

# Learning Objectives and Success Criteria Rationale

This rationale will outline the reasons for why learning objectives and success criteria are used in educational establishments and to understand their impact on children's development.

As all educators are aware, assessment is an essential part of teaching. Over recent years, there has been a change in the focus of assessments within the classroom – with a much greater emphasis on formative assessment rather than solely summative assessments.

Shirley Clarke (Outstanding Formative Assessment 2014) states that formative assessment is *“the most powerful educational tool to raising achievement and preparing children to become lifelong learners.”*

On-going formative assessments by teachers encourages children take responsibility and ownership for their own learning. As a result, it is essential that they know and understand what they are learning. This can be carried out by sharing with them the learning objective and the success criteria. This has been proven in educational studies by Crooks 1988; Butler 1988 & Ames and Ames 1984 to have an impact on their learning.

With the introduction of the National Curriculum 1989, there came in a change the focus of education which was based upon: skills, concepts, knowledge and their application.

The onset of OFSTED inspections also led to the children being expected to know what they were learning within the lesson. This does not mean that it always has to be written in books as long as they are able to verbalise their learning.

It is therefore essential to understand the term 'learning objective/intention.' A clear and simple definition of this is 'what they are expected to learn by the end of the teaching session'.

Research shows that 'children are more highly motivated and task orientated if they know and understand the learning intention. They are also better equipped to make decisions about how to go about the tasks. This why learning objectives should be shared should be shared and visually displayed'

With objectives being shared and made clear with the learners, it is vital that they understand how the objective can be achieved (i.e. what they need to do) and what they are being judged on. This is the role of the **success criteria**.

The purpose of the success criteria is to help improve their understanding, encourage independent learners, allows more opportunities for accurate feedback and increases pupil accountability.

Black and Wiliam (Inside the Blackbox) carried out research on 'assessment for learning' and identified in their research that : 'assessment for learning is not only about helping teachers to teach more effectively but about encouraging and enabling learners to take more responsibility for their learning.

This increased responsibility can be done by: sharing learning objectives and success criteria more systematically and effectively with learners.

Therefore it is vital that teachers have a clear understanding of the learning objective and the success criteria in order for more effective teaching and learning to be taking place, thus improving progress of the learners.