![Midlothian]

MIDLOTHIAN NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

New report and agreed guidance for primary schools

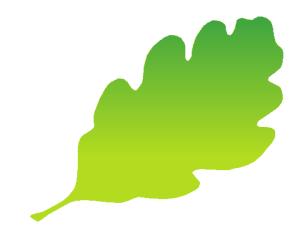The MNCT is committed to tackling bureaucracy and workload.

Head Teachers are asked to ensure that all permanent teachers, visiting specialist teachers, and fixed-term teachers within the establishment are given a copy of the attached.

Further information about how this agreement relates to the 35 Hour Working Week Agreement can be found in MNCT 15/03.
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Grace Vickers – MNCT Management Side
Sonia Kordiak– MNCT Joint Union Side Secretary

Circulated to: All Schools, Teacher Unions, SNCT

MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL

Reporting to Parents

Updated May 2015

Guidance for
Primary
Teachers

Introduction

As advised in the *Building the Curriculum 5* document on Reporting to Parents, reporting systems should not increase workload for teaching staff. Changes to this session's reporting format reflect Midlothian's commitment to tackling bureaucracy while still giving parents information on their child's key successes and next steps.

The purpose of this publication is to provide Midlothian schools with guidance about how learners' progress, achievements and next steps can be reported in a way that satisfies the principles of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). It is recognised that reporting can cover a range of different activities but this document deals, in particular, with the annual report to parents which remains a statutory requirement of schools.

Reporting

"*Reporting has two main purposes. Firstly, it provides clear, positive and constructive feedback about children's and young people's learning and progress, looking back on what has been achieved against standards and expectations. Secondly, it creates an agenda for discussions between learners and those teaching and supporting them about their next steps in learning.*"

(Building the Curriculum 5 a Framework for Assessment: Reporting)

Reporting allows information to be shared and exchanged among learners, parents and staff. Informed discussions, between teachers and parents on their child's learning, are central to the reporting process. These should focus on what information is needed to ensure that parents know what their child has achieved, how well they are doing against expectations and what would be their next steps. Effective reporting also provides a basis for discussion and reflection amongst professional staff about how and what they teach and how they can work together to support and improve young people's learning.

Reporting covers a range of activities including pupil folios, written reports, pupils presenting their learning to parents, parents' consultation meetings and oral discussions.

Staff should ensure that learners are involved, as appropriate to stage, in reporting activities in order to promote ownership of their learning. These on-going reporting activities should be closely linked to learners' reflection, dialogue about their progress and application of learning.

> **Written reports should provide a description of the learner's key successes and achievements. They should also set out for the learner, parents and staff what needs to be done to ensure continued progress and improved standards of achievement.**

1. Structure of the Report

In the title bar of each section, the child's current CfE level will be reported as follows:

Working within *Second Level*

This will reflect the level that has been inserted into Seemis Tracking and Monitoring module.

The Seemis reporting template then enables teachers to comment on key successes and next steps relating to:

- Pupil as a Learner
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Languages and Literacy
- Health and Wellbeing

- Learning across the Curriculum

Whilst sections 2-5 cover progress in the curriculum, the *Pupil as a Learner* section provides staff with an opportunity to comment on the development of a pupil's wider skills, capabilities and aptitudes. This section also offers an opportunity to comment on pupils' wider achievements.

The report sections link across to the areas of achievement being developed within individual pupil profiles. Staff should ensure that information on progress and achievement within reports and profiles are not contradictory.

Technical guidance will be distributed to schools. Further training, if necessary, will be provided for staff to support the use of the Seemis format. Staff will be issued with individual passwords but should be aware that these will have to be updated every 60 days. We recommend that passwords are updated at school. Staff should ensure that they re-set passwords prior to a holiday or a weekend.

The text boxes within the reporting template will be of the same fixed size, guidance will be provided regarding text capacity and an alert will warn staff when they are nearing the end of text space.

Programmes for planned Seemis maintenance will be provided. However, staff should check emails regularly as further notifications of dates for essential maintenance may be given.

2. Reporting Style

Teachers' comments should be constructive, based on evidence gathered over a school session and should show that the teacher knows the pupil as an individual. It is very important that a balance is maintained between the identification of key successes and next steps in learning.

Throughout each school session parents will have further opportunities to discuss their child's progress. It is very important that the formal report does not mention areas of concern that have not already been raised with parents.

The language used in the report should avoid 'jargon', abbreviations, acronyms or colloquialisms. Staff should also ensure that all text is spellchecked and that there are no mismatches between pupil names and gender.

Some Key Principles of Reporting

1. One of the most important principles of reporting is that the information provided is about **the learner**, rather than the curriculum. Teachers should ensure that they focus on the learner's key successes and next steps.

2. It is important that parents are able to recognise their child in the report. Therefore, teachers should avoid incorporating too much technical information.

3. It is also important to remember that the report should reflect the whole child and teachers should ensure that the different sections do not provide conflicting information about a learner. Teachers should liaise effectively to ensure that the most recent information is used when writing a pupil's report. Systems should be in place to allow specialist and part-time staff to coordinate individual pupil information. Where setting is in place for specific subjects, schools should ensure that staff have a clear understanding in relation to who has the responsibility for reporting on pupil progress.

4. For other curricular areas schools should be gathering assessment information relating to pupil progress in order to provide evidence of learning and application of skills.

5. Learners should be actively involved in evaluating their progress as well as determining next steps throughout the school session. They should be familiar with the information contained in the report. Pupils should complete their response section at home and return it, along with the parental response, to their teacher.

In short, reports should reflect these underpinning principles:

- the learner is at the centre of the report
- key successes and next steps in learning are detailed
- the language is accessible to parents and pupils

Head Teachers are encouraged to discuss with teachers the approach to be taken to the content so that across the school all apply a consistent approach to the use of bullet points or free text. It is suggested that if bullet points are to be used in curricular sections, the Pupil as a Learner section could be free text to allow for a clearer picture of the learner to emerge.

References

Building the Curriculum 5; a framework for assessment
Building the Curriculum 5: a framework for assessment: recognising achievement, profiling and reporting
Curriculum for Excellence Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy (November 2013)

APPENDIX 1

Report Sections

The Pupil as a Learner

When commenting on the *Pupil as a Learner* it is important to consider the individual, their key successes and next steps in relation to learning. Reporting in this section may cover the extent to which a pupil demonstrates that they are, for example:

- able to take responsibility for their own learning
- able to plan and organise their learning
- able to overcome barriers to learning
- able to learn with others
- able to set personal and targets including next steps for learning
- able to think creatively and solve problems
- able to show initiative and leadership skills
- enthusiastic and motivated
- cooperative and respectful
- determined and persevering

Teacher comments may also include wider pupil achievements, and successes, both in and out with school.

Mathematics and Numeracy

Being numerate is defined as:

"having developed the confidence in using number which will allow individuals to solve problems, analyse information and make informed decisions based on calculations."

(Numeracy across Learning: Principles and Practice)

Within Mathematics and Numeracy it is important to consider the individual pupil and focus on their key successes and next steps in relation to the phases of learning within CfE levels for **numeracy and mathematics**.

When considering progress within numeracy, teachers should assess each pupil's overall progress in number, money and measure.

When considering progress within mathematics, teachers should assess each pupil's overall progress in shape, position and movement and information handling.

Within Mathematics and Numeracy, reporting should reflect knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes in relation to the most appropriate of the 8 organisers:

- estimation and rounding
- number and number processes
- fractions, decimal fractions and percentages
- money
- time
- measurement
- data and analysis
- ideas of chance and uncertainty

Taking into account the 8 organisers, staff should provide assessment statements in relation to a pupil's progress within the three main organisers: **number, money and measure, shape, position and movement and information handling.** This section should also provide details of the pupil's next steps.

A pupil's progress within Mathematics and Numeracy may also be assessed through interdisciplinary learning.

Staff should refer to guidance described in the Principles and Practice Papers for Numeracy across Learning and Mathematics.

Language and Literacy

Literacy is defined as:

"*the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful*"

(Literacy across Learning: Principles and Practice)

Within Language and Literacy it is important to consider the individual pupil and focus on their key successes and next steps in relation to the phases of learning within CfE levels for **reading and writing and listening and talking**

This section should include details of significant progress with knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes in relation to the most appropriate of the three organisers: listening and talking, reading and writing. This section should also provide details of the pupil's next steps.

A pupil's progress within language and literacy may also be accessed through interdisciplinary learning.

Staff should refer to guidance described in the Principles and Practice Papers for Literacy across Learning and Literacy and English and also Modern Languages (if appropriate).

Health and Wellbeing

Learning within Health and Wellbeing should:

"ensure that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future."
> *(Health and Wellbeing across Learning: responsibilities of all: Principles and Practice)*

Within Health and Wellbeing it is important to consider the individual pupil and focus on their key successes and next steps in learning.   This should include aspects of the child's knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes in relation to the most appropriate of the 6 organisers:

- physical education
- food and health
- substance misuse
- relationships, sexual health and parenthood
- planning for choices and changes
- mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing

There is no requirement to provide assessment statements for each organiser but staff should ensure that reports describe the progression pupils have made in relation to all aspects of Health and Wellbeing across CfE levels. Schools should be gathering assessment information relating to pupil progress in order to provide evidence of learning and application of skills.

A pupil's progress within Health and Wellbeing may also be assessed through interdisciplinary learning.

It may be appropriate to suggest how parents may support their child with their next steps in learning. These suggestions must link to a pupil's key strengths or any identified development needs.

Staff should refer to guidance described in the Principles and Practice Paper for Health and Wellbeing across Learning.

Learning across the Curriculum

"It will not be necessary or possible to summarise every aspect of learning and progress in every written report. In particular, staff and schools will not be expected to provide comments on each of the four capacities or to comment on every individual statement of experiences and outcomes."
> *(Building the Curriculum 5 a Framework for Assessment: Reporting)*

Within Learning across the Curriculum, it is important to consider the individual pupil and focus on significant progress and next steps in relation to skills' application and development, as well as knowledge and understanding, within other curricular areas:

- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

Although it is not necessary to provide assessment statements for all of these curricular areas each session, teachers should endeavour to provide details of progress and next steps for a number of areas. Assessment evidence may be gathered from inter-disciplinary learning experiences or discrete curricular projects or lessons.

Staff should ensure that reporting on pupil progress provides assessment information relating to progression within CfE levels for each of these curriculum areas. Schools should be gathering assessment information relating to pupil progress in all areas in order to provide evidence of learning and application of skills.

Staff should refer to guidance described in the Principles and Practice Papers for the curricular areas listed above.