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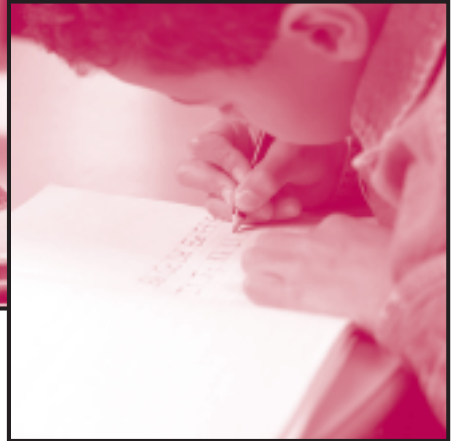
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THE ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME



ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING
beginning... developing... mastering

programme

The Assessment for Learning Programme

Students no longer ask "Is this what you want?" or "Is this going to be on the test?" Instead learning goals and standards are clearly spelled out so that students understand them and what they are expected to learn...know how to demonstrate they have learned it...and know what to do to improve.

Grant Wiggins

Educative Assessment, Designing Assessments to Improve Performance
(1998),

Jossey Bass, New York

Welcome to the Assessment for Learning Programme

Welcome to the Assessment for Learning Programme.

This unique programme will play a crucial role in helping you help children to learn.

The Assessment for Learning Programme:

- Helps you assess children's learning and progress in eight different subjects plus international-mindedness;
- Encourages and enables children to assess their own learning;
- Provides tools and guidance to help you use assessment to improve children's learning, not just record which learning stage they are at;
- Enables you to monitor individual children's learning and the learning of whole classes, and compare this to the learning of other classes across the mileposts.

How does it do this?

By providing the following resources:

- Assessment for every IPC subject at every milepost – the only comprehensive assessment for learning programme available for primary and elementary schools.
- Assessment for international-mindedness – the only programme in the world to do this, and the only programme focused on primary- and elementary-aged children.
- Skills rubrics for every subject that teachers can understand – making assessments easier and more reliable.
- Skills rubrics for every subject written specially for children – helping them to become involved in their own assessment for learning.

- Learning advice for teachers and children on what to do to progress from one level to the next – real assessment for learning.
- Computerised Recording Software – keeping paperwork to a minimum and ensuring your results are accurate and easily-comprehensible.
- Automatically-collated reporting sheets for individual children’s learning and the learning of whole classes.
- This Teachers’ Manual explaining the background to the Assessment for Learning Programme and giving detailed advice on how, when and why to use each of the assessment resources.

Introduction

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) Assessment for Learning Programme is based on a simple assumption. If we are passionate about children's learning, then we have to be passionate about assessment and evaluation, too. It makes no sense to say that our main purpose is to help children learn academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually without wanting to find out whether they have or not.

This is not to say that finding out is easy. In the art room at the International School of Dusseldorf there is a quote from French realist/impressionist Edgar Degas. It says: *Painting is easy when you don't know how to do it...but very difficult when you do.* If we replace the word "painting" with the words "assessment and evaluation" the sentence would be equally true.

But just as the difficulties of being a painter don't – and shouldn't – stop anyone from painting, so the difficulties of assessment and evaluation shouldn't stop us from trying to find out whether children have managed to learn anything and, if so, what that learning is. If you already use the International Primary Curriculum you'll know that the units of work provide some helpful advice about assessment but we have always known that we need something more than just helpful advice. The problem has been deciding precisely what. Assessment and evaluation are complex issues and almost impossible to get "right".

So we have taken our time. We have talked to some leading figures in the assessment debate, attended courses, done our background reading, looked at what is happening in other programmes around the world and made sure we are up to date on current assessment issues.

We now have an approach that is based on best practice, is consistent with the beliefs of the IPC and which will contribute to helping children learn.

The Big Picture

We hope that you will read all sections of this *Teachers' Manual* so that you get to know the reasons behind the IPC Assessment for Learning Programme and how to use it. Actually, you must read the *Teachers' Manual* as soon as possible. (You'll have to read some sections, if only to know how to load and operate the computerised *Recording Software*).

If you are in a hurry, though, here are the key messages from this first introductory section:

- Assessment and Evaluation are different.
- The results of assessment and evaluation are not “true”; they provide us with the evidence that lets us *infer* how much and how well children have learned.
- Learning is about developing new neuronal constellations or consolidating those that exist.
- The experience of learning knowledge, skills and understanding is different, even though the learning of all three is both new and consolidated.
- Knowledge is relatively easy to assess.
- Understanding is very hard to evaluate – much harder than many curriculum developers and teachers believe.
- Skills learning moves through a process of:
beginning...developing...mastering.
- It is important to assess skills as they define the action component of each subject or discipline.
- Not everything needs to be assessed. We should assess, though, those skills that give us the opportunity to make the most valid inference.

- “Assessment for learning” is different from “assessment for reporting”. Assessment for learning involves providing feedback to children and activities for them to do that help them improve their learning.
- The Assessment for Learning Programme responds to each of these issues.

Two Key Terms: “Assessment” and “Evaluation”

It's important to clarify terms as much as possible as there is a real danger of confusion. Different systems and different cultures might use the same words but they often use them to mean different things. Equally importantly, within the same system and/or culture we can use words differently when we use them conversationally and professionally. What might be perfectly appropriate usage conversationally over a cup of coffee is not necessarily helpful in a more rigorous, professional context.

The terms “assessment” and “evaluation” are often used interchangeably. In the IPC we think it is helpful to separate them to some degree. When we talk of “assessment” we mean all those processes that lead to a more definitive statement of a child's performance or ability. When we talk of “evaluation” we mean all those processes that lead to a more general value judgement about a child's performance or ability.

Eliot Eisner wrote in *Beyond the Numbers Game* (1969) (ed. Hamilton et al) about the difference between *instructional* targets (or learning outcomes or learning standards) and *expressive* targets. He defined “instructional” targets as those that contain their own internal clarity.

For example:

- This training session will stop at 16.00.
- Each child must be able to swim 25 metres using any stroke of their choice.

He defined “expressive” targets as those that cannot contain their own clarity by nature of what they are asking.

For example:

- Each child will develop a love of the music of Mozart.

The difference between this expressive target and the earlier instructional ones is that it is much more difficult to identify what it is that “develop a love” of Mozart actually means. And to try and reduce it to behavioural outcomes makes a mockery of whatever it is we do mean by “loving the music of Mozart”. Eliot helps us here by suggesting that expressive targets should be supported by *success criteria*: statements that reduce the confusion by helping us to identify some of the conditions that indicate success might have been achieved.

In the IPC, we find it much more helpful to think of *assessment* as relating to *instructional* targets and *evaluation* as relating to *expressive* targets. Both instructional and expressive targets involve value judgements; in deciding that something should be a learning standard or target we are ascribing one sort of value to it. But expressive learning standards and targets additionally require another value judgement in coming to a decision. We simply can’t be certain in these cases.

We think this is helpful in knowing the difference between the *assessment of knowledge*, which is relatively straightforward, the *assessment of skills*, which is more complicated but possible and the *evaluation of understanding*. Our view is that understanding is qualitatively different than either knowledge or skills and one that requires a different approach in determining performance, ability or development. But, of course, this begs the question: What is our definition of knowledge, skills and understanding?

A View About Learning

One of the great waves of the past few educational years – and one which is still rolling in now – is the move that places learning at the centre of what we do, rather than teaching. But as John West-Burnham, Senior Research Adviser at the National College of School Leadership, points out, the potential of putting learning at the heart of our discussions and action is weakened if we don't have a common agreement in school about what *learning* is. West-Burnham says that this lack of agreement in schools, between schools and throughout the system is one of the major issues we have to rectify.

So, given that assessment is about learning, we have to say what the IPC view of learning is. The view we have developed over the past few years has been strongly influenced by brain research and its links to learning. We'll express the view as simply as possible here.

Neurons are the building blocks of our learning. The more we learn, the more extensive the connections between the neurons become, the bigger the neuronal constellations. The better we learn, the faster those connections operate and work together.

So learning can be seen as having two components. Learning is new when we add to that which already exists. Learning is consolidated when, even if nothing new is added, our existing learning becomes more secure and faster.

New and Consolidated Learning

So learning can be *new*. This means that we have established a new neuronal set or added to the one we already have. Let's say that you know something about the establishment of Islam in Andalusia, Spain. As a result of new experiences – a lesson or a visit to the Alhambra at Grenada, for example, you are now able to link something new onto what you already had. By definition, new learning is always insecure. You may forget most of that new information in a relatively short space of time, just as you may forget a person's name if you don't see him/her very often.

Learning can also be *consolidated*. Consolidated learning happens when what we have learned becomes established and secure. Usually this happens when we revisit something we have learned. So discussing Islam and Andalusia amongst friends, as part of a study group, or because it is connected with your own personal history is likely to consolidate what you know.

(There is a third element that can often look like learning but isn't. This happens when we go over and over things that are already consolidated. No amount of practice or re-visiting is going to help your learning get better because it is established. We call this *treading water*.)

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Our view is that all learning is either new or consolidated but there are three different kinds of learning – knowledge, skills and understanding. The significance of these three different kinds of learning underpins our articulation of the IPC learning goals.

Knowledge is relatively straightforward. We see knowledge as largely factual. For example: *My name is Brigitte; My address is...; At this moment I am painting.*

For the IPC, knowledge is characterised by being:

- **Infinite in quantity and continually expanding.**

There is no end to the amount of new knowledge being discovered. Many of the facts we were once certain about have been replaced by new facts, about which we might want to feel similarly certain. The “knowledge explosion” is exactly what it says. This is why we all have to make a choice about what knowledge counts for children to learn. First, there is simply too much for them to be able to learn in the time they have available. Second, some of what we choose to teach may well be shown to be untrue before too long.

- **“Right or wrong”, “on and off”.**

There is less dispute about whatever knowledge exists at a given time. The knowledge may change or be replaced, but while we “know it” we usually accept it.

- **More easily assessable.**

Knowledge is what we assess by quizzes and tests of various kinds.

Knowledge can be *new* or *consolidated*. For example: *You had told me that your name was Brigitte but yesterday I wasn't sure; I couldn't quite remember. Now I have no problem.*

Skills are different. Skills are concerned with abilities, with being able to do things. Skills are what we see in action. For example: *I am able to spell Brigitte; I am able to find my way home; I am able to paint.*

For the IPC, skills are characterised by being:

- **The essence of many disciplines.**

Scientific skills are what scientists do; musical skills are what makes someone a musician.

- **Relatively few in number and consistent.**

Although the equipment scientists use may have changed over the past two hundred years, the skills they use remain largely the same.

- **Developmental rather than right or wrong.**

As we learn skills we make a progression. The IPC identifies this progression as from *beginning...through developing...to mastering*. (And note that even "mastering" is not "mastery". The reason concert pianists and golfers, amongst many others, keep practising is that there isn't a finishing point to skills.

- **More difficult to assess than knowledge.**

This is simply because it is a process, there isn't a right or wrong and our performance might be heavily influenced by context. Skills can't be assessed by tests and quizzes and they can't reliably be assessed only once. We need to see a skill in action a number of times before we can begin to express a view about its performance.

Skills can be *new* or *consolidated* as well. The difference with skills is that each stage of skills development will be “new” or “consolidated”. For example: *I am just beginning to learn how to ski and I’m falling over a lot. Now I have consolidated the beginning stage I can move on to beginning the developing stage.*

Understanding is different altogether in the view of the IPC. We believe that the nature of “understanding” has been poorly represented in many curricula. We think there are three main reasons for this. First, it is one of those words that is used both conversationally and professionally and, too many times, the conversational sense wins out in school. Second, because understanding is what we all hope to achieve, curriculum writers and assessment writers have rushed to focus on assessment without realising how complex it is. Third, and of fundamental importance for primary and elementary schools, we have imported a secondary usage of understanding into primary schools without thinking how appropriate it is.

For the IPC, understanding is characterised by being:

- **Complex, multi-dimensional, uncertain, fluid.**
- **Developed within the relationship between acquired knowledge, developed skills and time for extended reflection around a theme.**
- **Impossible to “assess” and difficult to “evaluate” (given our definition of each of these).**

Understanding can be *new* or *consolidated*. But it is something permanently in a state of “becoming” and never fixed. Whilst understanding is built upon knowledge and skills, it is quite different from them.

Finally, in schools and assessment and evaluation, learning has two other aspects worth mentioning here.

Learning needs to be appropriate. Because learning almost always links with something that has been learned before, it needs to be *appropriate* to the age and experience of the children. Put simply, it needs to make sense to them in terms of where they have come from and where they now are. The IPC learning goals have been designed to indicate appropriate stages of learning for most children in primary and elementary schools. They also provide an indication of what it is reasonable for children to learn next if they are at stages different from the majority of children. The IPC assessment material in this programme is similarly age-appropriate.

Learning also needs to be *sufficient*. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the American author of *Flow* (1991) (Harper Collins, Canada), says that the most effective learning takes place when individuals feel high challenge and low stress at the same time. High challenge means that children and students should be helped to achieve the best learning they can. What this is for individuals is a judgment that must be made by teachers in their own classrooms with the children.

The Main Focus of the IPC Assessment for Learning Programme

The IPC's consistent and coherent view about learning has helped us to identify what the Assessment for Learning Programme should focus on.

We do not believe that there is much use in producing Assessment for Knowledge. Partly this is because we simply can't know what knowledge children will gain as they work through a topic, unit of work or theme. To produce centrally available tests would be guesswork on our part. But it's also true that teachers can easily test knowledge themselves. The profession has been doing it for a long time.

We do not believe – at the moment – that the methodologies are secure enough to enable us to evaluate understanding well. This is not to say that we shouldn't try, but we firmly believe that the way to do it is for teachers to examine the learning standards they are using and become clear about what each means, particularly those related to understanding. We especially need to make sure that goals currently defined as *understanding* shouldn't actually be defined as knowledge or skills learning goals. There is much confusion here.

Learning goals or standards related to understanding are the best example of Eliot Eisner's (*Beyond the Numbers Game* (1969)) expressive goals. We need to develop some form of indicators that suggest what understanding might look like. Even more importantly, we need to apply these carefully over time, refining our judgments as we go. (Putting it as bluntly as possible, unlike a number of curricula, we do not believe that children come to understanding as a result of a five week unit of work.)

Learning goals focused on understanding are of central importance to the IPC. We will continue to work with our own teachers and schools and with the assessment and evaluation community as we explore how the understanding of primary and elementary aged children can be evaluated effectively. When we have a practical response that is helpful rather than confusing we will publish the material.

The Assessment for Learning Programme, therefore, focuses on skills.

Skills are:

- The practical behaviours we can observe in action.
- At the heart of each subject, such as history, or focus, such as international-mindedness.

Key Assessment and Evaluation Issues

The debate about assessment and evaluation – and about learning itself – is broad and long. We have immersed ourselves in it for the past five years. Out of that immersion a number of key ideas have emerged that have underpinned the approach to the Assessment for Learning Programme. Here are some of the main ones.

1. Learning Goals are the foundation of both assessment and understanding.

In combination, curriculum and assessment fully define what students will learn; where curriculum lays out what students will learn, assessments show how they have learned.

Charlotte Danielson

Enhancing Student Achievement: A Framework for School Improvement
(2002)

ASCD, USA

Both assessment and evaluation begin from knowing where you want to go in the first place. To put this simply, deciding that a restaurant meal you’ve just eaten wasn’t very good means that you must have entered the restaurant with an already formed idea of what a “good” meal is.

We can’t assess or evaluate without having some criteria against which the assessment or evaluation can take place. For learning that takes place in school, these criteria in the IPC are expressed as *learning goals* and *learning targets*. In some other curricula they are referred to as standards, outcomes or objectives.

The IPC has an advantage over many other curricula in this respect. The time that was taken in the early stages to define the learning goals as explicitly as possible has been clearly justified for its impact not only on teaching and learning, but on assessment and evaluation, too. The clearer the learning goals, the easier it is to define how they might be assessed or evaluated. Many attempts around the world to define learning goals have foundered on their lack of clarity. Whether you use the IPC or not, we suggest that parents, teachers and, above all, children can be helped by ensuring that your learning goals are as explicit as possible.

2. Learning Goals have different functions in teaching and learning than they do in assessment or evaluation.

Well-written learning goals and learning targets both guide teaching and learning and help to focus assessment or evaluation. But the way they do this is different.

In guiding teaching and learning, learning goals and targets need to be extensive because they need to make sure that the different components of learning are clearly highlighted. Let's take a real example again.

When we go to a ski class there are a number of elements that are involved in being able to make a turn.

Among them are:

- our position on the skis
- our weight transference
- the angle of the edge of the ski
- our balance, and;
- our use of the poles.

Our ski instructor has to be aware of each of these and he/she will organise his/her teaching so that each is covered in the lessons we take.

But when the instructor comes to make his/her assessment of our skills as a skier he/she looks at us quite differently. The instructor will have a more general notion of how well we are turning. Only if we fail that more general notion will the instructor go back to the individual learning goals to see where we are going wrong.

This difference between the use of learning goals in teaching and learning and learning goals for assessment or evaluation is important because it explains why it is necessary to choose the learning goals we are going to assess or evaluate from all of those available to us. (See below for more on this.)

3. There are too many Learning Goals to assess: some choice has to be made.

Educational testing revolves around inferences. Typically, we test a child to infer what the child knows or can do. We can also assess children to get a fix on their attitudes or their interests...technically, it is not the test that is valid or invalid; rather it is the inference made about a student, based on the student's performance.

Rule 1: Identify the most important student outcomes and then develop tests for high priority outcomes that can successfully be...assessed in the time available.

W James Popham
The Truth About Testing (2001)
 ASCD, USA

In coming to terms with what assessment and evaluation is actually about, the following sentence is absolutely crucial.

**BOTH ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION ARE
PROCESSES OF
INFERENCE.**

When we take our driving test, the examiner infers from our performance that we are fit to drive in all sorts of conditions. Driving examiners will tell you that they sometimes “fail” technically perfect drivers and “pass” drivers who make mistakes on the test. They do this because they make an inference about who will actually be a good driver on the road.

When we apply to go to university, the college infers that we are capable of sustaining and completing the particular course for which we have applied from a review of our examination results, our application form and a possibly limited interview. When someone describes our understanding of, for example, “power and authority in the Middle East”, as getting deeper it is an inference based on seeing us react and respond in a number of different situations.

We make an *inference* from the results of our assessments about the likelihood of someone’s overall broader knowledge and skills performance. We make a similar judgment or evaluation of someone’s developing understanding based on the evidence available to us.

It's that inference that is behind the important concept of *validity* in both assessment and evaluation. A valid assessment means that we are able to make those inferences about what children know and can do with some degree of certainty. A valid evaluation makes the same claim about the inferences we are making about children's developing understanding.

Test creators – particularly in this scientific age – might prefer the importance of inference to be kept quiet, because it essentially means that “We don't know for sure”. As James Popham says in *The Truth About Testing* (2001) (ASCD, USA), inference is vital to both assessment and evaluation because it has always been recognised as impossible to assess every piece of knowledge, or every skill, or evaluate every aspect of understanding. Creators of standardised tests choose certain questions that they believe more accurately enable them to infer performance and report results meaningfully. Other, non-standardised assessment creators similarly choose what to assess from the huge range of what is possible.

This makes the *choice* of what to assess or evaluate a very important one. Choose the appropriate things and you have a worthwhile test; choose the inappropriate things and you have a test that's not worth the time it takes to administer.

There are three important factors that govern our choice of which learning goals to assess or evaluate.

First, the learning goals must be of crucial importance to the subject. James Popham talks of dividing learning goals into three groups: *essential, highly desirable, desirable*. In other words, no one is saying that any learning goal is unimportant; but some – those that represent the essence of a subject – are more important than others. This is why the Assessment for Learning Programme doesn't assess every skill or sub-skill; we have chosen to focus on those that are essential and highly desirable in each subject or area.

Second, the choice must result in assessments or evaluations that are not too complex to carry out. Learning must be the main activity of classrooms. When the weight of assessment or evaluation gets too heavy, it's the time for learning that suffers. This is why the Assessment for Learning Programme asks you to observe children doing their normal classroom work and uses rubrics to help you assess what you see. Creating a separate set of activities used only for assessment and evaluation is taking time away from children engaging in the activities that help develop their learning.

Third, others must see the information that results from the assessment or evaluation of those learning goals as significant. If we give people feedback on the trivial then they will tend to disregard what we tell them. (Imagine asking someone to comment on a piece of music that you like only to find that their reply is focused on the hairstyle of the conductor or lead singer.) This is another reason why the Assessment for Learning Programme chooses key skills to be assessed. The results will not only mean something to parents, teachers and children, but practical action for improvement can take place.

4. Assessment and evaluation can be used for different purposes.

Academic achievement in classes where effective feedback is provided to students is considerably higher than the achievement in classes where it is not.

Robert J. Marzano

What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action (2003)

ASCD, USA

Effective feedback should make more explicit to pupils what is involved in a high-quality piece of work and what steps they need to take to improve.

Paul Black et al

"Working Inside the Black Box": Assessment for Learning in the Classroom (2002)

King's College, London

Almost every reference work, course and article on assessment or evaluation talks about making sure that the purposes of both are made clear.

The terms *summative* and *formative* have frequently been used to describe these different purposes. Summative assessment has been described as "managerial"; formative assessment as "professional": (Gipps and Stobart *Assessment: A Teachers' Guide to the Issues* (1994) (Falmer Press, London)).

Summative assessments or evaluations are used to summarise performance and/or to compare one performance against another. Individually, summative assessment or evaluation will tell you whether you have made the grade, passed or failed, succeeded or not. Collectively, summative assessment or evaluation can be used to compare one class with another, one school with another, or one system with another. Perhaps it is clearer to call summative assessment "*assessment for reporting*".

Giving one child a grade "A" for effort or achievement at the end of the school year is assessment for reporting. So is checking how well your school is doing against international standards in mathematics, language arts or any other subject.

Formative assessment is about helping improve learning. It uses assessment or evaluation as a way of finding out what children can do and then giving them feedback on how to improve their learning still further. Like summative assessments and evaluations, formative assessments or evaluations can take place at the end of a piece of work; when this happens the difference is in how the information is used. But formative assessments and evaluations also take place during the work as well. It is clearer to think of formative assessments and evaluations – and much more preferable from the point of view of the IPC – as "*assessment or evaluation for learning*".

Watching a child at work and suggesting how he/she might improve a particular skill is an example of assessment for learning. Listening to a child and then asking a question that helps him/her to deepen his/her thinking and understanding is an example of evaluation for learning. So is marking a child's book with helpful comments – providing that they do something about it. So is reviewing a child's work and setting targets for the next unit of work, providing that the targets are accompanied by advice on how to achieve the improvements targeted.

The different purposes of assessment and evaluation for reporting and for learning mean that the assessments and evaluations themselves have to be different.

If assessment or evaluation is to be used for comparison or reporting purposes then there needs to be great similarity between the questions asked, the way in which they are asked, the way they are marked and the interpretation of the evidence. Summative assessment and evaluation has to have a greater degree of standardisation. This is less true when assessment or evaluation is being used to give individual children feedback on how to improve.

This is why the Assessment for Learning Programme provides not only rubrics and computerised recording software, but also specific advice on how to help children move from *beginning* to *developing* to *mastering*. It is why you have in your possession an *assessment for learning* programme.

5. Assessment and evaluations are culturally sensitive.

Given that different countries have different value systems...it is reasonable to assume that they will develop different assessment models that reflect these values.

Roger Brown in International Education in Practice, ed Hayden et al
Cultural Dimensions of Assessment (2002)
 Kogan Page, London

We have already seen that creating an assessment or evaluation tool involves making a number of choices, including:

- which learning goals to assess or evaluate and which not to
- the purposes to which we intend to put the assessment or evaluation.

Like all choices we make, our decisions reflect the set of values in which we believe. Different values produce different choices – which, in turn, create debate, discussion and argument.

These differences occur internationally, too. Think for a moment of a culture that favours learning goals focused on openness and questioning. In such a society the teacher is a facilitator of learning, creating opportunities for debate and exploration that are, hopefully, taken up by the students. Now think of a society that favours learning goals focused on knowledge and the correctness of things. In such a society, the teacher is a deliverer of content, relatively unchallenged by students.

These differences will, in the first instance, inform the choice of learning goals it is felt are important; then they will inform the activities we encourage children to do; finally, as a consequence, they will also inform the kinds of assessments that are used and valued.

The Assessment for Learning Programme recognises this, but we also appreciate that we can't be all things to all people. It is an Assessment for Learning Programme that does not denigrate knowledge. We believe knowledge to be an important factor in the development of understanding. We recommend that you devise your own knowledge tests and give them due importance. However, it is a programme based on a view of learning that is constructivist, activist and developmental.

6. Where possible, alternative kinds of assessment and evaluation should be provided to ensure validity.

We must encourage a range of modes and task style[s]; we need also to expand the range of indicators used. Multiple indicators are essential so that those who are disadvantaged on one assessment have an alternative opportunity to offer evidence of their expertise.

Gipps and Murphy

A Fair Test: Assessment, Achievement and Equity (1994)

Open University Press, Buckingham

...[I]t is difficult for an international assessment system to reflect the values of all nations. But if an assessment system has sufficient flexibility within it, then it may be able to match more closely the values of a particular group.

Roger Brown in *International Education in Practice*, ed Hayden et al

Cultural Dimensions of Assessment (2002)

Kogan Page, London

...[T]here are no purely culture fair or culture blind assessment materials. Each reflects its origins.

Howard Gardner

Multiple Intelligences – A Reader: The Theory in Practice (1993)

Basic Books, New York

If both assessment and evaluation are about the process of inference, then the inferences we make are likely to be better, the bigger the range of evidence we have to go on. Given that we can't, and shouldn't even try to, assess or evaluate everything, too narrow a range of assessments or too narrow a range of evaluation opportunities simply means that our inferences are likely to be invalid. So children need to be given a number of different opportunities to show what they know, can do and understand.

Providing a range of opportunities has other advantages, too. It helps children better demonstrate what they can do because children, like adults, have preferences in the kinds of responses they make. A range of assessment or evaluation opportunities provides everyone with an equal chance to shine. We know, for example, that the multiple intelligence profile of a child affects how he/she responds to and processes the information and experiences he/she receives. That's why the IPC has provided a range of different learning opportunities. But it's also one of the reasons why we need to provide a range of different assessment or evaluation opportunities.

It also means that we can provide an assessment or evaluation methodology that is more appropriate to different learning goals. Factual knowledge has to be assessed differently from skills, and both have to be assessed differently from understanding. A range of assessments responds to these differences.

Finally, a range of assessment and evaluation opportunities also helps to deal with the issue of cultural differences in an international classroom. Through these different responses children can see that their particular cultural background is not being ignored.

In the Assessment for Learning Programme the multiple and different learning activities contained in the IPC or your own curriculum programme provide the “assessment opportunities”. Apart from the End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation suggested summary activities, there are no special assessment activities. You can draw evidence to inform your judgment from anything relevant going on in the classroom. The Assessment for Learning Programme is not a “test”.

7. Children improve their learning as a result of assessment and evaluation only when certain things happen.

...[T]he published evidence identified three main problems. The first was that the assessment methods that teachers use are not effective in promoting good learning. The second was that marking and grading practices tend to emphasise competition rather than personal improvement. The third problem was that assessment feedback often has a negative impact...

Paul Black et al

"Working Inside the Black Box: Assessment for Learning in the Classroom
(2002)

King's College, London

There is a growing body of evidence about the impact of assessment or evaluation on improving children's learning. Summative assessments or evaluations – straightforward assessment for reporting – seem to have very little positive impact on learning and may even have a negative impact. (There is a growing move in many countries around the world to respond to what is seen as the pressure placed on children by too much summative assessment activity.) This may not be surprising given the managerial function of summative assessment.

But, interestingly, formative assessments or evaluations only impact positively on children's learning within a particular context. It is, therefore, possible to carry out formative style assessments or evaluations without them having much of an impact on improving learning either. Three things need to be in place for formative assessments or evaluations to work well.

First, children should be aware of the focus of the assessment or evaluation. This means that it helps when children are told the learning goals of particular pieces of work in which they are about to engage. But it also means that the assessment or evaluation should focus on what it is that children think they have been trying to learn.

Second, giving children grades has very little impact on learning and is often counter-productive. Research seems to indicate that children are either put off by, or ignore, grades on their work. We need to be giving comments rather than grades.

Third, – and possibly the most important – comments in themselves are relatively ineffective unless accompanied by specific ideas of how to improve *which are then acted on by the child*.

The Assessment for Learning Programme responds to all three.

First, the rubrics are written not only in the language of teachers but also for children. This increases the likelihood that children will become aware of the learning they are expected to achieve. The *Children's Rubrics* can, for example, easily become children's individual targets and be the focus of discussion between the child and the teacher.

Next, the Assessment for Learning Programme doesn't give children grades. It provides instead a language which children can use to think about and reflect on their own learning.

Finally, the Assessment for Learning Programme provides specific advice to teachers on how to help children consolidate their learning or move from one stage to another. This advice becomes the action steps for children and teachers that can be easily followed up on.

Of course, there are many other opportunities in a class for teachers and children to work together on assessment for learning. The way questions are framed, the comments made in books, the use of reward devices and much more, all have either a positive or negative impact on whether assessment becomes *assessment for learning* or not. As we send Assessment for Learning Newsletters to users of the Assessment for Learning Programme we'll be exploring these in more detail.

Assessment, Evaluation and the IPC

Given the above, how is it possible to summarise the Assessment for Learning Programme?

The IPC supports the need for some “assessment for reporting”.

We are not opposed to *assessment for reporting*. As teachers, we have found it useful to receive summary information from colleagues who have taught the children before. As parents, we have felt the frustration of attending parental consultation evenings and leaving with no summary information of any kind.

Nevertheless, our passion is for learning. Too much assessment is currently focused on reporting. The Assessment for Learning Programme corrects that balance by placing assessment where it really matters – as a tool to help children develop.

The IPC believes that assessment in mathematics and language arts is critical.

We have already recommended to a number of our member schools and schools who work with our colleagues in Fieldwork Education that they should investigate internationally-standardised assessments in mathematics and language arts now being developed in a number of countries, including the UK and Australia. We will continue to make such recommendations as appropriate material is developed. But we believe that mathematics and language arts are already well-served by assessment material. The purpose now is to provide assessments about all of the other subjects and themes of the curriculum. In doing so, we believe that assessment can play its part in restoring value to those subjects often squeezed out of the curriculum.

IPC assessment and evaluation is learning focused.

The IPC has always been committed to helping children learn and our assessment and evaluation programmes must support this commitment.

IPC assessment and evaluation, therefore, is about *learning*. It sets out to help children improve their learning and to help teachers and parents help children learn.

In doing this, it sets out to help children reveal the range of their knowledge, skills and understanding, rather than their lack of these. Importantly, it sets out to provide advice to children, teachers and parents on how to get even better.

IPC assessment and evaluation focuses on the essential elements of the learning goals.

The IPC assessment and evaluation programmes have to reconcile three issues:

1. A choice of learning goals from all of those available.
2. The need to limit the amount of time children and teachers should give to assessment or evaluation.
3. The need to provide evidence which will be valued.

The IPC believes that there is some essential factual content (knowledge) in each subject of the curriculum. But we also believe that the assessment of knowledge through appropriate and simple testing requires relatively little professional help. We do believe that the *essence* of each subject is contained in the learning goals related to *skills* and *understanding* and that it is from these two that our choice of learning goals for assessment or evaluation will be made.

The central focus of IPC assessment will be on skills development; later, the focus of IPC evaluation will be on the deepening of understanding.

IPC assessment enables children and teachers to identify skills performance at the end of each Milepost as: *beginning*, *developing* or *mastering*. Rubrics are descriptions of what each level of performance looks like at each stage of each of the key skills identified. These rubrics are in two different forms: a version for the teacher that closely corresponds to the language of the learning goals (*Teachers' Rubrics*) and a version for children that is easy for them to access (*Children's Rubrics*).

In our work to come on the evaluation of understanding, IPC assessment will provide indicators to children, parents and teachers that help them describe the increasing depth of key understandings.

IPC assessment and evaluation material provides advice to teachers and children on how to improve learning.

IPC assessment and evaluation responds to the need to make sure that it provides practical help and advice that leads to improved learning. Once again, the rubrics help children and teachers to clearly identify the kinds of learning necessary to move from one level to the next. But IPC assessment, in particular, provides specific advice to children, teachers and parents on what can be done to improve the learning of key skills.

The IPC provides specific advice to teachers on increasing the quality of their ongoing formative assessment and evaluation.

If IPC assessment and evaluation is to be truly about developing learning, it must support teachers and children in the lesson-by-lesson, moment-by-moment activity of each day where much observation occurs and much feedback is given. In addition to the formal assessment and evaluation materials, we will also provide, through regular Assessment for Learning Newsletters, guidance to teachers on what works in classrooms and what doesn't.

The IPC will provide ways of reporting on children's learning that are meaningful to children, teachers and parents.

The IPC wants children, parents and teachers to celebrate the learning that has taken place and the progress that has been made. We believe that this progress should be formally recorded and we will provide advice on report forms that enable such information to be communicated in a way that is helpful to everyone involved.

The Rubric for Assessment

Charlotte Danielson, in her book *Enhancing Student Achievement* (2002) (ASCD, Alexandria), created the following guidance for schools in order to help them assess and evaluate their own assessment programme. We believe that the Assessment for Learning Programme exceeds the “Exemplary” category.

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT

	POOR	BASIC	EXEMPLARY
Alignment with the Curriculum	The curriculum either has no commonly used assessments or the assessments are not aligned to the curriculum goals.	School staff has attempted to establish common assessments, which are partially aligned to the curriculum goals.	The faculty has established common assessments that are completely aligned to the curriculum goals.
Assessment Methodologies	The assessment methodologies used are poorly suited to the curriculum goals.	The assessment methodologies used are partially suited to the curriculum goals.	The assessment methodologies used are completely appropriate to the curriculum goals.
Criteria and Standards	Performance standards are unclear and have not been shared with students.	Performance standards are fairly clear and some are shared with students.	The assessment methodologies used are completely clear and have all been shared with students.
Interpretation of Student Work	Teachers interpret student work in highly idiosyncratic and inconsistent ways, making it impossible to draw any conclusions from the results.	Teachers attempt to interpret student work consistently, but results are uneven.	Teachers interpret student work consistently, enabling them to draw important conclusions from their analysis.

Conclusion

Assessment and evaluation is complex and it would be easy to hide behind the complexity and do nothing for a long time.

But it is also important. If we believe in learning, then we also believe in the right of children to receive feedback on how their learning is going and help about how they can improve.

The IPC responds to that right by providing the following.

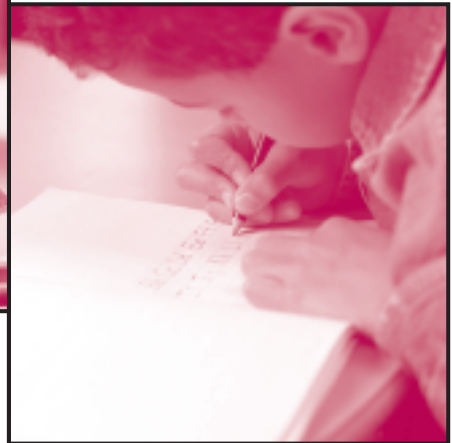
- Classroom-based advice that helps teachers maximise the quality of their feedback to children.
- Teachers' and Children's Rubrics that enable teachers and children to judge the quality of essential skills development in each subject.
- Where appropriate, End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation activities that help to support and reinforce ongoing judgments made in class, based on the same rubrics but which are time-sensitive and not formal tests.
- Guidance on how to record and report successful learning.
- Computerised, easy-to-use Recording Software to record and collate your results.
- Training and development courses about "assessment and evaluation for learning".

With all of this support the Assessment for Learning Programme will help you help children make progress and learn.

Thanks,

The Assessment for Learning Programme has been three years in development. This first edition would not have been possible without the help and support of colleagues throughout the world already using the IPC who either commented on or trialled different parts of the programme. In addition, colleagues from both IPC and non-IPC using schools have attended courses on assessment run by Fieldwork Education and have allowed us to try out and refine many of the ideas contained in this programme. Finally, we have learned a great deal from all of the work going on in the world assessment community, whether through our own course attendance, qualifications or reading.

Our gratitude to everyone who has helped in any way cannot be overestimated.



HOW TO USE THE ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING
beginning... developing... mastering

programme

How to Use the Assessment for Learning Programme

In this section of the *Teachers' Manual*, you will find explicit advice about how to use the Assessment for Learning Programme Classroom Resources.

This information is provided for each of the different Classroom Resource materials of the Assessment for Learning Programme and explains how, when and why to use each resource.

There is advice on the following areas.

- **Skills** – This section details what the skills are and how you can use them to assess the children's learning in any activity you are doing.
- **Scenarios** – This section gives examples of how the identified skills are practised in a classroom situation. This section also explains how you can identify activities in other IPC Units of work or activities taken from other curricula to assess the children.
- **Teachers' Rubrics** – This section explains how, when and why to use the Teachers' Rubrics to assess the children.
- **Children's Rubrics** – This section explains how, when and why to use the Children's Rubrics to assess the children. Detailed advice on how teachers and the children themselves should use the rubrics is included.
- **Learning Advice** – This section explains how to put these Learning Advice suggestions to best use to assist the children in their learning.
- **End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation** – This section explains how, when and why to use the End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation activities to confirm your judgments of the children.
- **Record Sheet for Classroom Use** – This section explains how to use the Record Sheet in the classroom to record your judgments of the children.

When can the Assessment for Learning Programme be used?

The Assessment for Learning Programme can be used with any curriculum including, but not exclusively, the International Primary Curriculum itself.

You can use the Assessment for Learning Programme in a variety of ways in your school, including as:

- A school resource that individual teachers can use to assess individual children or their whole class in specific subjects or specific skills within subjects;
- The way in which evidence is provided to support specific targets in your school's continuous improvement plan or school development plan that charge your school with improving children's learning in specific areas of the curriculum;
- The basis for the incremental growth in your school's assessment for learning processes over the next few years. (You may, for example, choose to introduce the assessment for learning of art and music next year, followed by science and history the year after.);
- The consolidation of a number of assessment activities currently taking place in school. The Assessment for Learning Programme can bring consistency and coherence to what may currently be a disparate set of assessment activities;
- A tool to check on how well children are learning in specific subjects or at specific stages of their school life;
- Support to teachers developing their own awareness of the different subjects of the primary and elementary curriculum, of children's learning in those subjects and of ways in which they can help learning progress;

- Support to teachers in coming to a common awareness about learning and the stages and progression of learning in different subjects and international mindedness. In particular, the rubrics can be particularly helpful in focusing staff development sessions about learning in action and encouraging the process of “moderation”.
- Evidence to children, colleagues, parents, board members, governors, inspection and accreditation teams and others that learning is taken seriously in your school;
- A way of involving parents in their children’s learning by giving them specific help about things to do that will play a part in improving their children’s learning;
- A complete assessment for learning programme throughout your school.

How do we introduce the Assessment for Learning Programme into our school?

Obviously, the context of each school is different and it is impossible for us to say with any certainty how the programme should be introduced. What we can say though is:

- Unless you are very confident of your ability to do so, don't introduce the Assessment for Learning Programme all at once.
- Choose the school-specific purpose for which you think the Assessment for Learning Programme is most suited and start from there.
- Make sure that one person in your school is very familiar with the programme and, equally importantly, with the principles behind it.
- Give everyone a chance to "play" with the programme first by using aspects of it informally in their classroom.
- Use staff development sessions to encourage discussion of – and examples of children's work about – the different levels and stages of progression in learning.
- Plan the introduction of the programme carefully so that it supports both assessment for learning and the development and reinforcement of your school as learning-focused.

What is in the Assessment for Learning Programme?

The Assessment for Learning Programme comprises four folders.

1. Classroom Resources – Milepost 1 (6-7 year olds).
2. Classroom Resources – Milepost 2 (8-9 year olds).
3. Classroom Resources – Milepost 3 (10-12 year olds).
4. This Teachers' Manual.

The following materials can be found in the Classroom Resources folders for each milepost.

- A list of all of the Learning Goals per subject (filed at the beginning of each *Classroom Resources* folder).
- Details of the most important skills included in the Assessment for Learning Programme (the skills included in the Assessment for Learning Programme are those highlighted in bold in the list of all the Learning Goals per subject).
- A set of assessment resources for each skill included in the Assessment for Learning Programme, including:
 - Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action
 - A Teachers' Rubric
 - A Children's Rubric
 - Learning Advice
- Subject specific End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation activities
- A Record Sheet for Classroom Use.

The Assessment for Learning Programme provides these assessment resources for the following subject areas.

- Art
- Geography
- History
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Science
- Technology
- International-mindedness.

Note: The assessment materials are not interchangeable between skills or subject area. You should always ensure that you are using the correct materials for each skill.

The *Recording Software* is provided on CD and instructions for use are contained in a separate section of this manual: *How to Use the Recording Software*.

The Record Sheet for Classroom Use is filed separately at the end of the *Classroom Resources* file. There is only one copy of this record sheet, as it is designed to be photocopied and used in all classes where assessment for learning takes place. Instructions regarding how to use the record sheet are included in this section of the *Teachers' Manual*.

For further advice and guidance, please refer to the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of this *Teachers' Manual*.

SKILLS

What the *Skills* are

At the very heart of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC)'s work are clear definitions of what children should learn. There are learning goals, or standards, for all the subjects of the primary and elementary curriculum. The *Classroom Resources* folder for each Milepost begins with a list of the IPC learning goals for each subject.

The learning goals are written in one of three ways: **Knowledge** ("Know about"), **Understanding** ("Understand") and **Skills** ("Be able to").

Knowledge refers to factual information: you can tell the children a factual piece of information in a class or ask them to research the knowledge they have to learn.

Understanding refers to the consideration of big ideas and is always developing. You can't teach understanding, but can provide a wide range of different experiences through which children's understandings can deepen.

Skills refer to things the children are able to do. Skills have to be learnt practically and develop progressively. The Assessment for Learning Programme calls this developmental progression a move from *beginning...* to *developing...* to *mastering*.

The Assessment for Learning Programme is **skills-based**.

(See *The Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual* for more information on this).

Each *Classroom Resources* folder lists all of the learning goals for the age-range of the children per subject, and also details which are the most important skills that are included in the Assessment for Learning Programme and have corresponding assessment resources. These most important skills are highlighted in bold text. (See *The Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual* for an explanation of why not all skills are assessed.)

Explaining the *Skills*

When you use the Assessment for Learning Programme, you will find the skill you are going to assess detailed in the following way. This is the first page of the resources you will need to conduct your assessment of the children.

Example of the “Skill” in the Classroom Resources

Be able to use a variety of materials and processes

**SKILL
1.2**

The numbering is appropriate to those of you who use the International Primary Curriculum. Nevertheless, using this numbering system will help develop consistency in the Assessment for Learning Programme, including the use of the *Recording Software*.

In the IPC, all learning goals are numbered and cross-referenced in each IPC unit of work activity. The first digit (1) refers to the milepost level, and the second digit (2), to the learning goal.

All the learning goals that are skills-based begin: *Be able to...*

These learning goals are detailed within each IPC unit of work, stating which skills (and other learning targets concerned with *Knowledge* and *Understandings*) are practised in both different subject areas, and within specific activities.

When you decide to assess the children, the first thing you need to do is to decide which skill you are going to assess. You can choose any skill that is detailed in the Assessment for Learning Programme and has corresponding assessment materials.

Note: It is important that you note the skill number on your *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* when assessing the children, as the skills are collated by number in the *Recording Software*.

When you look at the IPC Units of work, you will also find the skills (and other learning targets) grouped by number. If you wish to identify an activity that can be used to assess Skill 1.2, you can look at the IPC unit of work you are currently using at Milepost 1 to see if Skill 1.2 is included in any of the activities.

When using other curricula, you can identify the skill in the activity you are currently doing. The IPC units of work make this information explicit for you, but the Assessment for Learning Programme can be used with all curricula in all the stated subject areas.

Once you have decided which skill you wish to assess, you merely have to select and review the corresponding Classroom Resource materials for that skill.

What we recommend

When you decide to assess the children, you must first identify which skill you are going to assess. Think about which activities you are doing at the moment or will be doing in the near future and see if it will be possible to assess the children at that time.

You can refer to the materials in the IPC unit of work that you are using to identify an activity that practises a particular skill. Alternatively, you can consider any other activities you are doing taken from another curriculum and identify which skills they are practising. Then select the materials for the skill you wish to assess and begin your preparation for the assessment.

We recommend that you assess one skill at a time.

Key Points

- The Assessment for Learning Programme is skills-based.
- **The Assessment for Learning Programme provides resources to assess the most important skills.** Whilst all the skills included in the IPC units of work are important, they are not vital in terms of assessing a child's learning. The skills that are included in the Assessment for Learning Programme are those most useful in making an inference about children's learning. (For more information about this, see *The Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual*).
- **The Assessment for Learning Programme can be used with all curricula.**
- **The first thing you should do is decide which skill you are going to assess, then review the corresponding assessment materials for that skill.**

SCENARIOS – EXAMPLES OF THE SKILL IN ACTION

What the *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* are

To assist you in understanding what the skill means, the *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* detail where you can see how the specified skill is practised in some IPC units of work.

If you are not using the IPC, these examples will still help you and your colleagues to develop a shared knowledge and awareness of what each of the skills mean.

Example of the “Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action” in the Classroom Resources

(Be able to use a variety of materials and processes – Skill 1.2)

SCENARIOS – Examples of the skill in action:

In *Transport* Task 1, the children collect pictures of their favourite type of transportation from books, magazines and leaflets and cut out and photocopy them. They then make their own book on their chosen transportation using a variety of different materials and processes, including painting, charcoal, pastels, collage, etc.

In *Flowers and Insects* Task 1, the children begin by looking at the work of artists who have represented flowers or insects in their work. The children then produce their own piece of art using the same materials as the artist they have studied, or by choosing from a variety of materials, including paint, glue, pastels, pen, ink, etc, and a process of their choice, e.g. collage, paint.

Note: These are examples only. You can use any activity taken from any curriculum to identify a relevant skill that you would like to assess.

If you are not currently using the units that are included, users of the IPC units of work can identify which skills are practised in a particular activity by looking at the list that precedes each unit of work, each subject area within each unit of work, and each activity within a subject area (the skills are listed in each of these places for ease-of-use). If the skill you wish to assess is detailed in an activity you are currently doing, you can use the activity to assess the children's learning.

Users of other curriculum can identify your own "examples of the skill in action" by reviewing what activities you are doing at the moment or that you intend to do in the future.

How to use the *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action*

Each “scenario” begins by detailing the unit title and the task where the skill is practised. For example: *In Host Country and Home Country (Here and Now, There and Then) Task 5*...If you are looking at a geography skill, taken from the geography section of the *Classroom Resources*, the numbered task can be found within the geography section of the named unit of work (in this case *Home Country and Host Country (Here and Now, There and Then)*).

In some cases, however (in the international section of the programme in particular), the skills to be assessed are practised in different subject areas within the IPC unit. In this case, the scenarios direct you to the appropriate subject area to look at, for example: *In Location, Geography Task 3*... In this case you would look at the geography section of the *Location* unit to see an example of how the international skill is practised.

The scenarios go on to describe the activity in detail and how the specified skill is practised within the activity.

You can use any IPC unit of work activity or an activity taken from a different curriculum to assess the specified skill that you would like to assess.

If you do not study the units that are included in the *Scenarios* section of the Assessment for Learning Programme, this does not mean that you cannot assess this skill. Use other IPC units of work that you are studying to identify a suitable activity (again, look at the detailed learning targets for the unit and the separate activities) or an activity taken from another curriculum.

Note: The *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* are not extra activities that you need to do. Their purpose is to show you some examples of how the skills are practised within the IPC units of work and to make sure that you know what the skill means.

What we recommend

If you are unsure of how a skill is practised in an activity and you use the IPC units of work, you can refer to the given examples to give you ideas for activities that are suited to assessing a particular skill.

In all other cases, you should look at the unit or other curriculum you are currently studying, or intend to study, or an activity you are currently doing or intend to do in the future and see which skills it is possible to assess at that time.

Key Points

- The *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* direct you to examples of how the skill is practised in the IPC units of work.
- The *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* are provided to give you ideas to identify some activities to practise specified skills and ensure you understand what the skill means.
- The *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* are NOT extra activities for you to do.
- The *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* describe a range of IPC units of work where the skill is practised – the examples offered here are not definitive.
- You can use any activity that you are currently doing to identify a relevant skill that you would like to assess. This applies to all curricula.

TEACHERS' RUBRICS

What the *Teachers' Rubrics* are

The *Teachers' Rubrics* can be found on the second page of the skill resources, with the *Children's Rubrics*.

Example of the "Teachers' Rubrics" in the Classroom Resources

(Be able to use a variety of materials and processes – Skill 1.2)

Teachers' Rubric

Beginning	Developing	Mastering
<p>The child uses more than one type of material and process to produce a piece of art. He/she may need help to choose the materials and processes for his/her work, e.g. suitable materials to make a collage, etc. The child may also need help using the materials and processes to produce his/her piece of art.</p>	<p>The child chooses more than one type of material and process and successfully produces a piece of art. The child understands that materials are suited to different processes and chooses accordingly, with some help from the teacher. The child produces a piece of art based on his/her choices.</p>	<p>The child uses a variety of materials and processes in his/her work with success. The child understands that materials are suitable for different processes and chooses accordingly. The child needs little or no direction from the teacher.</p>

Note: There is a *Teachers' Rubric* for each specified skill. They are not interchangeable between skills or subjects.

The *Teachers' Rubrics* have explicit definitions of a child's learning-in-action in each of the three levels of progression: *beginning...developing...mastering*.

The learning stages: *Beginning, Developing, Mastering*.

As skills are developmental and involve a progression through the learning stages, none of these learning stages should be considered time-sensitive. For example, a child can be at Beginning stage after practising a skill over the course of six months. Another child can be at Mastering stage and still make some mistakes and have room for improvement. It is also likely that some children will revert to a "lower" stage over the course of a milepost, as we all do with skills practise.

(See the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of this *Teachers' Manual* for further information on this).

How to use the *Teachers' Rubrics*

The *Teachers' Rubrics* are for teacher use only.

The teacher can use the *Teachers' Rubrics* to assess the children's learning for a specified skill, before, during or after an activity (but usually during an activity).

Using the *Teachers' Rubrics* before an activity

Before beginning a new unit of work or an activity, you should familiarise yourself with the corresponding *Teachers' Rubrics* for the skill you have chosen to assess. Read through the defined abilities for a child working in each learning stage for this particular skill.

Think about what stage you think each child is working at before they begin the activity. How have they worked using this skill in previous activities? How have they worked in previous activities that practise similar skills? As your school develops in its use of the Assessment for Learning Programme, you will have information about children's past learning through the *Recording Software*.

Ensure that you know exactly what levels of ability you are looking for in each child (as detailed in the *Teachers' Rubrics*) before you begin.

Using the *Teachers' Rubrics* during an activity

After familiarising yourself with the *Teachers' Rubrics*, you can use them during an activity to begin to assess the children's learning.

You should ensure that you are using the *Teachers' Rubric* for the skill the children are practising in the activity and observe the children as they work. Refer to the explicit descriptions of how a child works in each learning stage to identify which stage each child is working at (Beginning, Developing or Mastering) and record this in the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use*.

Using the *Teachers' Rubrics* during an activity enables you to assess the children whilst they are working. This authentic assessment is most likely to give you relevant and useful information. (See *The Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual* for more on the importance of authentic assessment).

Using the *Teachers' Rubrics* after an activity

The *Teachers' Rubrics* can also be used after the children have done an activity. Having familiarised yourself with the *Teachers' Rubrics* before beginning a unit or activity, you can use the explicit definitions in the rubrics to confirm which stage each child is working at after the class has completed the unit.

Using the *Teachers' Rubrics* after an activity allows you time to reflect on your observations of the children's work. It does mean, though, that you will need to have taken some notes or recordings whilst the children have been working.

Note: You can use the *Teachers' Rubrics* formally or informally to assess the children. Use your own discretion when choosing whether or not to inform the children that they are being assessed.

What we recommend

We recommend that during the course of a milepost you use the *Teachers' Rubrics* before, during and after a range of activities to ensure that your assessment of the children's learning is accurate and fair. If using the *Teachers' Rubrics* after the children have finished an activity, you should ensure that you take some notes or recordings whilst the children are actually doing the work.

Key Points

- The *Teachers' Rubrics* are not interchangeable between skills. Each rubric is relevant to a particular skill at a particular stage of learning.
- The *Teachers' Rubrics* detail exactly how a child performs within each learning stage.
- You must use the correct *Teachers' Rubric* for the skill and milepost of the class you are assessing.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the *Teachers' Rubric* for the skill you are going to assess before you begin work.

CHILDREN'S RUBRICS

What the *Children's Rubrics* are

The *Children's Rubrics* can be found on the second page of the skill resources, with the *Teachers' Rubrics*.

Example of the "Children's Rubrics" in the Classroom Resources

(Be able to use a variety of materials and processes – Skill 1.2)

Children's Rubric

<i>I'm getting used to it</i>	<i>I'm getting better</i>	<i>I'm really getting it</i>
I know how to use some art materials, e.g. paints, charcoal, etc. I'm not sure when I should use each material and my teacher helps me with this. For example, when I'm making a collage my teacher helps me collect all the materials I need and helps me make my collage.	I know how to use some art materials and I can choose the right materials for a process, e.g. to produce a painting, I need paints, brushes, etc. I check my choices with my teacher and sometimes I need help with this. I can produce a piece of art using the materials and processes I have chosen.	I know many different ways of doing art and can use different materials without any help from my teacher. I can make different types of art and decide for myself what I need to do this.

Note: There is a *Children's Rubric* for each specified skill. They are not interchangeable between skills or subjects.

How to use the *Children's Rubrics*

The *Children's Rubrics* can be used by either the teacher or the children, or both, as detailed below.

The *Children's Rubrics* are contextually identical to the *Teachers' Rubrics* for the specified skill, but written in a language that the children can understand (with younger children you may need to help them with this). The *Children's Rubrics* can be used to involve the children in the assessment process and to make them aware of how they are learning.

I'm getting used to it = Beginning

I'm getting better = Developing

I'm really getting it = Mastering

The child can use the *Children's Rubrics* to assess their own learning for a specified skill, before, during or after an activity. The teacher can also use the *Children's Rubrics* as a method of communicating how the children should be working, in a language that they can understand. You can use the *Children's Rubrics* in many ways to assess the children, some of which are detailed below.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* before an activity

For the child

The *Children's Rubrics* can be given to the children before they begin an activity. The children should read them through and think about what stage they think they are working at in the specified skill (this doesn't have to correlate to your own opinion about what stage the children are working at). The children can then carry out the activity and think about whether their judgment was accurate.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* before an activity allows them to identify how they should be performing a skill and isolate areas of the skill that they need to work on. Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

For the teacher

You can use the *Children's Rubrics* before an activity to help you explain to the children in a language that they can understand how they should be performing a skill at each learning stage. You can use them to identify and explain to the children what they should "be able to do" with regard to the skill in question.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* before an activity allows you to explain to the children what they should think about when practising the skill before they begin. The children can reflect on their own perceived abilities and deepen their understanding of how a skill should be performed. The children can also become actively involved in the learning and assessment process.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* during an activity

For the child

The children can use the *Children's Rubrics* whilst they are practising a skill. You could distribute the *Children's Rubrics* and ask the children to refer to them as they work, to identify which stage they think they are working at (with younger children you may need to go through the *Children's Rubrics* with them first).

Using the *Children's Rubrics* during an activity allows the children to assess themselves as they are working, using their own observations to become actively involved in the learning and assessment process.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

For the teacher

You can use the *Children's Rubrics* whilst the children are doing an activity. You can use them to explain to the children in a language that they can understand how they are working.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* during an activity allows you to talk to the children about how they are performing a skill as they are doing it in a language that they can understand. You should use your discretion when deciding whether or not to inform the children that they are being assessed.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* after an activity

For the child

You can give the children the *Children's Rubrics* after they have done an activity to allow them to reflect and assess themselves with regard to how they think they have practised a skill. The *Children's Rubrics* direct them to think about how much help they needed, the finished result of the skill they practised and how they could improve. The children can use the *Children's Rubrics* independently or with other children to reflect and comment on how they performed a particular skill.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* after an activity allows the children to reflect immediately on what they have done and involves them directly in the assessment and learning process.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

For the teacher

You can use the *Children's Rubrics* after an activity to assess how the children have performed a particular skill. You could use them to talk to the children in a language that they can understand about how they have worked.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* after an activity allows time for reflection on how the children have worked and involves them directly in the assessment and learning process.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* in this way helps you create specific learning targets for individual children or groups of children. These can be put into children's books, displayed on their desks or on the classroom wall.

Using the *Children's Rubrics* as a teacher tool only

The *Children's Rubrics* can be used as a teacher tool only. You can use the descriptions of how each child works in each stage to talk to the children about their work. It is at your own discretion whether you give the children access to the *Children's Rubrics*. However, we think that there is much to gain by involving children in the assessment for learning and target setting processes.

What we recommend

We recommend that you use the *Children's Rubrics* in each of the ways detailed above over the course of the milepost.

At times it may be appropriate for you to inform the children that they are being assessed, and use the *Children's Rubrics* to inform them of what you will be looking for in the assessment. At other times, you may wish to use the *Children's Rubrics* to discuss with the children how they are performing.

The children can use the *Children's Rubrics* themselves to reflect on their own learning and progress. You can also use them to discuss with each child in a language that they can understand how they are doing in a particular skill.

Key Points

- The *Children's Rubrics* can be used by both the teacher and the children.
- You can use the *Children's Rubrics* in a number of different ways.
- The *Children's Rubrics* are contextually identical to the *Teachers' Rubrics* for a particular skill, but are in "child-speak".
- The *Children's Rubrics* are not interchangeable between skills.
- The *Children's Rubrics* detail exactly how a child performs within each learning stage.
- You must use the correct *Children's Rubric* for the skill and milepost of the class you are assessing.

LEARNING ADVICE

What the *Learning Advice* is

The *Learning Advice* can be found on the third page of the skill resources.

Example of the “Learning Advice” in the Classroom Resources

(Be able to use a variety of materials and processes – Skill 1.2)

LEARNING ADVICE:

How To Progress From Beginning To Developing

Suggest the following to the children

- With a partner, look at different types of art and think about what materials the artists used. Choose one material that you don't know how to use and ask your teacher if you can practise in a class.
- Ask other children in your class what art processes they know how to use. In an art class work with a child who can show you how to use a process that you didn't know before. Can you show them a new process?

How To Progress From Developing To Mastering

Suggest the following to the children

- Choose a piece of art you have produced this year. What was the subject of the art? Work with the same subject and make a new piece of art using a different process. For example, if your original piece of art was a painting of a statue, perhaps you could sculpt a statue using plasticine, or make a collage.
- Look around your town or city. What art do you see? Think about buildings, statues, monuments, fountains, etc. Make a class list of all the different art there is in your local area and the materials and processes that are used for each.

Note: There is *Learning Advice* for each specified skill. They are not interchangeable between skills or subjects.

The *Learning Advice* provides specific advice to teachers on how to help children consolidate their learning or move from one stage to another. This advice becomes the “action steps” for both children and teachers.

How to use the *Learning Advice*

You can use the *Learning Advice* to help the children progress in their learning.

Each skill in the Assessment for Learning Programme has detailed *Learning Advice* to assist children in progressing from Beginning to Developing stage, and from Developing to Mastering stage for a skill.

You can use the *Learning Advice* with the children individually, or in groups, or as a whole class. Using the *Learning Advice* in these ways is crucial to assessment for learning as it provides both the feedback loop and the actions that are essential to the whole process.

Using the *Learning Advice* with individual children

When you have assessed a child’s work in a skill and have identified what stage they are working at, you can give the child individual activities taken from the *Learning Advice* to help them progress. The *Learning Advice* activities include a range of ideas that the children can do at home or at school.

Using the *Learning Advice* with a group of children

When you have assessed the children and have identified what stage they are working at, you can put them into small groups working at the same stage. Each group can do one or more of the suggested activities to assist in their progression. A number of the *Learning Advice* activities are designed for groups of children to do.

Using the *Learning Advice* with a whole class

A number of the *Learning Advice* activities are designed for whole class participation. Again, you should wait until you have assessed the children and have identified what stage they are working at, before choosing some of the activities to do.

If all of the children in your class are working at the same stage, you can choose the corresponding *Learning Advice* suggestions for a particular skill and work together as a class.

For children working at Mastering stage

Children working at Mastering stage can use the *Learning Advice: How to progress from Developing to Mastering* to consolidate their learning, or the children can move to an appropriate skill in the next milepost section. The *Recording Software* is designed to allow you to record the children's progress both in and outside their age-based milepost. The automatically-collated reports clearly show that you have assessed the child in a skill taken from another milepost and you can also add a teacher comment to this effect in the *Recording Software*.

What we recommend

We recommend that you use a range of *Learning Advice* activities throughout the milepost to assist the children in their progress. We also recommend that you choose a range of individual, group and whole class activities from this section of the *Classroom Resources* to allow the children to participate in as many ways as possible.

It is also possible to involve parents in this process. At a parents' evening, for example, you could offer *Learning Advice* to the parents to encourage their child to do at home to consolidate their learning and progress through the learning stages.

Key Points

- The *Learning Advice* activities are not interchangeable between skills.
- The *Learning Advice* gives practical suggestions to help the children progress from one stage to another.
- The *Learning Advice* provides a range of individual, group and whole class activities for the children to do at school or at home.
- You should use the *Learning Advice* after you have assessed the children for a particular skill.

END-OF-MILEPOST ASSESSMENT CONFIRMATION ACTIVITIES

What the End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation activities are

The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities can be found at the end of each subject section. There is an *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* for each subject within each milepost.

Example of the “End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation” activities in the Classroom Resources

END-OF-MILEPOST ASSESSMENT CONFIRMATION

MP1

Art

It is helpful at the end of each milepost to have one overall check on how well the children can work as artists. This overall check isn't a test. It's a way for you to check your own judgments by letting the children carry out some activities without your intervention. If, watching children's performance in this end of milepost activity, you think that your overall judgment is inappropriate you might want to let the children do another activity. However, two days of activity won't give you better evidence than two years of closely watching the children at work. In the end, you will have to make a judgment based on all the evidence you have, not just one small part of it.

Try to make the end-of-milepost assessment confirmation activity as much fun as possible. Have an art day. Let the children think up their own activities.

Try some of the following ideas.

- Visit an art gallery or museum in your local area. The children can look at all the different types of art and think about their likes and dislikes. The children can talk to another class about what they saw at the museum and create their own versions of art they have seen to enhance their presentation.
- Create a class art gallery of all the art work the children have produced throughout the milepost. Invite parents and other children and teachers to visit the art gallery one day after school. The children can act as gallery guides, explaining their work, the materials and processes they used and what influenced them. Take pictures and create a class art brochure that can inspire their future work or the work of other children.
- Ask the children to create a fact sheet concentrating on one area of art to help other children. The children should include a step-by-step guide of how to use the material or process they have chosen and include examples. For example, if a child chooses colour, they could detail primary colours and how to mix colours to make new shades. They could list what they think each colour could be used to represent and how colours work together. They could also include a colour chart of all the colours that are available in the school.

Each of these activities requires the use of a number of the skills that have been focused on over the course of the milepost. Let the children carry out their activities. Observe them closely. Compare what you see to the judgments you have made from your evidence at the end of the milepost.

Note: There are *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* resources for each subject within each milepost. They are not interchangeable between subjects or mileposts.

The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* material is provided for you to confirm your judgments of the children over the course of the milepost in each subject area. They suggest activities that the children can do that require the use of a range of the most important skills (the skills that have been identified and included in the Assessment for Learning Programme).

This material allows you to have one overall check on how well the children can work. This check isn't a test, but a way for you to confirm your own judgments about the children's learning and progress. The *Recording Software* automatically collates the information you have entered for the children for each skill you have assessed over the course of the milepost and gives you an overall level for each child in each skill. You should refer to the *Recording Software* (print a report for each child or for the whole class, for one or more subjects) to see what your overall judgments are before deciding if you would like to do an *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activity.

How to use the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities

You should use the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities at the end of the milepost. If you would like to confirm your judgments about the children's learning and progress, you should choose an activity and observe the children as they work without your intervention. If, after watching the children work, your judgments are confirmed, you needn't do anything else. You have a record of your assessment of the children throughout the milepost and this *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activity has confirmed this. If, after watching the children work, you feel that your overall judgement is inappropriate, you can choose another activity from the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* for them to do.

Remember, though, that one or two *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities won't give you better evidence than watching the children work for two years. In the end, you will have to make a judgment based on all the evidence you have, not just one small part of it.

What we recommend

We recommend that you read the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* material thoroughly when you are nearing the end of a milepost. These activities are not time-sensitive and a range of activities are provided so that you can choose, if appropriate, an activity that is suited to the time you have available.

If you feel that your judgments of the children are accurate, you do not need to use the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* materials. They are provided to help you confirm your judgments, but are not compulsory activities.

Review your assessments of the children using the *Recording Software*. Do you have assessment recordings for all the children? In all the skills? Do your recordings provide a clear judgment of how each child is working? If not, then the *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities can help you to confirm your judgments.

Key Points

- The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* material should be used at the end of the milepost.
- The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* is not a test.
- The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* material allows you to confirm your judgments.
- You should base your assessment of the children on all the evidence you have, not just one small part of it.
- The *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities are not compulsory.

RECORD SHEET FOR CLASSROOM USE

What the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* is

Each *Classroom Resources* folder contains one copy of the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use*. It is filed at the back of the folder. This sheet is designed to be photocopied and used with all subjects and mileposts to record your assessments of the children.

Example of the “Record Sheet for Classroom Use” in the Classroom Resources

RECORD SHEET FOR CLASSROOM USE			
Subject:			
Milepost:			
Skill:			
Teacher:			
Date:			
Pupils	Beginning	Developing	Mastering

Note: The *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* should be used with all skills and subjects within each of the mileposts.

How to use the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use*

You should use the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* every time you decide to assess the children, to ensure that you record your judgments accurately.

Complete the details at the top of the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use*. Record the subject the children are working in, the milepost, the skill, your name and the date. Take this opportunity to check the *Classroom Resource* materials you are using and ensure you have the correct materials for the skill you wish to assess.

List the pupils you are assessing in the left-hand column of the table, under “Pupils”. As you assess the children, mark each child’s stage with an “X” in the corresponding box – Beginning, Developing or Mastering.

By using the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* you have an accurate record of your assessment of the children. You can use this sheet at a convenient time to enter this data into the *Recording Software*.

What we recommend

We recommend that you use the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* every time you assess the children, whether this is before, during or after an activity. You should record the information accurately and ensure that you complete all fields. You should also use the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* every time you enter this information into the *Recording Software* to ensure that the data is accurate.

Key Points

- The *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* allows you to accurately record your assessment of the children.
- You should use the *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* every time you assess the children, whether this is before, during or after an activity.
- You should use your completed *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* to enter the information into the *Recording Software* to ensure accuracy.
- The *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* is photo-copiable and should be used with every skill, within every subject, for each milepost.

HEADER AND FOOTER

What the *Header* and *Footer* of each page is

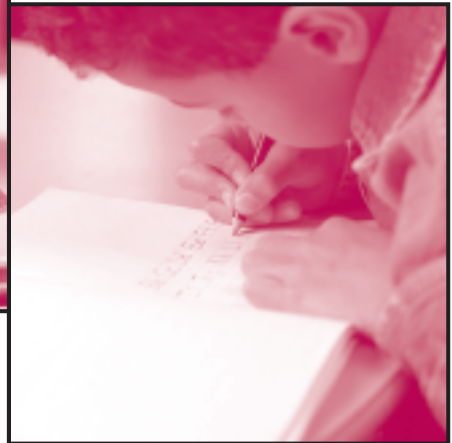
The “header” of each page can be found at the very top right hand-side of each page.

The header of each page details the skill that the materials have been developed for. As the first page of each skill section details the skill to be assessed, there is no header on this page.

These are included so that when you are using the rubrics or learning advice in class, you can ensure that you have the correct materials for the skill you are assessing.

The “footer” of each page can be found at the very bottom of each page, alongside the page numbers.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING
beginning... developing... mastering

programme

Frequently Asked Questions

The Assessment for Learning Programme is designed for teachers to effectively and easily assess how children are progressing in their learning.

It is important that the Assessment for Learning Programme is used in its intended way to support the teacher and the children in their teaching and learning and to build a complete picture of the child's strengths and weaknesses in both subject areas and specific skill development.

The following Frequently Asked Questions aim to alleviate any problems you may have using the materials, and respond to feedback we have received from participating schools around the world.

Full details of how to use the materials are contained in the *How to Use the Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual*.

Will the Assessment for Learning Programme be very time-consuming for teachers?

The Assessment for Learning Programme is designed to be used throughout, though particularly towards the end of, each milepost.

It is not expected that each teacher will use the programme to assess each child in their class, on each skill, within each subject area, every time they use an IPC unit of work or an activity taken from another curriculum. This, indeed, would be time-consuming.

Instead, the Assessment for Learning Programme is designed to clarify and articulate what the teacher knows about each child's abilities through observing them informally on a day-to-day basis. Teachers will have a fair idea of what stage each child is at in their class, as well as which skills, (investigative, practical, etc) each child is stronger or weaker at.

The Assessment for Learning Programme is also not designed as an official document to hand out to children during each class to decide how they are doing. The *Children's Rubrics* are designed to be given to the children to make them aware both that assessment is a part of learning, and that skills learning is a progressive experience. This does not mean that the *Children's Rubrics* should be given to the children in each class.

We have identified the most important skills within each subject area in terms of assessment for learning and are therefore included in the Assessment for Learning Programme. It is important to remember though, that each milepost is designed to last for a two-year period which gives you sufficient time to assess each of the children on each of the skills. It is important that each skill is assessed throughout this time as that is the only way in which we will see progression.

All the materials that teachers need to thoroughly assess each child have been prepared for them. There are printable *Teachers' and Children's Rubrics* to take into class, *Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action* to direct teachers to areas of the IPC units of work that are suitable to see as examples of the skill in action, *Recording Software* to record how each child is progressing, printable record sheets that are suitable for use in parents' evenings, etc to show each child's progress, and specific *Learning Advice* to help the children to consolidate their learning and progress from one learning stage to the next.

Some schools will not use the units that the “Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action” are taken from. What should they do?

The “*Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action*” text is designed to give teachers an idea of what each skill means through describing it in action.

The “*Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action*” section in the Assessment for Learning Programme elaborates on the activity instructions contained in the IPC units of work to give teachers a very clear understanding of how the skill is relevant to that particular activity.

However, if your school chooses not to use this unit of work, or indeed, chooses not to assess the children whilst following this unit, it is possible to easily identify an activity in which to assess the children.

Each IPC unit of work lists each skill that will be covered in the unit in both the *Learning Targets* section of the unit, and also at the beginning of each subject section of each unit. Each activity further lists these same learning targets that will be practised. One merely has to look at this list to identify which skills it is possible to assess at that time. Again, however, the teacher will build up an idea of each child’s abilities throughout each milepost and it is this that will be most beneficial when assessing the children.

This also applies to schools that do not use the IPC units of work at all and follow a different curriculum. Schools using other curricula can use any activity the children are doing to identify a skill they wish to assess. This is covered in further detail in the “*Scenarios – Examples of the skill in action*” material in the *How to Use the Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers’ Manual*.

What do I do if all the children in my class fall into the “Beginning” stage?

This is not a problem at all. Skills, as opposed to knowledge and understanding, can be practised.

If all the children in a class fall into Beginning stage, the teacher could do some of the *Learning Advice* activities as a class and, as the children progress, could have a stronger child work with a child who is still not yet ready to progress to the next stage.

The Assessment for Learning Programme is designed to identify and clarify how the children are learning and provide “action steps” to consolidate and improve each child’s learning. Whether all the children in a class fall into the same stage or whether there are a range of stages in a class, the Assessment for Learning Programme can be used as a tool to adapt teaching methods to suit these patterns, as suggested above.

Teacher opinion on a child's learning stage may differ and there may not be consistency across the school. What should we do?

Differing opinions exist in all areas of education. Our task is to reduce the limits of confusion and misunderstanding. The Assessment for Learning Programme will alleviate some of these differences in opinion; teachers can refer to both the *Teachers' Rubrics* and the *Children's Rubrics* to identify what learning stage each child is at. These rubrics are very explicit in what the teacher should be observing in order to make their judgment, which significantly alleviates the problem of differing opinion.

In all cases we have identified for the teacher the best ways in which to assess each skill.

Wherever possible, teachers should meet to discuss the rubrics and examples of them in action. In this way, their shared knowledge of each skill will develop and consistency between them will increase. This type of professional conversation between teachers has long been recommended as "moderation".

Why does Beginning stage assume the children have some ability in each skill?

Beginning stage does assume that the children have some ability in each skill. This question is only really relevant in terms of Milepost 1, as children who have progressed to Mileposts 2 and 3 will have worked within each subject area and with a variety of skills before.

If you have a new child in your class who has recently joined the school, you can also assume that they will have worked within the different subject areas and a variety of skills before, at their previous school or in an Early Years environment.

How much time should we dedicate to assessing the children's learning?

The Assessment for Learning Programme is not designed as a resource for teachers to take to every class with them and complete an assessment record sheet and to try to assess all the children on all the skills all of the time. This would encompass all of the teacher's time and, in order to assess how children are learning, we must give them time to learn.

If teachers familiarise themselves with the content of the Assessment for Learning Programme before beginning a new unit or theme of work, and are generally aware of what skills they can assess as they progress, it becomes more a case of informally observing the students as they work, as most teachers currently do on a daily basis. Then at an appropriate time, perhaps towards the end of a unit, a milepost, or before a parents' evening, or approaching end of year exams, etc, the teacher can complete an assessment of the children to show their progress and areas they need to work on, etc. These assessment judgments could also be kept for teachers' use only, with the children being assessed informally. Teachers can also encourage the children to assess their own learning using the *Children's Rubrics*. (For more information on how to use each of the *Classroom Resources* see the *How to Use the Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers' Manual*.)

Teachers could also choose a day to assess, for example, Science Skill 1.2. The children could assess themselves before they begin an activity that specifically uses this skill to give their ideas of how well they think they can do this skill. Then teachers could spend a morning doing an activity that practises this skill.

Teachers could then wait some months before specifically assessing another skill in this way, instead informally observing the class using the *Teachers' Rubrics* and other provided resources.

Above all, the Assessment for Learning Programme is an aid to both children's learning and teachers' participation in this. Every school is different and every class has a different number of students of differing stages and the Assessment for Learning Programme should be used to reflect these different circumstances. In terms of how long the Assessment for Learning Programme should be used, this is a question that cannot be answered with a specific number of hours, days, or weeks, etc. It should be used enough to identify clearly how the children are learning. The teacher should know how the children in their class are doing in any given subject area and use the corresponding *Learning Advice* and *End-of-Milepost Assessment Confirmation* activities to ensure the children are getting the most possible out of both the IPC units of work or other suitable curricula and their education in general.

Should all the children be working at Mastering stage when they finish the milepost?

All children learn at different rates and, as individuals, we all have things we are good at and find easy to learn and things that take a little more time to master.

It would be nice to think that all the children will begin the milepost at Beginning stage and finish, on schedule, at Mastering stage, ready to move on to the next milepost. Of course, this is highly unlikely.

What is important and what we should all be aiming towards is for the children to understand that they are learning, that this is an ongoing process and for some progress to be made. The *Teachers' Rubrics* and *Children's Rubrics*, together with the *Learning Advice*, help teachers to do this and give the children practical ways to help them progress towards a different learning stage.

What role should the children play in the assessment process?

The *Children's Rubrics* are designed to allow the children to assess themselves and identify their own strengths and weaknesses. The children can use these towards the end of a milepost to assess how well they think they are learning.

The children are then made aware that learning is an ongoing process, and this will also encourage them to think back to how they performed at the beginning of the milepost compared to the end. How have they changed? Have they moved from one stage to another?

It doesn't matter if the children's opinions differ from the teachers, although it is important that children come to a more developed awareness of what they are learning. It is, of course, the teacher who will decide which stage each child falls into within each subject area. However, this is a valuable learning tool and allows the children to be involved in their own learning.

Again, it is not intended that the children should be given all the *Children's Rubrics* for all the skills within every subject area at each milepost. The teacher could use these *Children's Rubrics* to identify a particular skill that many children are finding difficult, for example, or use them before undertaking a large activity, or a field trip, etc. The children could use the rubrics before the activity to see how they think they are doing, and then again after the activity to see if they were accurate in their judgments.

We have a lot of children in our school who don't have English as their first language. How does this affect the Assessment for Learning Programme?

In no way does the Assessment for Learning Programme assess children's level of English.

The materials are in English, though it is assumed that each class will have a range of students from many different nationalities and that the teacher may not be a native speaker of English. The Assessment for Learning Programme (and, indeed, all materials produced by the International Primary Curriculum) is designed from an international perspective and language is in no way a barrier to using the materials.

Each class within each school is different and each teacher tackles the difficulties of teaching children with a range of different first languages in their own way. Observing how the children perform on a daily basis will give the teacher a good idea of each child's stage, regardless of what language they speak or how they choose to express themselves and their abilities. The children should in no way be "marked down" or otherwise placed in a lower stage because of any difficulties when expressing themselves in English.

How should I use the “Learning Advice”?

The *Learning Advice* gives teachers practical ways to help the children progress from one stage to another. These suggestions are skill-specific and will encourage the children to develop a more advanced stage in skills practise.

Teachers can use the *Learning Advice* at any time throughout the milepost. By familiarising themselves with the Assessment for Learning Programme before beginning a unit or a milepost, teachers can be aware of how the children can advance and consolidate their learning using these activities. The teacher can then incorporate these ideas into a class, or make the children aware that these are specific things they can do, or allow the children to brainstorm ideas and compare suggestions, etc. It is up to the teacher and the dynamic of any particular class whether to use these suggestions explicitly, and ensure the children are aware that they are specific learning tools, or use them implicitly and incorporate them into the children’s daily learning habits.

How do I record the children's learning stages – in class and after the class?

The Assessment for Learning Programme is designed to allow teachers to assess the children easily, effectively and without producing reams of paperwork or becoming unduly time-consuming.

For this purpose, we have designed a Windows-compatible database (the *Recording Software*) that will allow teachers to record and access information about children within the whole school, as opposed to being restricted to children of their own class. This is an invaluable tool in not only assessing how particular students are learning, but identifying how they fit into the whole school picture.

Each teacher should record information of a child's learning stage for a particular skill at periodic intervals. The *Recording Software* collates this information at the following levels: skill, subject, pupil, class. Teachers can use this information to identify any skills gaps within the class, a particular milestone or for an individual child. The *Recording Software* can also be used to ensure that as wide a range of skills as possible are being practised, by easily-identifying any "gaps" in skills practise.

Teachers can also print off this information as required, which will be particularly useful for parents' evenings, etc. For example, the teacher could print off a copy of an individual child's record for a particular subject, or for their abilities across a range of subjects and compare this to how other children are performing in the same subjects or milestone, etc.

The Assessment for Learning Programme also includes a photo-copiable *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* that can be used with all skills and all subjects for all classes within each milepost. The teacher should detail the pupils they are assessing, the skill and the subject it is taken from, the milepost, the date and their name. The teacher can then record the learning stage of the child and use this information when convenient to complete the details in the *Recording Software*.

What should I do if some children are between learning stages, e.g. Beginning and Developing?

The *Teachers' Rubrics* and *Children's Rubrics* detail explicitly what the teacher should be looking for to make a judgment about what learning stages the children are working at. However, if a teacher really feels that a child is working "between" learning stages, they should simply enter both learning stages for the child, both on the photo-copiable *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* and in the *Recording Software*. The *Recording Software* has an option to add comments about each child and their progress – this is where the teacher can explain that in his/her opinion the child is working between learning stages.

What should I do if a child is at Mastering stage very early in the milepost?

This is not a problem. Many children who begin at Mastering stage will often revert to Developing or even Beginning stage throughout the milepost, as we all do with skills practise.

Many of the IPC units of work activities and activities taken from other curricula involve children working in groups or pairs. By partnering a child who is currently working at Mastering stage with a child who is working at a less advanced stage, they can further enhance their learning and skills development.

If a teacher has a child in their class who is clearly working at a far higher stage than the other children, he/she might like to look at the *Teachers' Rubrics* and other *Classroom Resources* for the next milepost. There is no reason why teachers shouldn't assess a child at a higher milepost if it is appropriate. The *Recording Software* has been designed to make this possible. Teachers can keep results for each child in the same place, regardless of whether they are being assessed using skills taken from their age-based milepost, or if a teacher decides to look at the *Classroom Resources* for other mileposts too. Each record will have a date entered with it, so you can clearly see when the child was assessed.

This also applies to children who are struggling with the skills in their age-based milepost. Teachers might like to look at the skills of the previous milepost and record these too. It is important though, that when assessing a child's learning outside of their milepost, teachers ensure they assess the child on the skills within their milepost too. This will provide a more complete record of learning, which can be compared at class and milepost level.

The Assessment for Learning Programme is not designed as a “one size fits all” tool. We have provided the resources for teachers to use and adapt as they see fit to enhance every child’s learning on an individual, a class and a whole school level.

Why is the language of the “Children’s Rubrics” different to that of the “Teachers’ Rubrics”?

The *Children’s Rubrics* are a tool that teachers can use in class to encourage the children to look at their own learning and abilities. The language used is suitable for a child of the milepost age-range and will allow the children to identify what stage they think they are working at.

The *Children’s Rubrics* detail what a child is able to do when practising a skill. The children can use these rubrics before, during or after an activity to decide how well they think they can do the skill. The *Children’s Rubrics* are designed to be used with the skill in any situation – they are not activity specific, but provide an overlying description of how the children are working and learning.

The content of the *Children’s Rubrics* is contextually the same as the content of the *Teacher’s Rubrics*. Both teacher and child are directed to look at the same indicators within their work to identify their learning stage. The language has been adapted so that a child can easily understand what they should be considering in their judgments.

(See the *How to Use the Assessment for Learning Programme* section of this *Teachers’ Manual* for more information on this.)

What should I do if I don't cover all the skills throughout the milepost?

When producing the Assessment for Learning Programme, we identified the skills that are most important to indicate a child's abilities in skills practice. There are, therefore, some skills that will not be assessed in the Assessment for Learning Programme. Whilst these skills are important and are included in the learning targets of the IPC units of work and can be identified in other curricula, they are not vital in terms of assessing a child's learning. The skills that are included in the Assessment for Learning Programme are the most important in allowing us to make valid inferences about a child's learning.

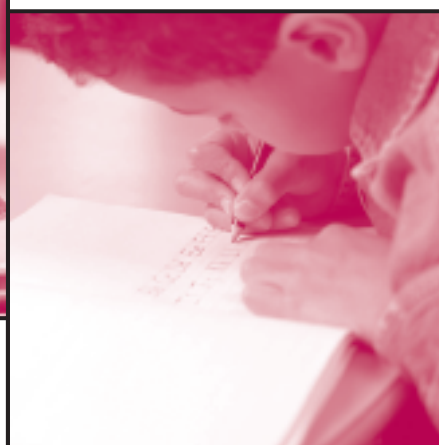
If you do not manage to cover all of the skills throughout a milepost, this in no way means that you will be unable to provide an accurate assessment of a child's skill development. The skills that you have assessed will provide an overview of the child's learning and you can make a judgment based on this. A number of the IPC unit of work activities incorporate a number of different skills, so it is possible to consider more than one skill at a time (we do recommend, however, that teachers assess one skill at a time).

The *Recording Software* allows teachers to identify any skills that have not been assessed or practised throughout the milepost. This can help with choosing further units to study or activities to do (in this way, teachers can ensure that the children are practising as wide a range of skills as possible).

As stated before, teachers can also assess outside the child's age-range milepost. If a teacher was unable to assess some skills at Milepost 1, for example, the children could be assessed on these skills during appropriate units studied at Milepost 2. Again, comment should be added in the *Recording Software* to explain that the child is working at Milepost 2 stage, but that the teacher has chosen to record assessment evidence of a skill taken from Milepost 1.



HOW TO USE THE RECORDING SOFTWARE



ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING
beginning... developing... mastering

programme

How to Use the Recording Software

The Assessment for Learning Programme provides computerised *Recording Software* to record your judgments of the children.

The *Recording Software* is supplied on CD and this section of the *Teachers' Manual* provides you with all the information you need to use this software.

Please read the instructions carefully and refer to these instructions as you need to.

These "User Instructions" are also contained on the CD with the *Recording Software*.

Installing the *Recording Software*

The first thing you need to do is install the *Recording Software* onto your school computer (the *Recording Software* can be installed onto any drive of your computer).

Take the CD out of the packaging and place it in your computer's CD drive. Your computer will recognise that you have placed a CD in the drive and will begin the "Setup Wizard" to begin installation.

The Setup Wizard will install the Assessment for Learning Recording Software onto your computer.

Follow the instructions that appear on the computer screen (as shown below).

1. The first window of the Setup Wizard: Click "Next".
2. Enter "User Name" and "Organisation". You should enter the name of your computer administrator as the User Name and the name of your school as the Organisation.
3. Click "Next".
4. Choose Setup Type. Click on: "Typical" – this takes you to another window to begin the installation.
5. Click "Install".
6. Wait whilst the Setup Wizard installs the *Recording Software* on your computer. This may take several minutes.
7. When installation is complete, click "Finish" to exit the Setup Wizard.

The *Recording Software* can be accessed both from your desktop and under the "Start" menu at the bottom left corner of your computer screen. You can use either route each time you access the Recording Software.

Opening the *Recording Software*

Open the *Recording Software* by “double-clicking” on the icon on your desktop or by selecting it through the “Start” menu at the bottom left corner of your computer screen.

Note: The first time you open the *Recording Software*, you will see a Security Warning asking if you would like to block unsafe expressions. Click “Yes”.

Another Security Warning will then appear that asks if you would like to open the file, or cancel the operation.

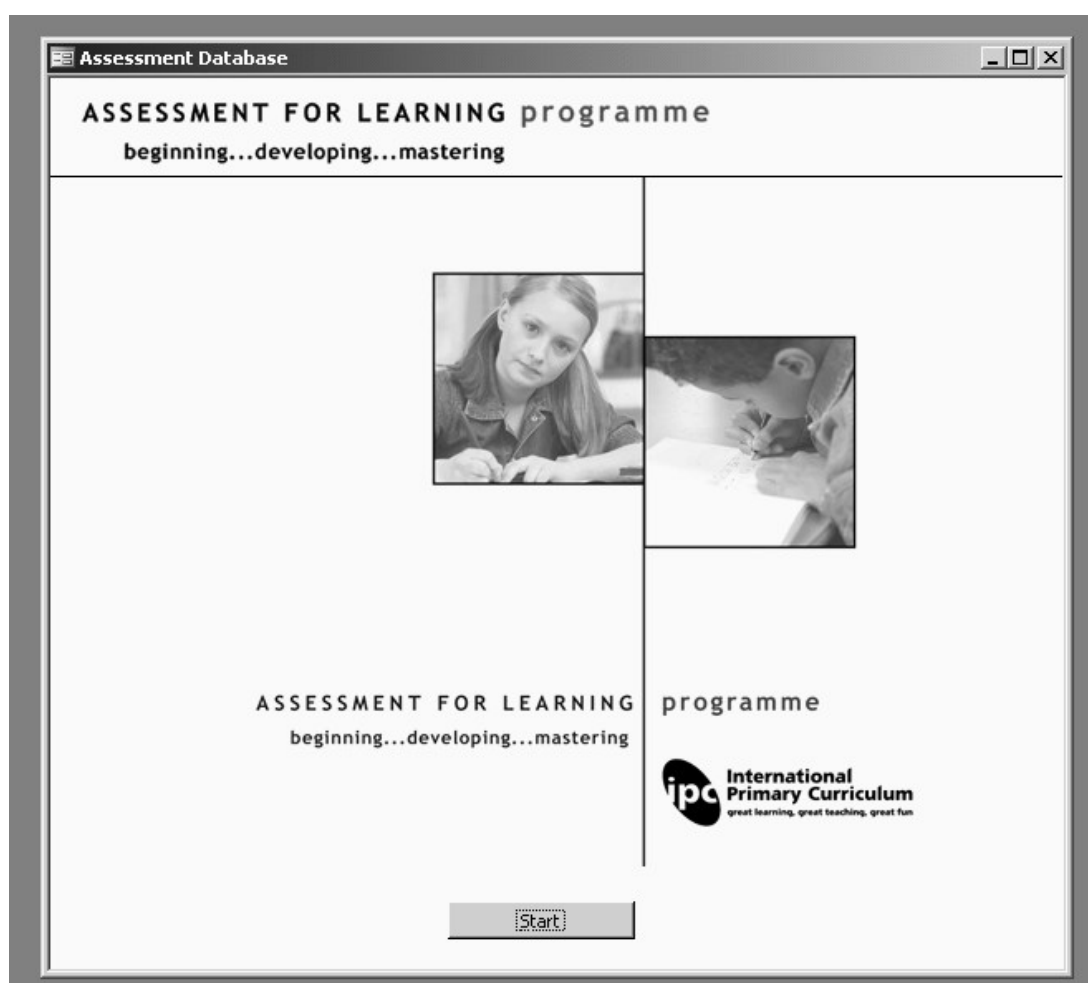
Select the box: “Always trust files from this publisher and open them automatically” and click “Open”.

You have now opened the *Recording Software*.

Accessing the Main Menu

When you have opened the *Recording Software*, click on the “Start” button towards the bottom of the first window (with the Assessment for Learning graphic) to access the main menu.

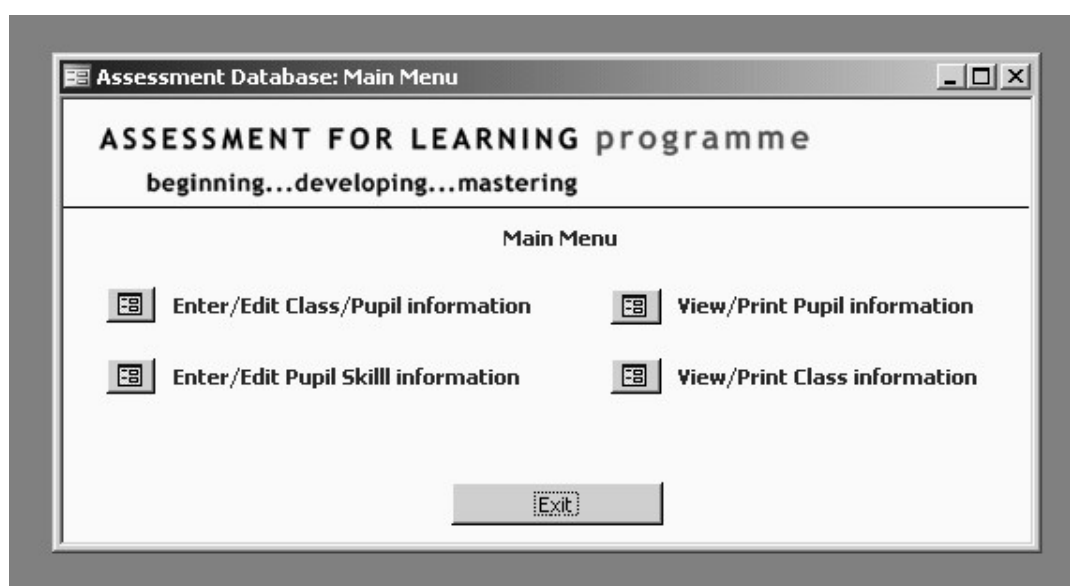
The First Window of the *Recording Software*



Enter and Edit Class/Pupil Information

This area of the *Recording Software* allows you to record details of the classes in your school and details about each child. To access this field, click the icon next to this option of the main menu.

The Main Menu of the *Recording Software*



General Information

To enter new information, scan to the first empty form using the >* key.

1. Enter the "Class Name" and the "Teacher's Name".
2. Use the drop-down menu to select the "Milepost" and the "School Year".

You can scan through these class information forms using the feature at the bottom of the window: "Record". Use the directional icons (<, >, <*, >*) to scan through and access the forms.

To return to the main menu click "Close".

Enter and Edit General Information

Assessment Database: Classes/Pupils

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING programme
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Class/Pupil Information
Class 5a 2004-2005

General Information | Pupils

Class Name:

Teacher's Name:

Milepost:

School Year:

Record: 1 of 3

Pupils

To enter this area, click on "Pupils" (next to "General Information"). Make sure the "General Information" window is showing the correct class that you want to add pupil information for.

Use this window to enter children's names and any comments you wish to add (whether they are new pupils at the school, if they are working at a very advanced stage, etc).

1. Click in the text box next to "Name". Type the name of a pupil you wish to enter details for.
2. Click in the text box next to "Comments". Add any comments you want to at this time. You can return to this window at any time and add or amend information.

You should not overwrite information in this field, but select an empty text box next to "Name" to enter details for a different child.

To return to the main menu click "Close".

Note: If you have two children in your class with the same name, you should add a middle initial for one of them to distinguish between their records and reports.

Enter and Edit Pupil Information

Assessment for Learning Programme Recording Software: Class/Pupil Informa...

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Class/Pupil Information
Class 2 2004-2005

General Information Pupils

Name:	Alex Garcia	Comments:	
Name:	Francois Lafolie	Comments:	
Name:	Martin Matthews	Comments:	
Name:		Comments:	

Close

Record: 1 of 2

Enter and Edit Pupil Skill Information

This area of the *Recording Software* allows you to record details of your assessments of the children for each skill included in the Assessment for Learning Programme. To access this field, click the icon next to this option of the main menu.

Remember to use your *Record Sheet for Classroom Use* to ensure that the information you input is accurate.

1. Select the class that you assessed or the class the pupil you assessed is in from the drop-down menu towards the top of the window.
2. Select the pupil you have assessed from the drop-down menu under the class drop-down menu.
3. Using the first free box in the "skill" section of the window, select the skill that you assessed. All of the skills included in the Assessment for Learning Programme are listed here for each subject (the subjects are listed in alphabetical order).
4. Enter the date that you assessed the child (dd/mm/yyyy). The default date is the date that you enter the information (not the date that you assessed the children) – you can override this by entering the date in the format dd/mm/yyyy.
5. Use the drop-down menu to record the child's stage (Beginning, Developing, Mastering).
6. If this is the child's overall learning stage for this skill, select the box "Overall Stage".

Entering an Overall Stage for the child

Every child should have an Overall Stage recorded for each skill they have been assessed in. This is very important as this information is used to generate reports in other areas of the *Recording Software*.

If this is the first time you have assessed the child in this skill then this is their overall stage and you should select the "Overall Stage" box after entering the information detailed in 1-5 above.

If this is the second time you have assessed the child in this skill and at both assessments the child was at Beginning stage, their overall stage is Beginning. You would have already selected their "Overall Stage" when you entered your assessment after the first assessment for this skill and should leave the "Overall Stage" box unselected for the second assessment for this skill.

If this is the second time you have assessed the child in this skill and their learning stage has changed, perhaps from Beginning to Developing, you should unselect the "Overall Stage" box for your previous assessment of the skill as Beginning, and select the "Overall Stage" box for your most recent assessment with the child's learning stage as Developing.

If you assess the child in a particular skill more than twice, you should use your judgment based on the child's previous learning stages for this skill to select an overall stage.

Note:

Each child can only have one Overall Stage per skill at any time.

You must ensure that you record an Overall Stage for each child for each skill that you assess.

The information you enter is saved automatically.

To return to the main menu click "Close".

Enter and Edit Pupil Skill Information

Assessment for Learning Programme Recording Software: Pupil Skill Information

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING programme
beginning...developing...mastering

Pupil Skill Information

Class:

Pupil:

Skill	Date	Stage	Overall Stage
1.1 Art	05/2004	Developing	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1 Art	07/2004	Beginning	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1 Art	07/2004	Developing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Art	06/2004	Beginning	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Art	07/2004	Developing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.3 Art	07/2004	Developing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.1 Art	07/2004	Beginning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Art	07/2004	Beginning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Art	07/2004	Developing	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Art	07/2004	Beginning	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 Art	07/2004	Beginning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Close

View and Print Pupil Information

This area of the *Recording Software* allows you to view and print reports of your assessments of the children for each skill included in the Assessment for Learning Programme. This is particularly useful to review the children's learning with them, their parents and other teachers. To access this field, click the icon next to this option of the main menu.

1. Use the drop-down menu to select the class the child is in.
2. Use the drop-down menu to select the child whose assessment reports you wish to view/print.
3. If you want to view/print a child's assessment reports for a particular subject, or for a selection of subjects, select the subject from the menu "Subject". If you want to view/print the child's assessment reports for all subjects do not select any subject from the menu "Subject".
4. If you want to view/print a child's assessment for a particular time-period (between parent's evenings, for example) enter a start date and end date in the text boxes. If you want to see a child's assessment for May 2005 to June 2005, you should enter 01/05/05 as the start date and 01/06/05 as the end date (as the dates you want to view and print are within this timeframe). If you would like to view/print the child's assessment reports for all dates, leave these boxes empty.
5. Click "OK".

To return to the main menu at any time, click "Close".

The child's assessment information for all fields that you have selected in 1-4 above is presented in a separate window.

To print the information, click on the "File" option at the top left-hand corner of the main screen, and select "Print".

To close this window and return to the main menu, select the "close" icon at the top right-hand corner of the window that shows the child's assessments – not the "close" icon at the top right-hand corner of the main screen – this will close the *Recording Software*.

View and Print Pupil Information

Separate window to print – you can change the size of this window

View and Print Class Information

This area of the *Recording Software* allows you to view and print details of your assessments for each class for each skill included in the Assessment for Learning Programme. This is particularly useful to review the children's learning with them, their parents and other teachers, and to consider your judgments of the children as a whole class. You can also compare assessment reports for different classes and across the mileposts. You can view and print information for all subjects for the whole class, for one or a range of subjects for the whole class or for individual children. To access this field, click the icon next to this option of the main menu.

1. Use the drop-down menu to select the class you wish to view and print.
2. If you want to access the records for one child, use the drop-down menu to select the pupil.
3. If you want to view and print records for one or more subjects, use the menu "Subject" to select the subjects you wish to view.
4. Click "OK".

To return to the main menu at any time, click "Close".

The assessment report for all fields that you have selected in 1-3 above is presented in a separate window.

To print the information, click on the "File" option at the top left-hand corner of the main screen, and select "Print".

To close this window and return to the main menu, select the “close” icon at the top right-hand corner of the window that shows the child’s assessments – not the “close” icon at the top right-hand corner of the main screen – this will close the *Recording Software*.

View and Print Class Information

Assessment for Learning Programme Recording Software: Class Information

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View and Print Class Information

Class: 2 Subject: Art
Pupil: Geography
History
ICT
International
Music
PE
Science
Technology

Ok Cancel

Separate window to print – you can change the size of this window

Assessment for Learning Programme Recording Software: Class Information

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING programme
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Class Information:2

Milepost: 1 Teacher: Mr Fisher

	Art	Geography	History	ICT	International	Music	PE	Science	Technology
	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3	MP1 MP2 MP3
Alex Garcia	D B	B	D	B		B	B	D	
Francois Lafolie	M B/D								
Martin Matthews	D								

2011/2004

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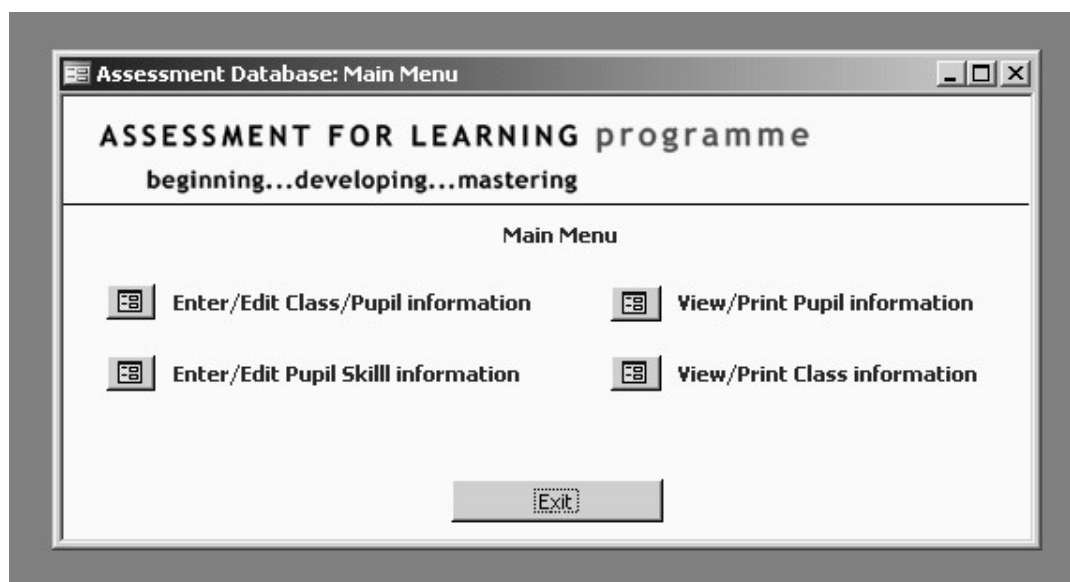
Page: 1

Exiting the *Recording Software*

When you have finished using the *Recording Software*, whether to enter and edit information, or to view and print information, return to the main menu and click "Exit" to close the software.

All entered data is stored automatically.

Click "Exit" in the Main Menu to close the *Recording Software*



Miscellaneous

Deleting Data from the *Recording Software*

It is possible to delete data from the *Recording Software* in the *Enter and Edit Class/Pupil Information* and *Enter and Edit Pupil Skill Information* fields (if a pupil leaves the school and you no longer wish to keep a record of their assessment, or if you enter data incorrectly, etc).

When you have accessed the field through the Main Menu, select the data you want to delete. To do this, look to the left-hand side of the data you want to delete – there is an arrow (you can see this in the screen shots for these fields earlier in this section of the *Teachers' Manual*). Click on this arrow and hit the "Delete" key on your computer keyboard. A confirmation message will appear in a separate window asking you to confirm that you want to delete this data. Click "Yes" to delete or "No" to keep the data.

If you decide to delete a class, this will delete all the information for all the pupils within the class and all their assessment information. If you delete a pupil, this will delete all their assessment information. If you decide to do this a window will appear asking you to confirm that you wish to delete the whole class/pupil and all their assessment information. Once deleted, you will not be able to recall any of this information, but will have to enter it again.

Error Messages

The *Recording Software* should be used following the instructions above. However, if you make a mistake in the Enter and Edit Class/Pupil Information or Enter and Edit Pupil Skill Information fields, or click on the wrong icon, or forget to enter some information, or enter the information in the wrong order, an error message window will appear on the screen.

If you want to return to the screen to complete the information correctly, click "OK" on the error message, or hit the escape key. If you then hit the escape key a second time, this will delete the partial record you have created.