



Monitoring, evaluating and assessing RSE - the basics

HOW RSE IS MONITORED, EVALUATED AND ASSESSED

Monitoring, evaluation and assessment can easily get confused:

Monitoring is an ongoing process that checks the degree to which a programme, course or scheme of work is being effectively implemented. Monitoring answers the questions:

- Is the programme effectively managed and are staff clear about their roles and responsibilities?
- Does the planned programme reflect national guidance, local priorities and pupils' needs?
- Are all pupils being taught the programme as planned?
- Is the quality of teaching consistent across all classes and does it exemplify best practice?

These questions can be answered by having systems in place to record pupil attendance in RSE lessons, effective PSHE leadership with a system of lesson observations and peer support and a system for regular review of the RSE policy and programme including looking at staff records and samples of pupils' work.

Evaluation is the process that measures whether the lesson or unit of work is effective and worthwhile. The assessment of pupil learning will contribute to the lesson/unit evaluation. Evaluation answers the questions:

- Has this lesson or unit enabled the pupils to learn what was intended?
- Does it meet the needs of the pupils?
- What do we think of it? (teachers and pupils)
- What are its good and bad points?
- Do we need to modify it in any way to improve it?

These questions can be answered by both structured and informal pupil and staff feedback in the form of:

- Teacher evaluation of lessons, units and the overall RSE programme
- evidence from lesson observations
- evaluation of contributions of external partners
- feedback and evaluation by pupils
- scrutiny of assessment records
- sampling pupils' work and portfolios

Evaluation is a means of improving provision and raising standards. Evaluation helps to identify issues for development and can prompt a review process and this may result in changes to the RSE programme or policy.

Assessment is the process by which an individual pupil's achievements are measured against the lesson objectives. Assessment plays a key role in effective RSE teaching and learning. Assessment is a process through which judgements are made about an individual's learning and development. It is not about making judgements on the character, worth or values of individual pupils, nor is it about continual testing.

Ofsted highlight features of assessment in outstanding PSHE as follows:

“Assessment tasks are built into schemes of work and pupils have a clear idea of their progress. Work is marked regularly and includes helpful comments about how to improve. This monitoring of progress is appropriate to the activity and used to identify pupils who may benefit from additional support or intervention.

An example of outstanding practice in assessment is a secondary school that uses a wide range of methods, including project work; tests; written assignments; accredited courses; students’ pre and post-unit self-evaluations; and reflective logbooks to record progress in students’ community activities.” (2013)

Teachers should not rely entirely on pupil self-assessment, which should be supported by evidence of achievement. Government guidance on RSE, Relationships Education and Health Education (draft version currently under public consultation) lists what pupils should know by the end of primary school and by the end of secondary school. These statements can be used to plan RSE and broader PSHE education programmes. The PSHE Association has also produced a Framework for PSHE education.

Needs assessment or needs identification has a particular function which is to indicate the existing knowledge and skills of pupils. This enables a teacher to plan a programme that is relevant to the group and builds on prior learning. It also serves as a baseline against which future progress may be assessed. Needs assessment information from pupils can be gathered using techniques such as ‘Draw and Write’ activities, mind maps, values continuums and quizzes.

Assessment for learning enables pupils to understand what they are intended to learn, how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. Assessment for learning is built into the learning cycle and encourages the pupil to participate actively in the learning **process**. It involves first sharing the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the programme with pupils and discussing what will be assessed, then providing pupils with a combination of feedback on their performance and enabling pupils to self-assess their performance in relation to agreed criteria. For assessment to be effective it must be planned. Also known as formative assessment.

The following are examples of questions that can be used with pupils to support the reflection stage and to develop pupil

Reflection

The learning cycle in Figure 1 is a reminder of the importance of reflection in the learning process.

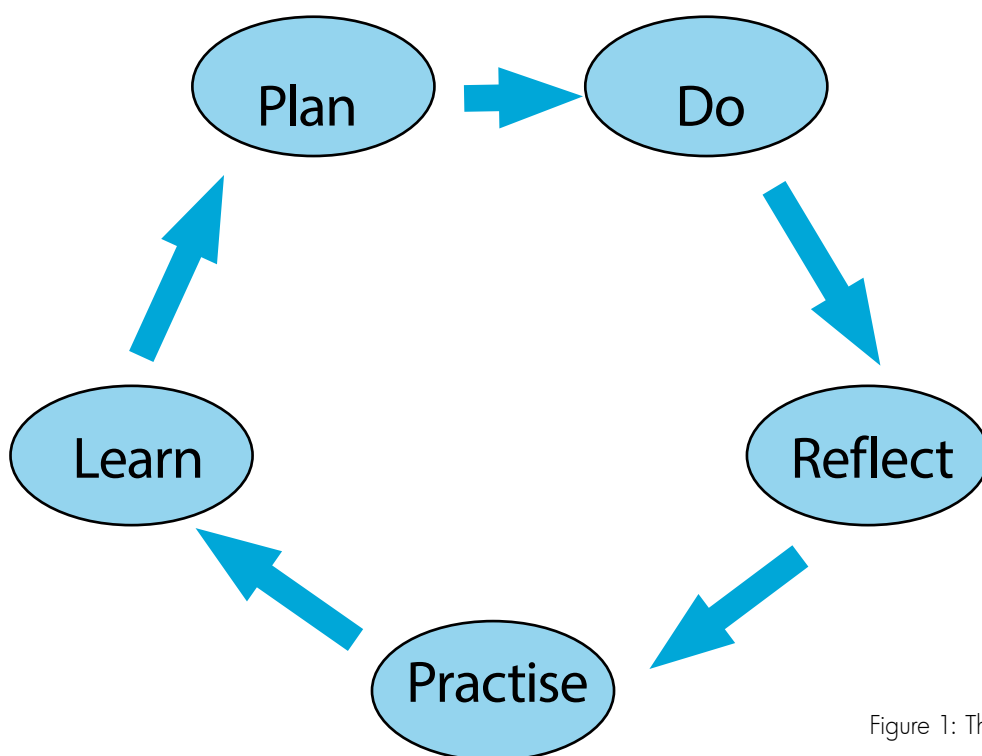


Figure 1: The learning cycle

understanding of what they have learned and the progress they have made. This is an extract from Assessment, evaluation and RSE (2012) – See full details below:

- What new information have I learnt?
- What do I now think and believe?
- Has listening to the views of others changed my views and/or beliefs?
- Did it help me confirm what I really believe?
- Did I learn anything I did not expect to?
- How will it change my behaviour in the future?
- What do I know already?
- How did I feel about what I found out?
- What feelings did I have during the session?
- What do I now need to learn?
- Is there anyone else I need to talk to about this?

Individual responses could be recorded in a logbook or a diary.

Assessment of learning takes places at the **end** of a unit of work or academic year. It involves judging the pupils' performance against the learning outcomes of the programme or unit of work, using a variety of evidence; written, verbal, visual and observed. Examples include review sheets, written tasks and presentations. The evidence can contribute to the pupil's record of achievement and should also be the basis of reports to parents/carers. Also known as summative assessment.

Assesement Checklist

- Is needs assessment used to identify existing knowledge and skills of pupils?
- Is assessment built into the RSE programme and is this stated in the policy?
- Is there over-reliance on pupil self-assessment?
- Does assessment focus purely on knowledge or does it include skills development and attitudes?
- Is pupil progress and achievement reported to parents/carers?
- Is pupil achievement in RSE celebrated and shared?

'Assessment, evaluation and RSE' (2012) is a practical guide for schools published by the National Children's Bureau, with a pack of activities for use with Key Stages 1-4.