

Abbots Farm Junior School



ASSESSMENT POLICY

Rationale:

At Abbots Farm Junior School we believe that assessment should be:

- Explicit in expectation
- Support teaching and learning
- Raise expectations

Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning. It helps us to ensure that our teaching is appropriate and that learners are making expected progress. All our staff are regularly trained in our approach to assessment and our senior leadership team are responsible for regular moderation of assessment across the school.

The principles of effective assessment practice:

Any type of assessment should....

1. Give reliable information to parents about how their child and their child's school is performing through:

- Allowing meaningful tracking of pupils towards end of key stage expectations in the new curriculum, including regular feedback to parents
- Providing information which is transferable and easily understood and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment and is consistent
- Differentiating attainment between pupils of different abilities, giving early recognition of pupils who are falling behind and those who are excelling
- Ensuring data is reliable and free from bias

2. Help drive improvement for pupils and teachers by:

- Linking assessment to improving the quality of teaching and setting ambitious targets
- Ensuring feedback to pupils contributes to improved learning and is focused on specific and tangible objectives
- Producing recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time
- Ensuring assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

3. Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation through:

- Using assessment materials that are created in consultation with those delivering best practice locally and are created in consideration of, and are benchmarked against, international best practice

Our method of assessment

Assessment serves many purposes, but the **main** purpose of assessment in our school is to help teachers, parents and pupils plan their next steps in learning.

We also use the outcomes of assessment to check and support our teaching standards and help us improve. Through working with other schools and using some external tests and assessments, we will compare our performance with that of other schools.

We assess pupils against assessment criteria, which are short, discrete, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what a pupil is **expected** to know and be able to do. Our assessment criteria are derived from the school curriculum, which is composed of the National Curriculum and Sheffield STAT tracking grids. Assessment criteria for periodic assessment are arranged into a hierarchy, setting out what children are normally **expected** to have mastered by the end of each year.

The achievement of each pupil is assessed against all the relevant criteria throughout the year and recorded onto Otrack termly through the school year. Each pupil is assessed as either '**beginning**', '**developing**' or '**secure**' at each relevant criterion contained in our expectations for that year. Where a pupil is assessed as exceeding the relevant criteria in a subject for that year they will also be assessed against the criteria in that subject for the next year. For those pupils meeting and exceeding the expected standards, we provide more challenging work.

Assessment judgements are recorded and backed by a body of evidence created using observations, records of work and testing. Assessment judgements are moderated termly by colleagues in school and by colleagues in other schools to make sure our assessments are *fair, reliable and valid*. P-levels will still be used to assess children who working pre-Y1 expected (Step 16)

Our use of assessment

At our school, teachers will use the outcomes of our assessments to summarise and analyse attainment and progress for their pupils and classes. They will then use this data to plan the learning for every pupil to ensure they meet or exceed expectations. Teachers and leaders analyse the data across the school to ensure that pupils identified as vulnerable or at particular risk at Abbots Farm Junior School are making appropriate progress and that all pupils are suitably stretched.

Ongoing dialogue to parents about their child's attainment and achievement is crucial to ensuring children make the best progress at our school. We report to parents formally through mid-year pupil progress reports, end of year reports and parent consultations in the autumn and spring terms. Parents and pupils receive rich, qualitative profiles of what has been achieved and indications of what they need to do next. We celebrate all achievements across a broad and balanced curriculum, including sport, art and performance, behaviour, and social and emotional development.

Transition between key stages

End of KS1 and KS2 assessment

A teacher assessment at the end of key stage 1 in mathematics; reading; and, writing, informed by pupils' scores is externally set by our feeder schools. National tests at the end of key stage 2 (Year 6) in: mathematics; reading; grammar, punctuation and spelling are undertaken as set out by the DfE and a teacher assessment of mathematics, reading, writing, and science is reported.

For the academic year 2014 – 2015, Year 2 and Year 6 will still be assessed and reported on using the National Curriculum levels.

How do we track achievement?

The Assessment Scale

For the year 2014-2015 we will be using the Sheffield Assessment Scale which is based on progressive learning benchmarked on a continuous curriculum from *Development Matters* (Early Education, 2012) into *The National Curriculum in England* (DfE, 2013).

Learning steps and pupil progress

The curriculum has been divided into learning steps. There are 3 steps for each chronological year. Each of the 3 steps within one curriculum year is described as **Beginning, Developing** and **Secure**. Pupils can be assessed as being on any step at any time regardless of their actual age.

Tracking children's attainment and measuring progress – English and Mathematics

The grids will support planning to address gaps in learning. They will allow staff to know:

- where pupils / groups of pupils are in their learning;
- whether pupils / groups of pupils are on track for targets;
- how much progress is being made over time.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

We believe that if not embedded, some skills within a subject will hinder children progressing at a later stage. These skills are hierarchical. They are considered as *essential* aspects for pupils to understand if the final step on a planning grid (**secure**) is to be awarded. In the English-related planning and assessment grids this means they **must be evidenced** at the embedded level. In mathematics they must be acquired.

The starting point with the grids is dependent on the ability of the child e.g. a child who has left Year 3 at secure (Step 24) will start Year 4 working towards Step 25 on the Year 4 grid. For a child who is not secure at Year 3 they will continue at the relevant step on the Year 3 grid. Grids will be passed up to the next teacher.

Assessing pupils who are newly arrived

Pupils new to English may briefly appear pre step 16 so Sheffield Achievement Survey levels 1-4 have been mapped onto the assessment grids. This does not reflect learners' cognitive ability. Listening and Speaking, crucial to language learning, is important to record, particularly in the early stages of English language acquisition. Learners can have uneven levels of progress and these two skills often precede reading and writing.

Reporting tracking using the grids

A pupil is not required to demonstrate a statement on a specific number of occasions for them to be assessed as having achieved it. However, they should be able to demonstrate and apply the skill or knowledge independently, where appropriate in a different subject or context. Problems and texts should be age-related to the grid from which they are derived.

English (Writing, SPAG, Reading):

- Writing and the Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation grids will be used for *each individual* child, however one reading grid will be used to represent a similar ability group of *between 5 and 6* children.
- For a more rounded and accurate judgement, all of the English based grids have 3 'boxes' alongside each statement, in which to enter a star. This is in recognition that objectives can only be met over a period of time, *eg, listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently.*
- The Guided Reading Book Banding system, which is used alongside our school curriculum, will ensure that readers can access texts appropriate at the **expected** stage.
- Stars in boxes use a three phase approach within each statement to indicate **depth of understanding**. These can be thought of as **'Beginning (B), 'Progressing (P)' and 'Embedded (E)'**.

- Teachers will use professional judgement as to when to indicate each of these small milestones of progress within a statement.
- Counting stars allows greater *flexibility and accuracy* in arriving at a summative assessment judgement, especially for the Entering and Developing phases.
- Steps 22-27 grids (from lower key stage 2) and Steps 28-33 grids (from upper key stage 2) in reading and writing this is particularly important because *pupils are not expected to achieve the criteria outcomes until the second year of a two-year programme.*
- Each box must be completed with a star before the next star is awarded. The stars are **cumulative** and all stars **must be** included in the total for each step e.g. B and P will equal 2 stars.

Mathematics:

- One mathematics grid will be used to represent a similar ability group of *between 5 and 6* children.
- The number of statements routinely required for a step to be achieved is given for consistency and moderation purposes.
- A step should only be awarded if achievement is spread across a range of different areas of learning.
- For statements to be completely embedded they should be demonstrated in a range of contexts and subject areas if applicable.

Recording and Reporting progress

YEAR GROUP	SSAT STEP	EXPECTED PROGRESS			RECORDING ON OTRACK FOR AN EXPECTED CHILD		
		AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER
YEAR 3	Steps 22- 24 *	Step 22	Step 23	Step 24	B3	D3	S3
YEAR 4	Steps 25- 27 *	Step 25	Step 26	Step 27	B4	D4	S4
YEAR 5	Steps 28- 30 *	Step 28	Step 29	Step 30	B5	D5	S5
YEAR 6	Steps 31- 34 *	Step 31	Step 32	Step 33	B6	D6	S6

Additional information:

* B (Beginning), D (Developing) and S (Secure)

*denotes what is **expected** for each year group

**children exceeding expectations:*

e.g. A year 3 child who has exceeded Step 24 and moved to step 25 in the Summer term would be recorded as B4

Policy created: January 2015 S Farrell