Pupil assessment


These documents emphasize that assessment is considered as help for the pupils to learn, grow and mature successfully. Assessment is a tool for collecting and making use of information about the pupils’ learning experience, achievements and progress made. On the grounds of the assessments’ results, the perspectives for learning are planned and the education process is individualized. Assessment also helps to measure the level of success achieved by individual teachers and schools and to make reasonable judgments. While achieving better learning outcomes it is most important to sustain the pupils’ psychological safety. Due to this, a favourable climate for the child in the classroom, where pupils are not afraid to ask questions, has to be created. Pupils should not be afraid to make mistakes and differ in opinion from their peers.

In preparing its curriculum, each school stipulates the methods and orders for assessing pupils’ learning achievements and progress. The teachers plan their pupils’ learning achievements and their assessment in line with agreements reached by the school. They should also take into account the learning achievements, needs and capabilities of their pupils. When planning the learning achievements and assessments for pupils in grade 1, the teachers familiarise themselves with the recommendations of pre-primary teachers or those of the joint group of pre-school teachers to make a conclusion about the child’s performance.

Pupils’ achievements in primary schools are recorded as short commentaries and descriptions. Grades/marks (points) or signs and symbols are not used.

Pupils’ achievements are not compared publicly. The progress of a particular pupil is monitored and assessed, comparing current and previous achievements. If parents (guardians) request, the pupil’s position among his/her peers can be indicated, but only confidentially. It is emphasized that parents should be more concerned if their child reaches his/her full potential and not what his/her rank is.

**Types of assessment**

Formative educational, diagnostic and generalized summative assessments are used to assess pupils’ progress and achievements.

**Formative educational assessment**

Formative educational assessment is used to help pupils learn by planning (self-) learning goals,
directions, specific steps and learning perspectives. A formative educational assessment is provided throughout the learning process, even outside the classroom, by observing pupils’ behaviour, interaction, cooperation, etc.

Different strategies for formative educational assessment are implemented – observation, interview, discussion, task analysis and consideration, etc.

Information is provided for the pupils, mostly orally and, where necessary, in writing. In that case, a teacher writes a comment in the exercise books, on test-paper sheets, in achievement booklets and so on. Information is provided about every pupil’s learning process and current achievements or failures and what he/she should do to improve his/her performance.

Diagnostic assessment

This type of assessment is used to diagnose the current situation, establish a pupil’s achievements and progress made, and plan further learning options. Diagnostic assessment is implemented according to assessment criteria discussed with the pupils in advance. It is normally performed at the beginning and the end of a new learning phase (topic or course).

In view of what is to be assessed (the assessment objective), various methods of diagnostic assessment can be used, including practical and creative tasks, tests, project work, etc. Pupils should not be given more than one diagnostic task per day to complete.

Information about learning achievements (tests and other tasks) is provided for pupils and parents (guardians) by short comments. Levels are not indicated, grade substitutes (letters, signs, symbols, etc.) are not used either. The teacher selects types and forms of gathering of assessment information (assessment files, assessment records, achievement booklets, etc.).

Generalized summative assessment

A generalized summative assessment is used on completion of a shorter or longer education period (project, trimester, semester, year, etc.) and on completion of the primary education curriculum.

This is a generalization of a pupil’s achievements during an education period. The progress made during an education period established by the school is assessed. The teacher takes into account indications of the pupil’s achievement levels described in the Curriculum for Primary Education. The results are entered into a Primary Education Diary, an electronic diary or any other achievement assessment form chosen by the school and/or teacher (the pupil’s learning achievements and progress assessment records, assessment files, achievement booklets, electronic diary, etc.).

The pupil’s summative achievement level – satisfactory, basic, advanced – is recorded in the relevant sections of the summary statement on the pupil’s learning achievements. In the event that a pupil fails to reach a satisfactory level of achievement, the entry ‘unsatisfactory’ is recorded. Moral education is assessed as ‘progress made’ or ‘progress not made’. The same categories are applied when assessing the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

On completion of primary education, a Record of Achievements and Progress in the Primary Education Curriculum is prepared. A copy of the record is presented to the school in which the pupil is going to learn according to the lower secondary education programme.

National pupils’ achievement testing

The National Pupils’ Achievement Testing (NMPP) system came into effect in 2014. The same
standardized tests are taken and the achievements of Lithuanian pupils are assessed according to the same criteria. Based on the information, decisions are made on how to improve (self-) learning on different levels (pupils, teachers, classes, schools, municipalities and national).

Each spring, pupils from grade 2 and grade 4 (in primary education) take the same tests:

- Grade 2 – reading, writing and mathematics
- Grade 4 – reading, writing, mathematics and world knowledge

The institution that holds founder status decides whether the pupils should participate in the NMPP. The founder can transfer decision-making power to the school authority. If a school decides to participate in the NMPP, all its pupils must participate.

Municipalities and schools aiming for a wider assessment of learning quality can decide to take pupils’ questionnaires along with the NMPP. Based on the gathered data, the school (municipality) receives ratings such as the school’s climate, mockery and bullying, pupils’ well-being in school, pupils’ knowledge of how to learn, schools’ added value, etc. This allows the school to self-assess in a broader way. It helps to pay more attention not only to the academic achievements of pupils but also to pupils’ well-being and the emotional climate. A school can assess its contribution to pupils’ achievements, taking into account the school’s context. Schools must inform parents (guardians) about such a review and get permission for their child’s participation. Parents (guardians) can deny permission. In such case, it is more difficult for the school (municipality) to measure such important ratings as schools’ added value, pupils’ well-being in school and the bullying situation.

Is it important to mention that the NMPP results are information for the pupil, his/her parents or guardians and the teacher. It is not a conclusion on a pupil’s attained education. That is why the National Examination Centre recommends not to grade tests. The reviews’ results have no influence on pupils’ progression to another grade or school.

Participants in assessment

The teacher, education provider, school founder, Ministry of Education and Science and its authorized institutions assess learning achievements.

**Teachers** plan and assess pupils’ progress and achievements. They summarize and evaluate pupils’ achievements. They record assessment information in a way laid down by school. They inform pupils, their parents (guardians), other teachers and the heads of the school about pupils’ learning, achievements and gaps. They analyse and revise pupils’ (self-) learning. They tend to state that pupils with learning difficulties receive needed aid.

The **school** sets out methods for the gathering, recording and usage of information on pupils’ progress and achievement assessments. It guarantees that assessment methods are compatible while progressing between grades and education levels, also between classes and different subjects. The school also coordinates the scope and frequency of tests. It provides assistance to pupils experiencing learning difficulties. And, last but not least, it evaluates the quality of work performed by individual teachers and the school by pupils’ attainment.

The **education department** of the school founder administration analyses the school assessment information and reaches decisions based on it. In assessing the school’s work effectiveness, it takes into account the social cultural context. It guarantees that methods for external pupils’ achievement assessments are discussed with the school and with the teachers. It enables teachers to improve their qualifications.
The Ministry of Education and Science passes legal documents which regulate the content of the formal education curriculum and assessment of pupils’ achievements. It sets out the methods for pupils’ achievement assessments when they finish certain parts of the education curriculum. It guarantees fast and high-quality analysis of external pupils’ achievement assessment results, its presentation to the academic and general public and its proper usage.

**Progression of pupils**

The Procedure for Consecutive Learning in Accordance with General Education Programmes (Nuoseklio mokymosi pagal bendrojo ugdymo programas tvarkos aprašas [4]) states the methods for pupils’ progression.

Pupils with a satisfactory end-of-year assessment in all compulsory subjects in the teaching plan progress to the next year.

A pupil can display **higher achievements than the advanced** achievements set out in the general curriculum. If a school has proof of such achievements of pupils in grade 1-3, they can progress to a higher year. In doing so, they skip a grade and graduate more quickly. Parents (guardians) have to express their consent for a pupil to progress in this way. The pupil’s teacher and school child welfare commission have to agree on such progression too.

Teachers and other authorities in the educational process discuss pupils who have **unsatisfactory annual assessments** in some curriculum subjects (extra assignments, if such were given). The teachers decide whether such pupils should progress to another year, repeat the year or be given extra assignments. When a pupil receives extra assignments, he/she also receives counselling. When the assignments’ due date and report dates are set, the parents’ or guardians’ advice is taken into account.

The teachers repeatedly discuss the pupil’s learning achievements, if his/her assignment gets a negative assessment or if he/she misses the due date. They listen to the parents and provide their suggestions to the school principal.

The school principal reaches a final decision on the pupil’s extra assignments and his/her progression or repeating the year while taking into account the teachers’ suggestions. The school informs the parents (guardians) about these decisions.

If a pupil in grade 4 has a negative annual assessment in a subject for additional work given to him/her on completion of the primary education curriculum, he/she is kept in the same class to repeat the curriculum.

On **completion of the primary education curriculum** a pupil with satisfactory annual assessments in all curriculum subjects does not progress to another year. A pupil is considered as having finished the corresponding curriculum and having the right to learn according to the lower secondary curriculum. On completion of the primary education curriculum, a statement to assess the pupil’s progress and achievements on completion of the primary education curriculum is prepared. It is sent to the school in which the pupil will continue his/her education according to the lower secondary education curriculum.

**Certification**

Final-year primary school pupils who have received satisfactory annual assessments in all compulsory subjects are considered to have completed the primary education curriculum and acquired a primary
education. An acquired primary education grants a right to continue learning according to the lower secondary education curriculum.

On completion of the primary education curriculum, a pupil is issued with a certificate of primary education. This certificate does not specify the curriculum subjects or achievement levels but indicates which primary education curriculum the pupil has completed.

A primary education achievements certificate is issued to a pupil who has completed an individualized primary education curriculum. The certificate does not specify the curriculum subjects or achievement levels but indicates which primary education curriculum the pupil has completed.

Pupils in their final year of primary education who leave primary school at the end of the school year without having completed the curriculum are issued a free-form certificate.

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