

Part 2 Using curricular targets

Curricular targets are based on learning objectives. They are informed and identified by analysis of children's work, discussions with children, teachers' assessment information and test performance. They identify whole-school priorities and areas for improvement. These priorities are included in the school development plan and linked to performance management.

Curricular targets are translated into year-group targets based on age-related expectations; they steer improvements, guide teaching and set the focus for future assessments linked to what has been taught. Curricular targets for year groups also set out targets for classes, groups and individual children, where appropriate. Basing these targets on the children's personal achievements helps them to recognise how well they are doing. Such targets support children's own assessments of what they need to do next to progress.

The process of curricular target setting is already well established and effective in many primary schools and settings. Many schools and settings and LEAs have established mechanisms to analyse National Assessment Agency (NAA/QCA) test data to identify particular areas of strength or weakness in English, mathematics and science, and to translate these into class or school targets. Schools often find it helpful to refer to the analysis of pupil performance contained in the annual report on the national tests: *Implications for teaching and learning* (NAA/QCA). The process that is outlined in this section should complement what schools and settings are already doing.

Most schools and settings that are successfully using curricular targets have embedded their use within literacy and mathematics. Many schools and settings also set targets for aspects of learning that occur across the whole curriculum (e.g. 'I can take turns when working in a group', 'I can back up opinions with evidence'). Some of these schools have then gone on to consider how the *process* of identifying curricular





targets could be used by subject coordinators when they are focusing on areas for improvement within other curricular subjects. It may be helpful for *staff* to consider how 'big picture' targets within subjects, such as improving the understanding and use of maps in geography, could be layered down into specific targets for each year group. It is not, however, sensible or practicable to consider giving children termly targets in all curricular areas. It is better to focus on a small number of targets. Learning to learn targets, literacy targets and numeracy targets can be applied within other curriculum areas.

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, an understanding of how young children develop and learn is an important factor in developing approaches to layered curriculum targets. 'The principles for early years education' (*Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*, pages 13–17) provide useful advice, for example:

- early-years experience should build on what children already know and can do;
- well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process;
- practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.

Self-evaluation

The 'Establishing' and 'Enhancing' columns of the school self-evaluation grid for AfL detail a number of descriptors for a school in which curricular targets are effective and established. The AfL school self-evaluation grid is to be found in the accompanying booklet. Schools will find it helpful to use the appropriate section of this grid as an introductory CPD activity for this area of development.

The materials in this section will support schools in moving towards developing effective use of curricular targets, focusing on:

- the process of identifying curricular targets, based on national age-related expectations;
- assessing children's progress against curricular targets;
- tracking children's progress against curricular targets;
- illustrating the effective use of curricular targets through a case-study school.

The process of layering curricular targets for writing

1 Set whole-school curricular target in writing from NLS target statements for writing (based on analysis of NAA (QCA) tests, work scrutiny, discussions with children). For example:

- *'Children need to develop their abilities to apply grammatical skills to improve the purpose and organisation of their writing.'*

2 Assign year-group curricular target in writing from NLS target statements for writing. For example, for Year 5:

- *'Interest the reader by writing complex sentences to show a relationship between ideas.'*

3 Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups using language accessible for children (based on teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals). For example, for Year 5:

- *'I can vary the pace of my writing by using a variety of simple and complex sentences' (above age-related expectations).*
- *'I can use conjunctions found in shared reading to join ideas in writing, e.g. although, since, whenever' (age-related expectations).*
- *'I can use simple linking words to make some complex sentences, e.g. when, because' (below age-related expectations).*

Note: Curricular targets should be personalised for children with diverse needs.

4 Link curricular target to learning and teaching

- Teachers identify subject-specific knowledge related to that target.
- Professional development at staff meetings identifies progression through the school in this aspect of subject-specific knowledge.
- Teachers identify, from their medium-term plans, when they would teach the relevant literacy or mathematics to enable the children to meet their target. They would include opportunities for children to consolidate and apply this knowledge across the curriculum.
- Teachers identify when, in their half-termly plans, they will focus on assessing progress towards the target.
- Targets are shared with children in class.

5 Review progress against targets

- Teachers and children assess and record progress against the targets.
- Teachers and the leadership team review individual progress against targets and record information on the school tracking system.

'I can' statements are most useful when linked to knowledge-based statements.

The process of layering curricular targets for mathematics

1 Set whole-school curricular target in mathematics from NNS key objectives (based on analysis of NAA (QCA) tests, work scrutiny, discussions with children). For example:

'Children need to develop their abilities to: identify and use appropriate number operations and choose efficient ways of calculating when solving problems; organise and interpret numerical evidence so they can express generalised statements in words and symbols; and present their ideas and a clear explanation of their methods and reasoning, orally and in writing.'

2 Assign year-group curricular target in mathematics (based on the objectives in the *Framework for teaching mathematics*). For example, for Year 3:

'Solve one- and two-step word problems that are set in a real-life context and involve the organisation and interpretation of numerical data, and use simple diagrams to support their written explanations.'

3 Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups using language accessible for children (based on the teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals). For example, for Year 3:

'I can interpret scales on graphs and charts, I can record all my calculations when I solve problems and I can write about my methods' (above age-related Year 3).

'I can read numbers from tables and bar charts, I can write down the number calculation I need to do when I solve a word problem, and I can talk about and write down how I solve a problem' (age-related Year 3).

'I can make lists, tables and draw pictograms and describe them, I know how to solve add and subtract problems and I can talk about how I solve them' (below age-related Year 3).

Note: Curricular targets should be personalised for children with diverse needs.

4 Link curricular target to learning and teaching

- Teachers identify subject-specific knowledge related to that target.
- Input in staff meetings identifies progression through the school in this aspect of subject-specific knowledge.
- Teachers identify when, in their half-termly plans, they will:
 - focus on teaching the target;
 - focus on assessing progress towards the target.

5 Review progress against targets

- Teachers and children assess and record progress against the targets.
- Teachers and the leadership team review individual progress against targets and record information on the school tracking system.

'I can' statements are most useful when linked to knowledge-based statements.

Summary of key actions and tools for developing the use of curricular targets

1 Setting curricular targets

Key tools

NLS target statements and NNS key objectives
Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage
Foundation Stage profile handbook

- Set whole-school curricular target (based on analysis of NAA tests, work scrutiny and discussions with children).
- Assign year-group curricular targets (one or two per term).
- Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups or individuals using language accessible for children (based on teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals).
- Use the written example (*Foundation Stage profile handbook*) and the visual examples (CD-ROM) of pupil achievement in the Foundation Stage to layer the corresponding National Literacy Strategy (NLS) and National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) targets appropriately in the reception class.

2 Supporting children's learning

- Amend planning and teaching to prioritise curricular targets.
- Provide focused teaching to support children's learning.

3 Assessing children's progress against curricular targets

- Identify the group or individuals whose progress is to be assessed.

- Collect and provide evidence of achievement against the curricular targets from day-to-day assessment.
- Evaluate the impact on learners through work scrutiny, discussions with children and outcomes of children's self-evaluation.
- Leadership team monitors the achievement of targets through observation, work scrutiny and discussions with children.
- Leadership team feeds back key findings from whole-school analysis of progress towards curricular targets and discusses possible refinements to planning and teaching.

4 Tracking children's progress against curricular targets

- Use the data to identify which children are not making expected progress.
- Discuss with class teachers or practitioners the progress of the children in their class.
- Identify where the literacy and mathematics intervention programmes are needed and make sure they are in place.
- Ensure that inclusive principles are addressed so that all children receive appropriate additional support, intervention and opportunities.
- Establish monitoring and evaluation systems to review the impact of intervention programmes on children's progress.



Hull case study

Curricular targets were layered for each year group using the NLS target statements for reading and writing and the NNS key objectives. These give clear, age-related, end-of-year expectations for the agreed focus for each year group. The example below illustrates layered targets for one term for mathematics. Subject knowledge was strengthened through CPD on problem solving. The curricular focuses were also promoted through displays and learning prompts in the classrooms.

Hull case study school: mathematics curricular targets	
Key school targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop strategies and methods for solving problems To improve children's mathematical reasoning in contextual problem solving To help children explain the problem-solving strategies
Supporting year group targets	
YR	Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems.
Y1	Use mental strategies to solve simple problems using counting, addition, subtraction, doubling and halving, explaining methods and reasoning orally.
Y2	Choose and use appropriate operations and efficient calculation strategies to solve problems, explaining how the problem was solved.
Y3	Choose and use appropriate operations (including multiplication and division) to solve word problems, explaining methods and reasoning.
Y4	Choose and use appropriate number operations and ways of calculating (mental, mental with jottings, pencil and paper) to solve problems.
Y5	Use all four operations to solve simple word problems involving numbers and quantities, including time, and explaining methods and reasoning.
Y6	Identify and use the appropriate operations (including combinations of operations) to solve word problems involving numbers and quantities, and explain methods and reasoning.
Key activities to support targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree process for teaching problem solving throughout the school. Review learning environment – ensure that prompts promote interactive teaching and learning. Link problem solving to thinking skills/process – implement consistently across school. Children to be given opportunity to work individually, in pairs and in groups of no more than four. Use of specific resources developing mental strategies. Teach children a range of problem-solving strategies and help develop their explanations of their solution and thinking. Focus monitoring on effective problem solving highlighted in staff development. Seek further staff development on plenary sessions and implement in everyday lessons – focus of monitoring. Mathematics homework each week should address curricular targets. Children should be assessed each week against class curricular target and record kept. Two additional 15-minute sessions to be identified each week. Targets to be high profile in each classroom and communicated to parents. Certificates to be made to reward progress against curricular targets. Staff to ensure that problem-solving vocabulary is displayed and referred to. Staff development to be delivered by consultants who will also work alongside staff in classes.

Full case studies and further examples can be found in the *Intensifying support programme* booklet (DfES 0037-2004), page 55 onwards.

CPD ACTIVITY

Setting curricular targets

Aim

- To support whole staff to establish layered curricular targets.

Pre-reading activity

- Read the Hull case study (page 26) and the 'Summary of key actions' on page 25.

Leadership team pre-meeting preparation

- Analyse NAA (QCA) tests or work scrutinies and findings from discussions with children to share key areas for development in a curriculum area.
- Set a possible whole-school target.
- Draw up class lists identifying children working at or above, just below and well below age-related expectations.
- Assemble material showing progression in a curriculum subject linked to age-related expectations.

Materials

- Pages 23–26 of this unit.
- NLS target statements and NNS key objectives to provide age-related expectations.
- *Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage* and *Foundation Stage profile handbook*.
- *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties*.
- Class lists with groups of children identified (significantly below age-related, below age-related, at age-related and above age-related expectations).
- AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 2 'Interview'.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a half-day's CPD or at two staff meetings.

- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 2.
- Discuss school targets in the chosen curriculum area and agree one to develop as a school target.
- Share examples of layered targets and case-study material from pages 23–26.
- With the school target in mind, for each year group consider the age-related expectations and match them against the programme of study for the next half-term.
- Select a year-group target and then write child-friendly targets for each group.

Next steps in smaller groups

- Have a discussion on 'What is the subject knowledge teachers need to support children in attaining targets?' Identify any staff development needs.
- Plan to teach the target over the half-term and assess class progress towards the target so that you can share this at the next meeting.
- Begin to plan ways to communicate targets to children and parents.

CPD ACTIVITY

Assessing children's progress against curricular targets

Aim

- To support teachers in planning for ways to regularly involve children in assessing their progress against curricular targets.

Materials

- AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 3 'Discussions with children', Clip 4 'Writing targets in history'.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out at a staff meeting.

- Discuss in pairs how the curricular targets have been prioritised in planning and teaching.
- Feed back the results of this discussion.
- Consider the improvements you have seen in children's progress against the targets.
- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clips 3 and 4, which illustrates the way that the senior management team in John Gulson Primary School have regular discussions with children about their learning experiences and progress towards curricular targets as part of whole-school monitoring.
- In small groups, consider what opportunities class teachers and/or the leadership team currently have to assess children's progress against the curricular targets as illustrated in the video.

Next steps

- Allow time for pairs of teachers or the leadership team to plan for future interviews with selected children.
- Possible questions to consider include:
 - Can you tell me some targets you're working on?
 - Who or what helps you achieve the target?
 - How do you help yourself achieve the target?
 - What else might you be able to do to help yourself?
 - How will you know when you have achieved your target?
 - What do you think would help you more?
 - Are there any ways I could help you more?

CPD ACTIVITY

Reviewing outcomes from tracking children's progress against curricular targets

Aims

- To review the pattern of progress of groups of children across the school.
- To enable teachers to see the progress of specific groups across the school.

Pre-meeting preparation

- Complete tracking sheets for your class to track progress against the curricular targets.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out at a staff meeting.

- Make use of the whiteboard in the staff room to document the progress of each ability group in each year group or class against their targets, using a table like the one below.
- In turn report on the progress of each group in each year. Tick if the group has achieved its target and cross if the group has yet to achieve the target.
- This visual display will allow you to look for patterns across the school and to engage in whole-school discussion. For example, if a pattern emerges indicating that all the children across the school in the above age-related expectations groups have not met their targets, what does this suggest about the differentiation and challenge for more able pupils? This whole-school discussion opportunity allows all teachers to see patterns of progress across the school and to discuss possible solutions to barriers.

Year group	SEN	Below age-related expectations	At age-related expectations	Above age-related expectations
Year R				
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				
Year 6				

- Discuss the following questions:
 - Which groups achieved the targets? Share good practice.
 - Which groups did not achieve the targets?
 - Is there a pattern across the school to the groups not achieving the targets?
 - What were the barriers to their learning?
 - What further action needs to take place?