



Assessment policy

Date: March 2021

Aims

Effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. Teachers, children and parents can work together to raise standards for our children when there are thorough, open assessment procedures in place. This policy applies to practice in Key Stage 1 and 2 (KS1, KS2). The term 'teachers' is used here, but can, where appropriate, also mean teaching assistants.

The main aims of assessment in our schools are to:

- ☛ plan work that meets the needs of each child
- ☛ identify children who need additional support or challenge, and identify 'gaps' in their learning
- ☛ enable children to demonstrate what they have learnt, what they know, understand and can do
- ☛ help children understand what they need to do next to improve their work
- ☛ provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning
- ☛ provide school leaders with information for school evaluation

Key principles

- ☛ **Good assessment leads to good planning which in turn leads to good teaching and learning.**
- ☛ **Assessment is used as a basis for subsequent teaching and learning.**
- ☛ Assessment is based on a balance of teacher judgements and tests.
- ☛ Teacher assessments are based on performance in lessons and in books; this entails close reference to learning objectives and success criteria, which in turn entails close reference to age-related expectations.
- ☛ We also use regular formal assessments (tests).
- ☛ Assessments are recorded regularly; the assessments are based on a balance of teacher assessments and test outcomes (generally speaking, the younger the child, the more we rely on teacher assessments; likewise, the older the child, the more weighting is given to test outcomes).

The age-related expectations we have are closely based on the National Curriculum. They cover every subject.

Key Stage 1: In the National Curriculum, the Reading, Writing and Maths curricula are set out on a year-by-year basis and our age-related expectations match this. For Science and for other subjects, we have age-related expectations for the Y1/2 phase.

Key Stage 2: In Reading and Writing, the National Curriculum lists objectives across two years or across the entire key stage; we have broken these overall expectations down into individual year groups. Maths expectations are on a year-by-year basis and so are largely unchanged. For Science and the foundation subjects, we have listed objectives on a phase basis (Y3/4 or Y5/6) as our curriculum runs on a two-year cycle.

It is important to note, however, the National Curriculum (Department for Education, 2013) states in its introductions to core subjects:

Schools are ... only required to teach the relevant programme of study by the end of the key stage. Within each key stage, schools therefore have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. In addition, schools can introduce key stage content during an earlier key stage if appropriate. By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Formative assessment: on-going assessment

Teachers assess on an on-going basis. This is sometimes referred to as 'assessment for learning' (AfL) or formative assessment.

Formative assessment is carried out in all subjects, especially the core subjects of Reading, Writing or Maths. Teachers take opportunities to assess these core subjects at other times, too, so that pupils are assessed using and applying their skills and knowledge.

Reading	Maths
<p>Teachers are able to assess Reading in a variety of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 listening to children read 👉 questioning 👉 hot-seating and other drama 👉 reading tasks (eg in reading exercise books), such as RICs, story maps, story timelines 👉 traditional reading Q&A comprehension tasks 👉 phonics assessment (including screening) 👉 fluency (words per minute) <p>Teachers use their assessments of individuals / group in order to inform what learning (and therefore on-going assessment) takes place in the session, and what learning needs to happen next, especially where gaps in pupils' learning are identified.</p>	<p>Teachers can assess Maths in various ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 written work (books and worksheets)* 👉 questioning, especially open-ended questions 👉 whole-class teaching 👉 guided work 👉 practical work (observation) 👉 real-life contexts 👉 some official test questions (eg from TestBase - previous SAT questions) <p>*Rubbing out work, or doing calculations separately (eg on whiteboard) is discouraged: it wastes time but, more importantly, prevents teachers from assessing pupils' understanding eg misconceptions can't be identified.</p>
Writing	
<p>Teachers can assess Writing in various ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 written work in books 👉 whole-class white-board work (children's input during shared writing sessions) 👉 guided work (eg where teacher acts as scribe and children contribute through talk / whiteboards) <p>Teachers use independent writing as a minimum. The writing is typically at the end of a unit of work. Across the half term, this shows a balance of shorter and longer pieces, and features some cross-curricular writing.</p> <p>When assessing Writing, it's important that children are independent.</p> <p>Writing AREs are used on an individual child basis to assess children's attainment over the year and to inform planning. Teachers highlight and make notes of what has been achieved well / what was found to be difficult etc. Attitudes, speed, confidence as well as pure ability are also considered. We use term colours, linked to our school logo when highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Scholes – blue, green, pink 👉 St James' – blue, yellow, pink 👉 Moortown – orange, green, blue <p>Near the start of the year, teachers may choose to assess every child's writing against all AREs – this can be useful for a teacher to become familiar with pupils' writing and age-related expectations. However, teachers should quickly move to assessing in one of two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 assessing all children's writing against 2-3 specific ARE criteria; 👉 assessing closely only a sample of children's work and judge others based on these. <p>This means that teachers can spend more time analysing and planning for 'next steps' for pupils to fill 'gaps' in their writing skills - these next steps should be addressed as soon as possible in lessons and interventions. It also allows work to be assessed on a more regular basis and therefore helps to build up a fuller picture of a child's writing ability. The sample of writing is moderated frequently in the course of the year.</p> <p>Reference to Must Dos (Writing Policy) should be made.</p>	
Speaking & Listening	
<p>Teachers are able to assess speaking and listening during most parts of the school day (eg question and answers in whole class teaching), but various activities offer more focused assessment, including sustained group work and interaction, drama activities, show and tell and class talks and debates and discussions.</p>	

Science

Teachers continually assess children's learning and this helps to shape their subsequent teaching. At the end of the year, there is a more formal assessment and data is submitted to senior leaders who track attainment and progress to measure impact.

Foundation subjects

In foundation subjects, teachers do similar: they continually assess children's learning which informs their subsequent teaching.

At the end of a topic, teachers will make a summative assessment, indicating if children are 'currently working below', 'working towards', at 'expected' or at 'greater depth' in a subject. These are then reviewed and finalised at the end of the school year for all foundation subjects.

Summative assessment: teacher judgements

At the end of a term, teachers use a combination of on-going teacher assessment and test data to inform their final teacher judgements of pupil attainment. These are submitted on a spreadsheet that records each pupils' attainment within the school year and across school years. The data is used as a basis for pupil progress meetings.

The test data informs – not dictates – the judgements: teachers know their pupils better than the 'snap-shot' provided by a test. However, we recognise that the older the child, the more importance is placed on their test performance.

Teacher assessments submitted should be based on a prediction: the Sphere band (see below) should be decided based on **where a teacher predicts a pupil will be** by the end of the year; these predictions may change during the year.

Summative assessment: tests

Alongside on-going assessments, tests in aspects of core subjects provide summative assessment data. This means we can monitor progress in an objective way. From Y2 upwards, there are mid-year tests in Reading, Maths and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (in Y1, we test only at the end of the year).

If a pupil is absent for a test, the teacher does not follow this up at a later date. This is to make sure that a child returning from an absence is in class, learning. It also lightens workload for teachers. (Instead of an actual test result, an estimated score is made – this helps to ensure averages for the class are representative. The score is shown as an estimate by using italics.)

Monitoring and moderating

We ensure that we make consistent judgements about standards. Monitoring of assessment takes place in order to check the validity, reliability and consistency of teachers' assessment and pupils' learning. There are various ways to monitor. These include:

- 🔗 internal and external moderations: where staff (and sometimes advisors and other external colleagues) 'check' teacher assessments, and offer constructive feedback
- 🔗 pupil progress meetings: where staff review pupil attainment, often considering a 'sense check' of tests and progress
- 🔗 book scrutinies: where staff review learning in books across a range of children (different attainments, different ages, different pupil characteristics) and/or across a period of time
- 🔗 learning discussions with pupils: where staff discuss learning with children, including sometimes asking them to re-visit some specific learning objectives
- 🔗 peer and self-assessment, so the process is an opportunity for professional development.

Reporting to pupils and parents

We strive for engagement of children and parents / carers: assessments are discussed and set in consultation with children as much as possible, and are communicated clearly in parents' / carers' appointments and in Learning Updates.

We believe that feedback to pupils is very important as it tells them how well they have done and what they need to do next in order to improve their work (see our Feedback Policy). Pupils have many opportunities to reflect and discuss their progress towards targets eg self-assessments.

We have a range of strategies that keep parents / carers fully informed of their child's progress in school. We encourage parents / carers to contact the school if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's work, and staff are nearly always available for a quick discussion before or after school.