

Ashfield Girls' School

Peer and Self-Assessment in Physical Education

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Introduction

Ashfield Girls' School has around 700 pupils. This case study shows how the school has taken a whole-school approach to planning and developing assessment that is inclusive with the aim of improving learning by using Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies. This case study focuses on using peer and self-assessment strategies in Physical Education (PE) to assess subject knowledge, understanding and performance skills, alongside the Personal Capability of Working with Others. It illustrates how we can use video recordings of pupil performances in PE to engage pupils in discussion about their learning and to support both teachers and pupils to make assessment judgements.

School Policy and Practice

The school currently has no discrete assessment policy, although the senior leadership team is working on a draft. The vice principal (VP) has responsibility for assessment and leads a team, made up of the assistant vice principal (AVP Learning and Teaching) and the numeracy and literacy co-ordinators, to review the school's Learning and Teaching Policy. The policy includes assessment as an integral part of the Learning and Teaching process.

The AVP (Learning and Teaching) chairs a monthly Learning and Teaching forum. It is made up of representatives from every department in the school. The forum looks at best practice and the departmental representatives work with their own departments to implement school policy. Assessment for Learning is the forum's main focus.

The forum supports interdepartmental working. It has established a method called 'trio' work that enables departments to work together in groups of three. The Physical Education department works in collaboration with the Home Economics and ICT departments. This allows teachers to share best practice and ensure there is a consistent approach to assessment in all departments

The Learning and Teaching forum identified the following Criteria for Success:

- All staff should understand the concept of AFL and its five key principles;
- Pupils should be aware of the benefits of AFL;
- AFL should be used actively in all classrooms; and
- AFL should be embedded in departmental schemes of work.

When the KS3 Northern Ireland Curriculum was introduced in 2007, all departments revised their schemes of work in line with the new curricular requirements. Departmental schemes of work have a common format. They identify learning outcomes that address the Key Stage 3 Statements of Minimum Requirement for each subject, and how these will be assessed, and include opportunities for peer and self-assessment.

Heads of Department are responsible for work undertaken in their departments. They must sample the standard of marking to ensure consistency and ensure that pupils receive quality feedback for class work and homework.

Summative assessment is also important. It is planned in subject schemes of work. Each subject uses an agreed number of common assessments. These include end of unit/topic subject class tests and internal school examinations. Summative assessment takes place each half term for all pupils in Key Stage 3. Parents receive a report card and a full report in the summer term each year.

Monitoring, Recording and Reporting Progress

At Key Stage 3 and in Year 11 the school monitors and tracks pupil progress on Assessment Manager. This system is not yet in place for other years, but it will soon be implemented for other years. For target setting, teachers use data from:

- NFER (National Foundation for Education Research) tests in English and Mathematics; MidYis (Middle Year Information System);
- Key Stage 3 levels in English and Mathematics; and
- internal examination results.

Target setting involves subject teachers and pupils discussing and agreeing personal learning targets.

Subject teachers, form tutors and pupils review progress on an ongoing basis. Heads of Department (HODs) and the head of year monitor assessment information for all pupils, in each year of Key Stage 3, to identify low achievement, underachievement, or those pupils needing learning support.

Promoting Inclusion: Equity and Fairness

In accordance with the school's Inclusion and Diversity Policy, all departments must ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum and that assessments are fair and challenging. Assessment practices are reviewed and Heads of Department must submit internal assessment materials to the senior leadership team and the SENCO to identify any literacy or numeracy issues and to ensure that the materials are of an appropriate level of demand. This policy is intended to ensure that pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum. The school has developed an immersion programme for new EAL students. The programme phases the pupil into lessons and provides language support in the Learning Zone facilitated by a support teacher or classroom assistant, supervised by a language tutor.

Assessment Planning

The PE department, along with all other subjects, revised their schemes of work for all Key Stage 3 classes. This was led by the Head of Department (HOD) and involved the whole department. The schemes were revised and developed to ensure that all statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum requirements were addressed and that learning was appropriately assessed.

PE schemes identify opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop skills and capabilities as well as subject knowledge and understanding as learning intentions. Schemes of work also include success criteria. These are used to help pupils gain a better understanding of what they need to do in order to perform well in an activity. They also enable pupils to identify ways to improve their learning. Using success criteria in lessons is part of a wider approach to developing AfL in PE.

All subjects must give pupils opportunities to acquire and develop the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TS&PC) and Cross-Curricular Skills. They are not all required to assess and report on them. To make this process more manageable, the vice principal, in consultation with the HODs, delegated responsibility for assessing and reporting on certain skills and capabilities to different departments. The PE department felt that Working with Others (Personal Capability) formed a natural and important part of what pupils do in PE classes and volunteered to assess and report on this.

Using AfL in Physical Education

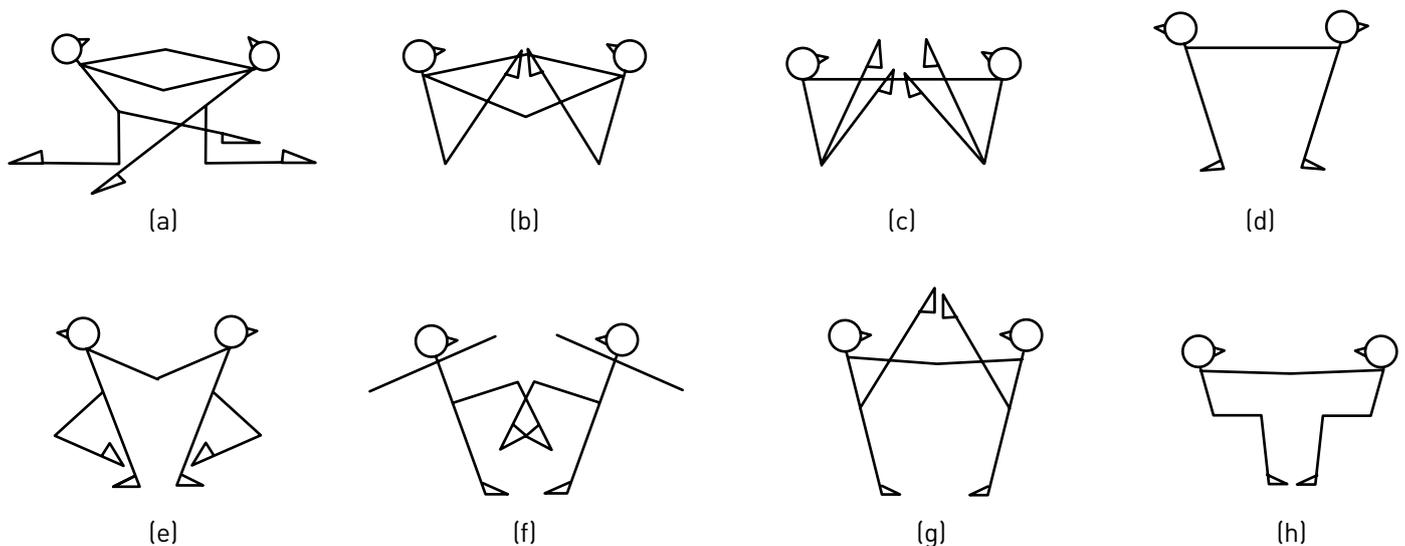
In Physical Education pupils experience a range of activities organised in six-week teaching blocks. Pupils are given opportunities to improve their subject skills, knowledge, and understanding by regular participation in, for example, athletics, gymnastics and dance. This enables pupils to acquire and develop TS&PC, such as those required to analyse and improve their own and others' work, and to work with others in tasks that require co-operation, creativity, problem solving, planning and team work.

In Year 9 one of these skills is gymnastics. It is taught under the theme of balance. The teacher begins each lesson by writing the learning intentions on the board in the sports hall and discussing with the pupils what they will be learning and the success criteria they will be assessed against. In this case the teacher formatively assesses the pupils' capability to work with others, in addition to subject skills. Pupils also peer and self-assess their performance in counter balance activities. Working with Others is assessed with reference to the TS&PC subject progression map for PE (CCEA, 2009).

Peer Assessment

Pupils are given activity sheets that illustrate different counter balance positions (see Figure 1 and 2) and success criteria, including those for Working with Others.

Figure 1 – Counter-Tension with matching/mirroring positions



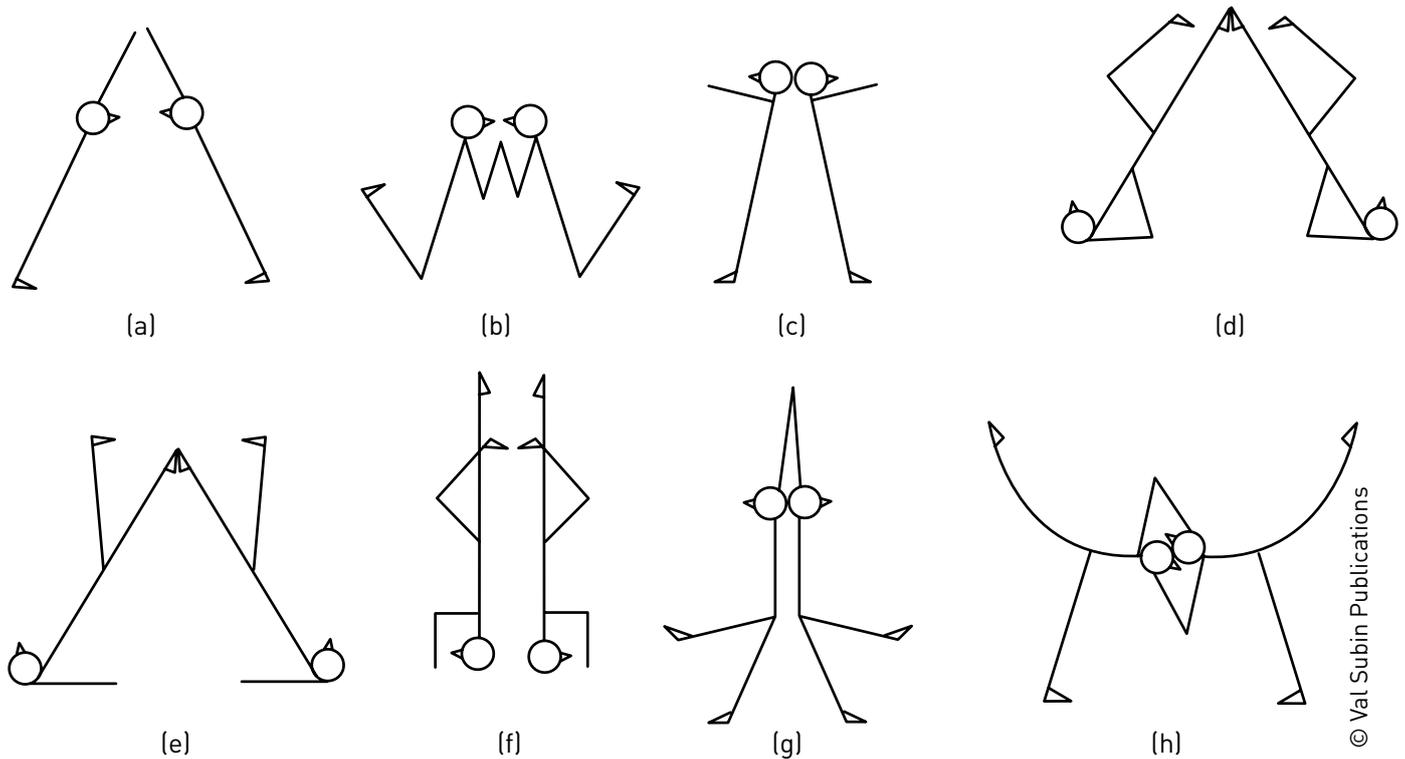
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Figure 2 – Counter-Tension with matching/mirroring positions



Pupils work in groups of three and select some of these positions to practice as part of a sequence for a five minute routine. Towards the end of the lesson there is a show-and-tell session where pupils perform their routine, demonstrating their skills to the class and teacher. This is the focus of a peer assessment activity. During class discussion pupils refer to the success criteria. They are expected to use key words that are part of a subject specific vocabulary, such as control,

body tension, stretched feet, balance held and synchronised movement, when evaluating each other's performances. Pupils also discuss what they learned from working with others, how they decided on the routine, what ideas they shared and their goals. Pupils make comments using two stars and a wish; they make two positive comments and a wish, which is a statement about how they could improve their performance.



Pupils discussing their gymnastic routine and success criteria.



Pupils practising counter balance positions.



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During the show and tell session the teacher takes the role of facilitator, prompting and encouraging the active involvement of all pupils. The teacher also generalises and summarises key points, discussing how being able to work with others can enhance their group performance. The teacher emphasises the positive aspects of each group's display and suggests ways that they could make improvements to their routine.



Teacher facilitating peer assessment activity.

This is in keeping with the school ethos that promotes the idea that every pupil should leave the lesson with a sense of personal achievement. This is a regular aspect of PE lessons. From the beginning of Year 8, pupils are accustomed to commenting on each other's performance and to accepting others' comments about their performance. Pupils quickly realise the value of this activity and soon develop a maturity in commenting and listening to others.

Self-Assessment

At the end of the six week teaching block, each group prepares and presents their routines to demonstrate the skills they have learned. Each performance is video recorded. The teacher and pupils discuss the success criteria they will use to judge their performance against. These criteria, including those for subject performance skills and Working with Others, are then displayed on the sports hall whiteboard. This helps pupils focus on what they need to do during their display. The teacher observes the groups as they work and provides helpful feedback, focusing on how they can improve their performance.



Pupils watching their performance on video.

At the end of this session the teachers takes the class to the dance studio to watch the performances on an interactive whiteboard. Each performance is followed by teacher and pupil discussion. Pupils are then given time to reflect on their own performance as part of a self-assessment activity. They are asked to think about and identify personal targets for Working with Others and developing subject knowledge, understanding and skills that would improve their performance.

This process provides evidence about pupils' progress in Working with Others. The video recording of pupil performance in gymnastics contributes to this assessment. A copy of the filmed performances can be sent to form tutors. This gives them an idea of how their pupils are progressing in PE and enables them to talk to pupils about their achievements and to encourage them.

Moving Forward

The school is committed to developing quality classroom assessment practice to enable pupils to improve their learning. The school is currently involved in a CCEA moderation trial for Communication and Using Mathematics. This has given teachers an opportunity to develop assessment tasks and to gain a better understanding of expected standards for these skills.

As well as preparing for the introduction of the statutory assessment of the Cross-Curricular Skills, the school is continuing to develop and embed AfL as an integral part of teaching and learning. In PE, teachers are exploring ways to make assessment more interesting and motivating for pupils and to encourage pupils to engage more in their learning. To do this, teachers plan to further refine, develop, and build on their current use of peer and self-assessment strategies as part of a wider approach to enhance their formative assessment practice.