



Priorsford Primary School

A Guide to Formative Assessment



Information for Parents

A Guide to Formative Assessment at Priorsford Primary School

At Priorsford Primary we make daily use of formative assessment techniques as a key part of each lesson. This short booklet provides some detail on how we use formative assessment in the classroom to help your child learn and to encourage you to become more involved in your child's learning.

The word 'assessment' typically causes people to think about a test or exam used to measure what a pupil knows about a specific subject or topic - this is known as **summative assessment**. Summative assessments are used to measure and track pupil learning and progress. At Priorsford we use summative assessment tests in the core subjects of maths, reading, spelling and writing.

However, at Priorsford, teachers and pupils make regular use of **formative assessment** strategies to get immediate feedback of pupil understanding. This means that rather than waiting until the end of a chapter or unit of work to discover what the children have learned, formative assessments are used on a daily basis, so that our teaching and activities can be quickly changed to meet the learning needs of our pupils.

Using formative assessment strategies, pupils are actively involved in their own learning; they know what the purpose of the learning is; pupils can assess their own work and reflect on what helps them to learn. There is regular dialogue between the pupil and teacher, where the teacher gives feedback which helps pupils know how to improve and pupils can act on this feedback and identify next steps in learning.

So what are formative assessment strategies that the teachers use?

- Sharing Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
- Effective Questioning
- Providing feedback to move learners forward
- Peer assessment
- Self-assessment

Some examples of formative assessment techniques to support these strategies

Learning Intentions: Sharing the purpose of the lesson by creating learning intentions which are clear and valuable to the pupils learning.

No hands-up: use lollipop sticks or choose pupils at random to answer questions. Typically, when pupils raise their hands, only those who know the answer do so. Pupils who do not know the answer may feel embarrassed or intimidated, causing them to tune

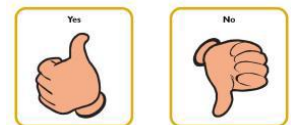
out. "No hands up" helps each pupil engage in his/her learning and helps pupils learn from each other.



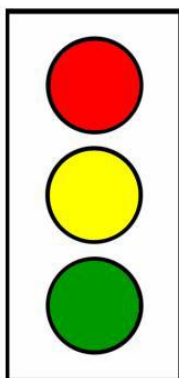
Mini whiteboards: pupils write down responses on a small whiteboard which they hold up to provide teachers with feedback on learning from the entire class at a quick glance.

Exit pass/ticket: to reinforce learning, at the end of a day or when there is a break in the lesson, the teacher may ask pupils to answer a question or respond in a way that will show the extent to which pupils have understood a learning concept. The teacher can look at the answers of the class individually or as a whole to adjust the lesson.

Thumbs up/thumbs down: An effective technique where the pupils simply put their thumbs up or down to show their understanding of the lesson.



Traffic Lights: Pupils use these in a variety of ways -



I don't get it!
I need some
help
understanding.

I think I
understand
but I need a
little support.

I understand
and can try
this on my
own.

Red = I do not understand and need some more help
Amber = I am unsure and need a little support
Green = I understand and can try this on my own

Think, Pair, Share: Giving pupils time to think and share their ideas with one another.

Tickled pink and green for growth: A method of marking where:

Pink highlighting = good answers/ideas

Green highlighting = answers we need to develop

How Can You Help?



- Ask your child... "What did you learn in school today?" (Not... "What did you do?")
- Be positive and supportive
- Praise your child's efforts
- Discuss with your child what s/he feels they could improve on
- When your child struggles, avoid giving them the "right" answer. Encourage them to explore different ways to solve the problem. This helps your child become a more independent learner.
- Be a good role model. Read with and to them; write; use numbers. This will help your child to see the relevance and to make connections with real life.

Your child's success in learning is one of our key aims at Priorsford. For this to be successful, it has to be done in close partnership with home. If you have any concerns about your child's progress or would like to find out more, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.