

Professional Development Meeting (PDM) or writing curricular targets

Developing a writing curricular target using the Primary Framework

An example case study

Context

A network of schools have already established effective pupil tracking systems to identify underperforming children and target them to ensure they make the necessary **accelerated** progress towards and beyond age-related expectations in writing.

To support the class teachers to achieve this, they have previously developed whole-school layered curricular targets for sentence construction and text organisation which has had an impact on the standard of writing across each of the participating schools.

From their further analysis of the writing across the network, the schools now want to build on these successes and further develop the children's repertoire of vocabulary and language skills to engage the reader, focusing on using speaking and listening and cross-curricular links as a key strategy to improve writing. They want to do this through developing the use of layered curricular target setting and the opportunity presented by the Primary Framework Continuing Professional Development.

The schools propose to use their whole-staff professional development meetings, as part of the implementation of the Primary Framework, to engage all colleagues in developing their own layered curricular targets. They want to look at the progression within a strand and then link this to developing the pedagogy through speaking and listening, linked to the planning sequence promoted in the Primary Framework.

Proposed structure of professional development meeting to set the curricular targets

Objectives

- To develop and set whole-school layered curricular targets using the Primary Framework
- To understand the progression required to ensure children secure level 2 by the end of Year 2, secure level 3 by the end of Year 4 and secure level 4 by the end of Year 6
- To consider the implications for further subject knowledge support

Resources required

- School handout of key successes and areas for development (new whole-school target) from the school's analysis of writing
- *Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics (ref: 02011-2006BOK-EN)* - or access to online e-framework
- Primary National Strategy resources: *Developing Early Writing*, *Grammar for writing* and *Boys Writing Fliers*
- **Primary National Strategy CD ROM: Helping children to achieve age-related expectations in English: Securing Level 4 in English by the end of Key Stage 2**
 - Paper copies of example Year 5 and Year 6 curricular targets for shaping and creating texts
 - Paper copies of subject knowledge support for Year 5 and Year 6 curricular targets for Shaping and creating texts

- Sticky notes, large sheets of paper and pens

Introduction

Use the outcomes from the school's analysis of the writing to share successes to date from the use of previous layered curricular targets and introduce the next whole-school target:

To improve children's repertoire of vocabulary and language skills to engage the reader in their writing

Make the specific links to the following QCA Assessment focuses:

The aspects of writing to be assessed are pupils' ability to:

AF1 write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts

AF2 produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

AF7 select appropriate and effective vocabulary

Make the following point:

- Previous curricular targets around sentence construction and text organisation should be further developed and need to be built upon when developing this aspect of literacy.

Introduce 'Core learning in literacy by strand 9: *Creating and shaping texts*' from the Primary Framework (page 56 and 57).

Make the following points:

- Structure of the Primary Framework allows us to view the progression within a strand from Foundation Stage through to Year 6 into Year 7.
- These are *learning* objectives rather than teaching objectives therefore they are expectations of what we expect children to achieve for each year group.
- The learning objectives are for the whole year and not termly.
- The learning objectives for each year group build on the previous year and are often interdependent with other objectives within the strand.
- The strand is also interdependent on other related strands, particularly the reading and speaking and listening strands.

Ask colleagues to quickly consider the whole-school curricular target and in pairs identify which of the learning objective(s) in Strand 9 would best support the development of this for their own year group. Take brief feedback to gauge their understanding and level of expertise.

The learning journey

Talk through the possible 'big picture', tracking from Foundation Stage through to Year 6 into Year 7.

What could the learning journey look like for a child working at age-related expectations for this particular curricular target?

An example (using NC level descriptors and information from QCA):

Foundation Stage

Note: Emphasise the strong links with all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum and also the Speaking and listening strands in the Primary Framework

Children to develop an extensive relevant vocabulary and oral language skills to support both the language comprehension and early 'writing' of ideas related to current themes or topics through experience, role-play and exposure to rich texts both indoors and outdoors.

Year 1 and Year 2 'Securing National Curriculum Level 2'

Selecting appropriate and interesting words and phrases for variety and interest for the reader. Developing simple noun phrases to describe settings and characters. Adding detail about when and where events are happening using the language of stories both orally and in written form.

Year 3 and Year 4 'Securing National Curriculum Level 3'

Selecting imaginative, precise vocabulary such as powerful verbs, interesting adjectives and use of simile, to describe characters, events and settings orally and in written form. Adding precise adverbial information for when, where and how events take place.

Year 5 and Year 6 'Securing National Curriculum Level 4'

Using adventurous narrative techniques such as figurative language, varying the pace, adding suspense and manipulating the viewpoint to engage, entertain and interest the reader.

Sharing a model

Share examples of Year 5 and Year 6 curricular targets for Creating and shaping texts from Primary National Strategy CD-ROM resource:

Helping children to achieve age-related expectations in English: Securing Level 4 in English by the end of Key Stage 2

Talk through the structure of Year 6 curricular targets for creating and shaping texts and give time for colleagues to read through both Year 6 and then Year 5 examples to see how they both work towards developing a secure level 4. Take feedback and clarify any misunderstandings.

Make the following points:

- The example bold 'I can' child-friendly statements are a way of communicating an age-related aspect of the learning objective with children, parents and carers. They are not a definitive list and are merely a model to support the school to develop their own.
- Children currently working at age-related expectations and children working just below age-related expectations in the target groups should expect to achieve the age-related expectation.

- The extension 'I can' statements are to show the possible next steps for children who achieve the age-related targets more easily or who are already achieving the age-related expectation.
- The class teacher would need to track back through the learning objectives in the Primary Framework to create possible 'I can' targets for children working well below age-related expectations.
- The important aspect for teachers to fully understand is the actual learning objective and the links both within and across strands and not simply the 'I can' statements.

Share the subject knowledge principles and explanations for Year 5 and Year 6 from *Grammar for Writing* for creating and shaping texts and ask colleagues to read through and identify any aspects they feel they need further support on.

Developing the layered curricular target

Activity 1

In pairs, identify a key learning objective from Year 4 that would support the achievement of the whole-school curricular target.

Consider what the possible links are to other learning objectives within the same strand in the year group and then consider possible links across strands - particularly with reading and speaking and listening strands.

Share your key points with another pair and then share findings as a whole staff.

Activity 2

In pairs now consider what the possible age-related 'I can' statements could be to communicate aspects of the learning objective with children, parents and carers. Write targets on sticky notes and create a bank of possible 'I can' statements. As a staff decide on the best versions.

Activity 3

Repeat the process for your own year group. Where possible, work in phase teams to ensure continuity of progression. For example, Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4, and Year 5 and Year 6.

Share your possible examples on posters for each year group.

Plenary

Consider as a staff whether the learning journey seems clear for a child working at age-related expectations and compare the big picture pen portrait shared at the start. Refine and edit as necessary.

Next consider the needs of more and less able children drawing on examples from other year groups as appropriate.

Consider the subject knowledge principles and explanations from *Grammar for Writing* required to teach the identified objectives and ask colleagues to read through and identify any aspects they feel they need further support on for their particular year group.

Use the outcomes from the activities to develop and set age-related class curricular targets and then differentiate for children working above or well below age-related expectations.

Next steps in classrooms

Make clear the timescale for the achievement of the targets and share with children, parents and carers.

Develop the learning environment to support the achievement of the targets.

Consider the opportunities to teach, practice and apply the targets in units of work both in literacy and across other curricular areas.

Use and adapt an example unit of work from the Primary Framework to ensure the targets are achieved.

Possible next steps for professional development meetings

Focus: Target setting

Develop an aspect of pedagogy, for example using speaking and listening, linked to the Primary Framework Continuing Professional Development modules on improving writing on *Subject Leader Development Materials DVD (ref: 02009-2006DVD-EN)*

See also the following:

Strengthening teaching and learning through the use of curricular targets (ref: 0186-2006DVD-EN)