



caspa 2010

Comparison and Analysis of Special Pupil Attainment

Assessment and moderation in CASPA

This document gives an overview of the recording of assessment results in CASPA, in particular the use of sub-divisions of outcome levels, and discusses the features in CASPA to assist in improving the consistency of assessment and to support moderation of assessment results against external references which are essential to ensure reliability in the bench-marking of attainment and progress.

Assessment in CASPA:

CASPA uses a scoring scheme that includes sub-divisions of outcome levels. Schools that use assessment products such as B Squared and PIVATS will be familiar with the use of sub-divisions of levels; the rationale for using sub-divisions of levels within CASPA is two-fold:

- to achieve compatibility with B Squared and PIVATS
- to allow the small amounts of progress within levels that are made by some pupils to be recorded, the importance of which was stressed by QCA in their publication 'Using the P Scales'

Guidance on CASPA for schools using B Squared or PIVATS can be found in the documents '*Import assessment results from B Squared*' and '*Import assessment results from PIVATS*'.

For other schools who are not familiar with the use of sub-divisions of outcome levels, we advise the following pragmatic approach: the P Scales are already a best-fit summative judgement and in many cases you may feel a pupil's attainment falls somewhere between two 'whole' outcome levels; the use of sub-divisions simply allows you to make a finer-grained best-fit judgement. This approach is not dissimilar to the judgements schools are being encouraged to make within the Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) framework. Details of the sub-divisions available for each subject are available within the CASPA Help system.

Whilst we are unable to offer detailed exemplification for sub-divisions of levels, both the QCA descriptors for levels and a set of exemplification materials made available by Hampshire County Council can be found in the CASPA Help system: select a result data entry field, press the F1 key to access the help page for that subject and follow the links from there.

Moderation of assessment results in CASPA:

The first step to meaningful bench-marking is having confidence in your assessment results. CASPA offers two features to assist with moderation:

- multi-media portfolios of moderated work to provide an external reference point for assessments
- reports to assist in ensuring consistency of assessment between pupils within your school

Multi-media portfolios of moderated work, made available to CASPA users by West Sussex County Council, are included within the CASPA Help system for many subjects; select a result data entry field, press the F1 key to access the help page for that subject and follow the links from there to access teacher-annotated examples of work at that particular outcome level.

To assist with the consistency of assessment within schools, CASPA offers the 'Ranking report by aspect', which can be found in the 'Moderation' section of 'Reports and graphs about groups of pupils', which can be accessed either via an icon on the tool-bar or the **Reports** menu. The rationale behind the 'Ranking report by aspect' is that, regardless of each pupil's age, category of need, class or year group, all pupils achieving a particular outcome level in the chosen subject should have the same ability in that subject, and that that ability should be slightly higher than that of those pupils at the outcome level immediately below, and slightly lower than that of those pupils at the outcome level immediately above. By grouping pupils according to outcome level in the specified subject, any pupils whose outcomes are inconsistent with other pupils scoring at the same level can quickly be identified.

Moderation of categories of need in CASPA:

Bench-marking of progress in CASPA is based on three factors: age, prior attainment and category of need. To ensure confidence in the results of bench-marking, confidence is therefore required that the categories of need assigned to pupils represent the most appropriate basis on which to compare a pupil against other pupils to whom they naturally compare. For a more detailed explanation of the bench-marking model within CASPA and the use of categories of need within this, please refer to the document '*Analysis and bench-marking in CASPA*'.

By default, category of need data in CASPA will be based on the category of need data recorded in your school MIS for school census purposes, which in turn requires categories of need to match those recorded on the pupil's formal statement. Whilst there is a requirement that a pupil's formal statement should at all times be an accurate and up-to-date reflection of a pupil's actual needs, in some cases the workload involved in re-statementing of pupils may mean that the needs on the child's formal statement, and thus recorded in the school MIS, may not be the best reflection of the child's actual needs, nor be the most appropriate basis on which to compare that child against other similar children. CASPA therefore gives you the ability to select the categories of need you feel best describe your pupils.

Moderation of the the selection of category of need that you have made for your pupils as the basis of comparison against other similar children can be achieved by the use of the 'CASPA percentiles graph', accessible either via the icons on the tool-bar or via the **Reports** menu: select a particular subject and category of need and then click 'Plot school data' to superimpose the outcome levels in that subject for all pupils in your school for whom that category of need is recorded in CASPA. Pupils who are working significantly beyond the 5th and 95th percentiles for that category of need are candidates for consideration as to whether a different category of need might be a better basis for comparing them with pupils of similar characteristics for bench-marking purposes.