



Dixons Allerton Academy

Assessment for Learning

Responsibility for Review: Senior Leadership Team

Statement of intent

AFL gets straight to the heart of good teaching by:

- Helping teachers help students to take the next steps in their learning
- Helping students help each other to take the next steps in their learning
- Helping students help themselves to take the next steps in their learning.

AFL is founded on the following 10 principles – namely, “Assessment for Learning”:

- Is part of effective planning
- Focuses on how students learn
- Is central to classroom practice
- Is a key professional skill
- Is sensitive and constructive
- Fosters motivation
- Promotes understanding of goals and criteria
- Helps learners know how to improve
- Develops the capacity for self (and peer) assessment
- Recognises all educational achievement

Key Characteristics of AFL:

- Is embedded in teaching and learning
- Involves sharing goals with students
- Aims to help students know and to recognize the standards they are aiming for
- Involves students in peer and self assessment
- Provides feedback which leads to students recognizing the next steps and how to take them
- Promotes confidence that every pupil can improve
- Involves both teacher and students reviewing and reflection on data (information)

Signed by :.....

Date:.....

(Principal)

Signed by :.....

Date:.....

(Chair of Governors)

1. Assessment for learning at Dixons Allerton Academy will:

- Provide insight into students' learning for both students and teachers
- Promote success for all
- Support the target-setting process
- Enable continuous reflection on what students know now and what they need to know next (feedback and feedforward)
- Measure what is valued
- Promote immediate intervention and link judgements to learning intentions
- Raise standards by taking students to the 'edges of capability'

2. Implications for teaching at Dixons Allerton Academy

The teacher will:

- Provide continuous oral and written feedback which identifies strengths and the next step for improvement
- Promote pupil involvement in self assessment
- Start each lesson with a starter and end each lesson with a plenary – see Teaching and Learning policy
- Act on insights gained to inform curricular targets
- Plan against what children know/can do/understand
- Provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate their achievements
- Make standards and objectives explicit to students
- Promote inclusion by attending to all students' learning needs, particularly for students who are at risk of underachievement
- Engage students in rich questioning with 'wait' time
- Build in time for focused observation of teacher-directed and child-initiated activity
- Ensure that levelled work is displayed in all classrooms
- Set clear targets for the students so they are clear on how to improve
- Ensure that all students have the school "AFL stickers" in their book (or equivalent) and use them with the students

3. Impact on learning and the learner at Dixons Allerton Academy

The student will:

- Know what to do to improve
- Know what standards are required
- Know what has been achieved against known success criteria and what to do next to improve / move forward
- Gain confidence, motivation and self-esteem as a learner
- Improve their own self-evaluation skills
- Use the stickers in their exercise books with the teacher to be aware of their level and use these to set targets for themselves
- Make progress

4. KEY STRANDS TO AFL

4.1 Assessment for Learning in Everyday Lessons

- AfL is more than marking and feeding back grades. Teachers identify the next steps for learning as well as responding to the errors students make and the difficulties they experience.
- Essential to good AfL are:
 - the sharing of learning objectives and outcomes with students;
 - students' peer and self assessment;
 - feedback to students to inform next steps in learning.
 - Good planning and teaching skills are crucial for making AfL a productive part of lessons.

4.2 Formative Use of Summative Assessment

- Teachers should use summative assessment to inform learning by using the information gained to:
 - draw students into the assessment processes;
 - improve motivation and self-esteem;
 - enhance the quality of target setting;
 - contribute to raising standards;
 - increase students' understanding of the standards they are aiming for.
- It takes time and support for students to gain the skills and confidence to assess their own work and to provide constructive and helpful feedback to their peers.

4.3 Objective/Outcome Led Lessons

- Effective learning takes place when learners understand what they are trying to achieve. This is enabled by sharing objectives with students, ensuring they are aware of what they are learning and why. In sharing the learning objectives there is a clear focus for the teacher and the pupil to review progress in their learning within the lesson.
- What the teacher intends the students to learn is called the learning objective, and how achievement will be demonstrated by students is called the learning outcome.
- In stating the learning objective in a lesson it is common practice to summarise the content of previous lessons and outline how it links to future lessons. A learning objective should be set in a learning context and help connect current learning with longer term purposes, e.g. objectives of a unit of work, end of unit assessments or pupil targets.
- Learning objectives and intended learning outcomes are the principal focus in planning and appropriate activities are established from these.
- Using stems (*to know, to be able to*, etc.) helps to ensure that learning objectives focus on learning rather than on the supporting activities.

4.4 Oral and Written Feedback

4.4.1 Oral Feedback

- Oral feedback is the most regular and interactive form of feedback. It should focus on being constructive and informative in order to help students take the next steps in their learning.
- It is both direct (targeted to individuals or groups) and indirect (others listen and reflect on what has been said). At times it will be spontaneous and at other times it should be planned.
- In offering oral feedback the teacher is modelling the language that students can use in giving feedback to their teacher and peers.
- Oral feedback should be developmental. It should recognise students' efforts and achievements and offer specific details of ways forward in relation to the shared learning objectives.
- Oral feedback about students' learning occurs in a range of situations on a continuum from the instant, informal reply to the more formally planned reviews.
- While focusing on specific areas of a response it is important to say when an answer is wrong to avoid confusion or reinforcing misconceptions.
- Wait time before and after questions or responses encourages students to carefully consider and expand on their responses.

4.4.2 Written feedback

- The learning objectives and learning outcomes need to be the reference point for a teacher's written feedback. These need to be shared and made clear to students in advance of attempting the task.
- Effective feedback depends on the students being clear about what is expected of them. Students should have an expectation that the feedback they receive will explain what they have done well, with reasons, and where and how they can improve.
- Students should be given written feedback that provides clear evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses, prompts further thought and reasoning, and identifies the next step in their learning.
- To be able to identify the next steps in students' learning a teacher needs to have a secure understanding of progression in the subject and be able to recognise students' misconceptions and challenges in the context of the subject.

4.5 Peer and Self Assessment

- To develop skills in peer and self assessment, learning objectives and intended learning outcomes must be made explicit and transparent to students. This will help to ensure that students are able to identify when they met some or all of the success criteria.
- Sharing learning objectives and outcomes must be a regular feature of lessons and become an integral part of reviewing learning rather than a 'bolt-on' activity.
- Students develop their skills in self assessment after initially developing their skills in peer assessment and therefore students need to be taught the skills collaboration in peer assessment. This will help students objectively to assess their own progress and become increasingly independent learners.
- To develop peer and self assessment in the classroom, teachers will need to:
 - plan peer and self assessment opportunities in lessons;
 - train students over time to assess their own work and the work of others;
 - explain the learning objectives and intended learning outcomes behind each task;
 - frequently and consistently encourage students' self-reflection on their learning;
 - guide students to identify their next steps.

4.6 Curricula Target Setting

- A curricular target expresses in words, not numbers, a specific aspect of curriculum as a focus for improvement. It can be for a whole class, a group or individual students and can relate to the long term (e.g. term or year), medium term (e.g. few weeks) or short term (e.g. few lessons).
- The target should detail specific cohorts, classes or groups of students who need more effective provision, intervention, support or monitoring in order make better progress.
- It will need to be matched to year groups and classes to ensure progression towards achieving the planned improvement – this is known as a layered curricular target.
- Teaching objectives in medium-term plans or schemes of work will need directly address the curricular targets. This will be further refined in learning objectives within lessons to ensure the target is being addressed. A target may be revisited several times in a unit, in a year and across the key stage ensure that there is progression and achievement towards the target.
- Curricular targets are established through an analysis of available information about what has and has not been learned. An appropriate target ensures that students' prior attainment and achievements are built on throughout the key stage. It will focus teaching on areas of underperformance, supporting improved learning outcomes for underachieving groups of students.
- Curricular targets are established through a process of:
 - information gathering;
 - information analysis;
 - identification of issues;
 - planned actions and related success criteria.

4.7 Securing Progression

- Teachers need to be able to identify different types of learning outcomes and curricular targets if they are to plan the most appropriate intervention strategies to enable students to make progress.
- Progression towards achieving curricular targets must be at the forefront of teachers' short and medium term planning and should be explicitly and assertively taught and assessed. Assessment for learning techniques can support this process and make a significant impact on standards of attainment.
- There are many intervention strategies which can help individual students to progress over the short and medium term. They require teachers and students to understand detailed progression in the processes, skills or concepts being taught. Consequently, students' rates of learning can increase dramatically, as can their independence and motivation.
- For students to become more independent learners they need to take increasing responsibility for identifying where they are in their learning, where they are trying to get to and what steps they need to take to get there. They need to be taught how to do this.

4.8 Questioning and Dialogue

- Classroom dialogue is an essential component of AfL because it:
 - enables teachers to make informed judgements about students' learning and, therefore, make immediate adjustments to their teaching;
 - enables students to develop their own learning because, through talk, they become more aware of their own learning needs and pathways to improvement. Therefore it progressively enables students to become more self aware, independent learners.
- In effective dialogue students' responses are well developed, build on or are informed by the ideas of others and often demonstrate higher levels of thinking. Where it is well established students are willing to take risks or to challenge each others' ideas in a constructive way.
- Teachers are highly influential in triggering and maintaining the kind of dialogue which promotes and sustains learning in whole class and small group situations. A teacher's own talk is an excellent means of securing inclusive dialogue, where learning results from the interactions between teacher and students, and between the students themselves.
- While some strategies to promote learning through dialogue rely heavily on advance planning others require a more responsive approach and are brought into play as evidence of students' understanding and misconceptions is revealed during a lesson.
- Questioning is often the first move in setting up interactive classrooms. Questions are key to formative assessment as they enable students to realise what they know, and more importantly, what they partly know and can then guide them to further develop their understanding.
- It is possible to achieve a classroom environment where dialogue is initiated and developed by students but this requires preparation and takes time to evolve.