

BEST PRACTICE – ACHIEVEMENT REPORTS

PASS has a wide and varied range of applications. In view of this, it is neither possible nor appropriate to give definitive guidance on its application in all circumstances. However PASS has been designed so that the profiles produced are readily understandable by professionals who work with children.

When using PASS with individual pupils, it is essential that it is not used in isolation from all the information that a school, teacher, psychologist or mentor will have about that pupil. A PASS profile on its own should not be used to determine actions without taking account of other information that will be available about that pupil.

Considering the PASS profile overall will provide valuable assistance to professionals in selecting areas to target, and in deciding support methods and interventions. PASS will also provide a baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of interventions for those aspects of children's development which were previously only subject to qualitative perceptions.

Only a sample of case studies are presented within this section. These are intended to provide the user with a guide to the possible applications of PASS. We will enlarge and update this section in time as more schools and LEAs submit their own examples to our web site.

Please note that these sample suggestions are in respect of these case studies only and should not be generalised. Profiles for your pupils need to be interpreted in your school/professional context and on the basis of your knowledge of the pupil(s) concerned.

Monitoring of progress and identification of schools causing concern.

One LEA is planning to incorporate whole school PASS data within the school profile that it uses to assess schools' performance and to identify schools that may be a cause for concern. At a whole school level, PASS represents more than just the accumulated profiles from individual pupils. It provides a measure of the learning climate of a school. With reference to school data already available from the national sample and accumulating LEA data, it will be possible to indicate 'at risk' profiles for schools in respect of their learning climate based on objective comparative data sets. The evaluation data for PASS has already established a clear correlational link with attainment at both the individual pupil and whole school levels. This would enhance the LEAs support to schools by including the learning climate from pupils' perspective as a measure.

The use of the learning climate approach would also identify particular issues within schools for action. For example, it would be possible to identify that a school had an issue about pupil attitudes to attendance as compared to other schools. This would allow both earlier intervention and a more creative use of the Education Welfare Service working in partnership with schools. Another example might be the case of a significantly lowered rating on the 'Response to curriculum demands'

Primary - Secondary Transfer

Primary secondary transfer and continuity of learning is a key issue for many LEAs. PASS data demonstrates that attitudes show a marked drop across the phase transfer but that this is not consistent. One LEA is using PASS data to establish both a baseline and to identify school transfer situations where the decline is either less marked or non-existent. This is being used to help identify effective practice. In the future the PASS data will then be used to evaluate the impact on pupils to changes in the transition planning and curriculum continuity. The intention is to have information about what works from the pupils' perspective as opposed to simply relying on adults' views of what is effective.

PRIMARY SCHOOL GENDER ISSUES

In the national sample for PASS, girls are generally more positive in their attitudes than boys on most factors. This profile mirrors the national picture of girls achieving higher levels of attainment than boys. Occasionally, in whole school surveys, a different learning climate is found. An urban primary school found that girls' attitudes were lower than boys in a number of PASS factors. They used the whole school profile to identify the girls with this lowered profile. There were a number of girls with significantly lowered attitudes.

The concerns centred on two PASS factors in particular:

- * Preparedness for learning
- * Confidence in learning

In order to address this issue the school tried a range of responses:

- * All the Y4-6 teachers and learning support practitioners (LSPs) were made aware of the pupils' profiles and took these into account when working with the pupils. In particular the LSPs concentrated on checking the ways in which the pupils tackled new tasks. Specific attention was given to those tasks that required existing skills to be used in different ways in order to support the generalisation of learning.
- * A short course in study skills was run.
- * The homework and after school clubs that the school ran were extended to give the pupils the opportunity for study skills and, what the school called 'learning