

Introducing curricular targets and reviewing action points

Main messages from the unit

- Departments need to set aspirational targets for pupil attainment. In addition, they need to identify curricular targets that increase the likelihood of aspirational targets being achieved.
- Departments need to analyse test performance and outcomes from teacher assessment to identify areas where pupils' performance needs to improve.
- External sources of information such as QCA's 'Implications for teaching science' need to be considered as possible areas for development in pupils' understanding of science.
- Departments need to use all available evidence to identify the aspects of science, in terms of skills or knowledge, which with improved performance would increase the chances of pupils meeting aspirational targets.
- Having analysed and identified aspects of the curriculum requiring improvement, specific curricular targets need to be agreed.
- A curricular target expresses in words (not numbers) a specific aspect of the curriculum which has been identified as an area of weakness in pupils' learning. Curricular targets can be:
 - for a whole class, a group of pupils, or individual pupils;
 - long term (e.g. a term or a year), medium term (e.g. a few weeks) or short term (e.g. a few lessons).
- A curricular target that requires whole departmental action over the medium to long term needs to be included as an action point in the departmental improvement plan.
- Short-term curricular targets, which may only apply to one class or a group of pupils within a class, need to be recorded by the teacher in their planning.
- Curricular targets need to be shared with pupils.
- Monitoring is the process where information is collected about the progress being made with an action point.
- Evaluation is the process that considers the information collected during monitoring, compares it with the success criteria identified for the action point and arrives at a judgement of the progress to date.
- The outcome of the evaluation is to provide a review of current action points; this often leads to the refinement of current activities or the formulation of new action points.
- Monitoring without evaluation and subsequent action does not change the experience pupils receive.

Implications for the science department

- The department needs to confirm that current targets are aspirational.
- The department needs to ensure mechanisms are in place to identify areas of the curriculum where pupils' learning needs to improve.
- Curricular targets need to be agreed to support the development of pupils' learning in these areas.
- Monitoring and evaluation of progress with curricular targets needs to take place frequently.

Implications for individual teachers

- Planning needs to tackle agreed curricular targets.
- Curricular targets need to be explicit to pupils and progress made against the targets must be shared.
- Teachers should use day-to-day assessment activities to establish short-term curricular targets for groups of pupils within classes.