

Key Stage 3

National Strategy

Heads of Department

Status: Recommended

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Auditing a subject in Key Stage 3

Name of School:

Headteacher:

Subject being audited:

Senior manager with
oversight of this subject:

Head of department

Other staff with responsibility, eg.
literacy co-ordinator or SENCO:

Date of completion of audit:

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Introduction

This booklet is to help a department or faculty to decide on priorities for strengthening its work and to draw up an action plan to improve standards in the subject. It can be used to supplement the whole-school development plan.

The audit is best carried out in the summer term when a wider range of information on pupils' performance is available. A senior manager and the head of department or faculty are likely to lead it, but all staff in the department should be included in discussions and contribute to the gathering of evidence.

Many of the judgements needed can be made through discussion in two or three departmental meetings. Others will arise from analysing test and examination data, looking at samples of pupils' work and marking, referring to records of pupils' progress and from observing lessons. Information from lessons that have already been observed as part of the school's normal routines can be used, perhaps supplemented by observation of a further small sample of lessons across Key Stage 3. The gathering of evidence, especially lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils work, will need to be planned carefully over a few weeks, since it may require the equivalent of two days of the head of department's time.

The use of best-fit phrases and tick boxes throughout the booklet helps to keep recording to a minimum. Once the possible points for action in each section have been determined, the head of department can complete the action plan. Senior managers and departmental staff will then have a clear view of the overall developments that are needed and how best to use the professional support of a Key Stage 3 consultant.

Standards in Key Stage 3

Based on last year's KS3 test results and teacher assessments, how do the overall standards achieved by pupils compare with national averages? You could refer to the benchmark information in the DfES's Autumn Package.

Tick boxes or enter grades as appropriate.

All subjects

Overall trends over three years.

Trends over three years	risen significantly	risen a little	stayed about the same	fallen
Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in the subject on entry to Year 7 has:				
Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in the subject by the end of Key Stage 3 has:				

Core subjects only

Percentage of all pupils attaining level 5 and above

Attainment in KS3 tests:	National averages		
	above	in line	below
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving level 5 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of boys achieving level 5 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of girls achieving level 5 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving level 6 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of boys achieving level 6 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of girls achieving level 6 and above was:			

PANDA grade for last year's KS3 tests in the subject in comparison with all schools:	
PANDA grade for last year's KS3 tests in the subject in comparison with similar schools:	

Non-core subjects only

Percentage of all pupils attaining level 5 and above

Attainment in KS3 tests:	National averages		
	above	in line	below
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving level 5 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of boys achieving level 5 and above was:			
Proportion (%) of girls achieving level 5 and above was:			

Attainment and progress in KS3 of different groups of pupils

Analysis of data	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
The department analyses its assessment, attendance and other performance information by year group, gender, ethnicity and background of pupils.			

Consider the following groups and any others particularly relevant to your own school or department. You should consider gender as a general issue within each of the groups.

pupils in **different year groups**

pupils from **different sets**

pupils with **special educational needs**

pupils who are **high attainers** in the subject

pupils learning **English as an additional language**

pupils from **ethnic minority** communities

pupils from **travelling** communities

How does the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils compare with the general national and LEA profile? You could use the value added and benchmark information in the DfES's Autumn Package.

Comments on noticeable differences in the attainment and progress of particular groups:

--

What could be done?

Where relevant, list up to two action points directed at addressing differences in progress or attainment of:

Different year groups, sets or classes, including differences between boys and girls	Pupils learning English as an additional language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■
Pupils with SEN, or gifted and talented pupils	Pupils from particular communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■

Attainment in different aspects of the subject

Based on the department's records of pupils' progress and pupils' self-assessments, are there any aspects of the subject where pupils show particular strengths or weaknesses? If so, record them here. You may want to use for comparison purposes those documents that are relevant to the subject, eg. National Curriculum level descriptions; key objectives for Years 7, 8 and 9 where available; the expectations set out in the Framework for teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9 and the Framework for teaching mathematics: Years 7, 8 and 9.

Year 7, high attainers	Year 7, middle attainers	Year 7, lower attainers
Year 8, high attainers	Year 8, middle attainers	Year 8, lower attainers
Year 9, high attainers	Year 9, middle attainers	Year 9, lower attainers

What could be done?

List up to two action points to improve pupils' attainment in each group.

Year 7

-
-

Year 8

-
-

Year 9

-
-

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour

Base judgements on staff discussions, lesson observations and, where possible, talking to pupils about their work.

Tick the most appropriate boxes.

In general:	Virtually all pupils	Most pupils	Some pupils	Relatively few pupils	Insufficient evidence
Pupils show an interest in learning the subject and have positive attitudes towards it					
They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other					
They answer questions willingly, explaining and demonstrating their ideas clearly using subject-specific vocabulary					
They present written and graphical work carefully					
They concentrate and try hard, even when the work is demanding					
They show some initiative and can plan and organise their work without direct supervision; for some of the time they work independently					
They respond positively to suggestions for improving their work.					
They complete homework tasks conscientiously					

Are there any noticeable differences in pupils' attitudes or behaviour between different year groups, classes or different groups of pupils? If so, note them here.

What could be done?

List up to three action points to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

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Planning

Schemes of work and medium-term planning

How effective is your planning in Key Stage 3 overall? Check your practice against the following questions and tick the appropriate boxes.

Does your medium-term plan/scheme of work:	usually	sometimes but not always	rarely
outline the work pupils will be taught over the year and each term, with the time or number of lessons to be allocated to each topic?			
specify learning objectives in line with expectations in the English or mathematics Frameworks, the NC programmes of study/QCA schemes of work, or agreed syllabus?			
provide breadth and balance across all aspects/attainment targets of the subject?			
identify when and how to develop cross-curricular skills, such as: literacy; numeracy; ICT; thinking skills and problem solving?			
consciously build on work done in the subject at Key Stage 2?			
specify special provision for pupils who need it, eg. 'catch-up' for Year 7 pupils who transfer at level 3; support for pupils with SEN; support for pupils with EAL?			
provide regular opportunities to make connections between different aspects of the subject and to revisit aspects/topics?			
build in time for regular review and self-assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding?			

What could be done?

List up to two action points to improve medium-term planning.

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Short-term planning

Effective short-term or day-to-day planning is a key element of the Key Stage 3 Strategy. The main task of short-term planning is to explain what, how and when pupils are to be taught and to identify the activities to promote, extend and consolidate their learning.

Do your short-term (day-to-day) plans for a unit of work:	usually	sometimes but not always	rarely
identify clear objectives for what pupils are to achieve in a lesson, based on the medium-term plan?			
indicate the key subject vocabulary to be emphasised?			
outline the main teaching inputs, and key points for teacher exposition, modelling and questioning?			
outline the focus for development of the lesson, including the main tasks and activities for pupils, and the time these are to take?			
outline expectations for higher attaining pupils, and any extended tasks for them?			
indicate which pupils will receive extra support during lessons, and any modifications or simplifications of tasks and activities for them?			
indicate the essential resources needed, including relevant sections of published materials, practical equipment, and the use of ICT?			
outline key points to be summarised or addressed at the end of the lesson?			
indicate, as relevant, homework assignments?			

What could be done?
List up to two action points to improve short-term planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■

Teaching

Initial impressions, based on departmental discussions, can be recorded first. The head of department and a senior manager will also need to use information from lessons in the subject that have already been observed as part of the school's normal routines, and/or specifically observe over a period of time a sample of lessons across Key Stage 3. Record here whether lessons have the key features listed below.

Key: 1. the feature is well established 2. the feature is evident in some lessons but not all 3. the feature is not yet part of practice	Initial impression 1/2/3	Observed evidence 1/2/3	Comments/action
Expectations of the level of work and pupils' behaviour are high; there is a productive working atmosphere.			
Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. They and their pupils use subject-specific vocabulary correctly.			
Teachers tell pupils what they are expected to learn in a lesson, and pupils understand which objectives/targets are being addressed.			
Lessons are well structured; a variety of activities is used so that pace and momentum are maintained.			
Teachers actively teach the whole class or groups throughout lessons, they communicate an interest in and enthusiasm for the subject to pupils.			
Group work is purposeful, focused and well-paced. Routines are established which support independent learning.			
All pupils are expected to be engaged and to contribute through a range of opportunities for participation.			
Pupils receive oral and written feedback targeted at improving their work.			
There are sufficient opportunities in some lessons for all pupils to think analytically or creatively, or to reason.			

[continued opposite]

Key: 1. the feature is well established 2. the feature is evident in some lessons but not all 3. the feature is not yet part of practice	Initial impression 1/2/3	Observed evidence 1/2/3	Comments/action
Teaching is inclusive, ensuring that all pupils are challenged and supported effectively and are fully involved in the lesson; including; high-attaining pupils; those with SEN; those with EAL.			
A purposeful plenary, normally at the end of a lesson, helps pupils to consolidate key aspects of the lesson and deepen their knowledge and understanding.			
If available, support staff are deployed effectively during whole-class and group time.			

Are there any noticeable differences between the teaching of different year groups or different groups of pupils? If so, note them here.

Where observed evidence indicates that an aspect of teaching is less effective than initial impressions had suggested, it will be important to decide how best to work with staff to introduce or strengthen those features.

What could be done?
 List up to three action points to strengthen teaching.

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Assessment

Tick the relevant boxes.

Do your assessments match these criteria?	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
Assessment is for learning, not just of learning. It is based on objectives from the subject's scheme of work or key objectives in the English and mathematics Frameworks. It is used to guide lesson planning and identify the particular help that individuals and groups of pupils need.			
Whole classes or groups of pupils have curricular targets for improvement, drawn from objectives from the scheme of work or key objectives in the Frameworks. Individual targets for pupils with SEN are incorporated in IEPs.			
There is a system for tracking pupils' progress against their targets and for responding to pupils who fall behind.			
Marking includes teachers' comments which show clearly what a pupil needs to do to improve. A response from pupils is expected.			
Test papers/assessment assignments are analysed to identify pupils' errors or misconceptions, and pupils are made aware of these. Particular attention is paid to the quality of pupils' reading and writing under test conditions.			
Records are manageable and useful for teachers. Individual records, incorporating pupil targets, are kept for pupils whose progress is markedly different from the norm.			
Pupil self-assessment is expected and respected and used as part of the assessment record.			

What could be done?

List up to three action points to improve assessment.

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Management of the subject and general issues

This section is not designed to give comprehensive coverage of management issues but focuses on those aspects that are particularly relevant to raising achievement.

Action planning	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
Are targets set for the proportions of pupils achieving particular levels in the subject?			
Is there a departmental action plan to meet the targets?			
Is the plan monitored regularly by the HOD and SMT?			
When senior managers monitor developments in the subject, do teachers receive feedback?			
Are the findings from monitoring linked to a programme of professional development for staff?			

What systems help to strengthen the quality of teaching in the subject:	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
a cycle of lesson observations with feedback?			
regular support with planning?			
regular moderation of pupils' work?			
regular sampling of marking and pupils' responses?			
regular departmental discussions about the quality of teaching and learning?			
a planned professional development programme for staff?			

What could be done?
List up to three action points to improve the management of the subject.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■ ■

Action Plan

Review the possible action points identified earlier and decide on up to six key priorities to improve standards in the subject. Use the table below, or a similar one, to record your priorities, photocopying extra sheets as needed.

Priority			
Success criteria and/or target(s)			
Action(s)		Person responsible	Timing or deadline
Resources			
Consultant support			
Monitoring			

Notes

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