Information for parents:
The engagement model

Standards & Testing Agency

The engagement model

What is the engagement model?

The engagement model is a teacher assessment tool to help schools support pupils who are at key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2), working below the level of the national curriculum and not engaged in subject-specific study.

Your child may be assessed using the engagement model if they have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), which mean they cannot demonstrate recognisable and specific skills, knowledge and understanding in:

- English language comprehension and reading
- English writing
- mathematics

As such, they are unable to engage in such subject-specific study.

The engagement model is formed of 5 areas of engagement:

- exploration
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

Why do schools need to assess my child?

The engagement model will help to improve the school's understanding of how well your child is engaging in the development of new skills, knowledge and concepts in the school's curriculum. It will help to understand their achievements and progress in their physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.
It is important that your child can show progress, regardless of any additional needs they may have. This will enable the school to better support your child.

What has changed in the way that my child will be assessed?

Before September 2021, your child may have been assessed using P scales.

However, an independent review found that P scales were no longer the most useful way to assess pupils with SEND. They found that P scales were designed on the basis that pupils would move in a linear way from one skill or concept to a more challenging or advanced skill or concept. Linear progress is not common for pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties.

The engagement model:

- enables a flexible and individualised assessment, allowing your child's teacher to tailor their teaching and provision to meet their specific needs
- recognises that engagement is multi-dimensional and breaks it down into the 5 areas of engagement
- supports identification of all progress made by your child and will not be limited to the linear progress that was tracked by P scales

Do I need to do anything to prepare my child for the engagement model?

No. You do not need to do anything additional to prepare your child. Schools will decide how they implement the assessment to provide a flexible, holistic assessment of pupils.

What information will I receive?

Your child's school is required to report achievements and progress to you in end of year academic reports, and in some cases will report to parents more regularly.

How will the information schools record be used?

Schools must report which pupils are assessed, using the engagement model, to the department for Education. This is so the department knows how many pupils are not engaged in subject-specific study and where they are being educated. There is no score produced for the assessment. Schools do not have to submit data about the achievements and progress made by your child. This is because the progress that your child makes will be personal to them, and it is not possible to compare data with other pupils being assessed in the same way.

Further information

Your child's teacher will be able to answer any questions you may have about the engagement model. For further details you can also visit www.gov.uk/STA.

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