

# St Mary's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

## Assessment Policy



**A love of learning**  
**A desire for God**

### **Introduction**

Assessment is viewed as essential to, and an integral part of, effective teaching and learning. The purpose of assessment is to provide information to enable teachers and pupils to decide upon the next steps to take in order to make the best possible progress. The product of the assessments and records of children's attainment and achievement, over time, form an essential part of the school self-evaluation process.

### **Aims**

We believe that the key aim of assessment is to **support pupil achievement and progress**.

Through our assessment and reporting practice, we aim to:

- Enable pupils to understand what they have to do to reach end of lesson, unit, topic, academic year and key stage expectations.
- Allow teachers to determine what a child can/cannot do and to help them plan future support to fill any gaps in knowledge and understanding.
- Help set targets and involve pupils in their own learning.
- Give parents a clear idea of what their child can do and what they need to do to progress.
- Provide information that can be used to evaluate teaching and learning practice.
- Give pupils effective feedback so they know what they have done well and what they need to improve.
- Enable all pupils, including pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to make effective progress.

The principles that underpin assessment at St. Mary's Catholic Primary are:

- Every child can achieve: teachers are constantly evaluating: 'What do I need to do next, to enable all children in my class to achieve?' The removal of ability groupings to improve pupils' mind-sets and all pupils have the opportunity to access more challenging aspects of the curriculum.
- The Primary National Curriculum Programmes of Study are used as the expectations for all pupils. Assessment of pupil's attainment and progress is directly linked to the curriculum and evaluates pupils' knowledge and understanding of subject requirements.
- Assessment is used to ensure that all pupils' needs are being met and that they make appropriate progress.
- All children need to understand the learning objective in each of their lessons and what they need to achieve it. A 'Success Criteria' is shared, or formulated and pupils' work is assessed against this criteria.

- Strategies are used to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of key ideas and concepts before moving onto the next phase of learning.

There are three main types of assessment used at St. Mary's:

### **Formative Assessment**

This is used by our teachers to evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day basis and to tailor teaching accordingly.

### **Summative assessment**

This is used to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of a teaching period (end of a Unit/Topic, term or academic year).

### **Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment**

This is used by the Government to hold schools to account and to provide information on how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally.

## **Procedures – Formative Assessment**

### **Day-to-Day Formative Assessments**

This type of assessment is embedded across all lessons – in all subjects. Teachers assess pupils' understanding of individual learning objectives and identify where there are gaps. This tells the teacher what to focus on in future lessons and prompts them to adapt their teaching approach to improve pupils' understanding.

Strategies used will vary according to the subject and learning objective taught – these include:

- Use of rich question and answer sessions to evaluate pupil understanding and identify gaps or misconceptions.
- Use of whiteboards, flip charts and number fans to get instant feedback of understanding.
- Mini-plenaries to determine understanding at regular intervals.  
Short re-cap quizzes or recall of facts.
- In some lessons, teachers often focus on the wrong answers (which can be used to explore concepts in greater depth and to identify and address any misconceptions).
- Observational assessment.
- Scanning work for pupil attainment and progress.
- Self (or peer) assessment at the end of every lesson based on individual learning objectives and the 'Success Criteria'.
- 1:1 or group discussions with pupils.
- Next step marking and feedback (see Feedback and Marking Policy).

### **Mastery Learning**

*'Mastery learning is a specific approach in which learning is broken down into discrete units and presented in logical order. Pupils are required to demonstrate mastery of the learning from each unit before being allowed to move onto the next, with the assumption that all pupils will achieve this level of mastery if they are appropriately supported. Some may take longer and need more help, but all will get there in the end', (Commission on Assessment Without Levels).*

Formative assessment is used to show what pupils have learned well and what they still need to work on, and identifies specific 'corrective' activities to help them do this. After undertaking these corrective activities (or

alternative enrichment or extension activities for those who have already achieved mastery), formative assessments are used to evaluate further progress.

## **Procedures – Summative Assessment**

### **End of Term Summative Tests (Years 1 to 6) – Maths, Reading, GPS and Science**

At the end of every term, teachers should test pupils using summative test papers (published by Head Start). These tests give a good indication of whether pupils are working towards, meeting or exceeding year group expectations for this time of the year.

### **Writing**

Teachers should use teacher judgements and 'end of year expectations' to assess pupil's writing across subjects on a termly basis.

### **Religious Education**

Teachers should follow guidelines outlined by the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service (NRCDES). Pupils will complete an 'Assessed Task' provided by the NRCDES every term. (Please note the 'Assessed Task' should not be used for teacher assessment).

### **Other subjects**

Teachers should carry out some form of summative assessment at the end of each unit of work. The format of this assessment is the responsibility of the subject leader in conjunction with the class teacher.

## **Procedures – Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception Class)**

### **Ongoing Assessments**

Throughout our Early Years setting, practitioners use the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as a part of their daily observation, assessment and planning. On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice. Staff make regular observations of how children act and interact and take photographs and make notes of what they can do to help identify where they may be in their own developmental pathway. Teachers collect this evidence using the 'Interactive Learning Diary' program on their iPads

These judgements are used to help track pupil progress alongside evidence in pupil books, ongoing assessments, observations and notes. Analysis of data is used to inform individual pupil targets and to plan appropriate support. It is also used to help identify whole class coverage of the Early Years curriculum and more general gaps in knowledge

### **EYFS Profile**

In the final term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. This provides parents, carers and practitioners with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The profile reflects ongoing observation (as described above), records, discussions with parents and carers and adults working with the child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals (ELGs).

Practitioners must indicate whether pupils are:

- Meeting expected levels of development

- Exceeding expected levels
- Not yet reaching expected levels (Emerging)

The Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher (as a part of our Handover Meeting at the end of the academic year) to discuss each child's stage of development and learning needs. This informs planning in the first term of Year 1 and beyond.

At the end of the Reception year we give parents a written report which:

- States the child's attainment against the ELGs
- Summarises attainment in all areas of learning
- Comments on general progress including the characteristics of effective learning

## **Procedures - Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment**

Nationally standardised summative assessment provides information on how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally:

### **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check**

This check demonstrates how well a child can use the phonics skills they've learned up to the end of Year 1 and identifies pupils who need extra phonics help. It consists of 40 words and non-words that a student reads 1:1 with a teacher. Each child is scored against a national standard – children who do not meet the expected level in Year 1 are given extra phonics support and then repeat the test near the end of Year 2.

### **End of Key Stage 1 tests**

All pupils sit the following tests at the end of Year 2:

- Reading
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) – OPTIONAL
- Mathematics

Writing assessment is based upon teacher assessment using writing completed during the year.

### **Year 4 Multiplication Tables check**

This check demonstrates that the pupils' multiplication times tables knowledge is at the expected level.

### **End of Key Stage 2 tests**

All pupils will take the following tests at the end of Year 6:

- Reading
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)
- Mathematics

Writing assessment is based upon teacher assessment using writing completed during the year.

At the end of KS1 and KS2 pupils will be given a scaled score and a 'performance descriptor' against the expected standard.

We use these results to benchmark our school's performance against other schools locally and nationally. The Senior Leadership Team makes judgements about the school's effectiveness and analysis of data is used to inform the School Development Plan.

## **Assessing Pupils with SEND**

In each year group we teach the national curriculum for that year – therefore **all** children are learning the objectives for that year and are initially classed as 'Working Towards' the end of year expectation. The only time this may differ is for pupils currently on our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) register. Depending on their need, they might be taught learning objectives from an earlier year group's curriculum and assessed according to this criteria.

Assessment methods are adapted for some pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes adapting the use of questioning to give pupils with significant learning difficulties sufficient time to respond, using visual stimuli and alternative means of communication. It could be the use of verbal questions or observations rather than asking students to produce a written response. Adapted tests are often used with specific pupils. This could be the use of braille or larger print. Readers are used to read questions where appropriate and pupils are given extended time to complete papers. Scribes are used for pupils with particular gross/fine motor control difficulties.

As a school we have considered meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress.

SEND pupils are set SMART targets within their IEPs (these relate to wider areas including communication, social skills, physical development and independence) and these are evaluated at the end of each term alongside advice from external professionals.

High expectations apply equally to SEND pupils. Effort applied to learning is reflected in teacher marking, feedback and through evaluations of IEP targets. Pupils with SEND are expected to understand key concepts before moving onto the next phase of learning.

Assessment is used to diagnostically contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupil's special educational needs and any requirements for their support and intervention. Early intervention is provided promptly to address any concerns about pupils' progress (focused on very specific areas highlighted through assessments).

We use a 'graduated approach' for SEND pupils (Assess, Plan, Do and Review). During termly Pupil Progress Meetings, teachers meet with the SENDCO to carry out a clear analysis of pupils' needs. This is based on formative/summative assessment, the views of parents and pupils and, where relevant, information from outside professionals. Assessment offers next steps on each child's learning pathway and ensures a focus on long-term outcomes.

## **Reporting**

Reporting not only fulfils legal requirements but also is vital part of our relationship with parents and the wider community, serving to support and extend pupil progress.

### **Reporting to Parents**

- There is an 'open door' policy and parents can speak to teachers at any point in the year

- Termly Parent Consultation Meetings: these meetings focus on the curriculum – what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve (targets).
- Annual Reports (including assessment against end of year government expectations)
- The results of any statutory assessments e.g. the Phonics Screening Check and end of KS1 and KS2 SATs tests.

### **Reporting to Governors and Catholic Multi Academy Trust**

- The Head Teacher's Report to Governors and the Catholic Multi Academy Trust(termly)

### **Pupils**

- Through our formative assessment strategies pupils get instant feedback on a daily basis.
- Next step marking informs pupils of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are actively encouraged to respond to teacher's comments, questions and commands in their marking, to self-evaluate their work and set their own targets based on a success criteria.

### **Local Authority and Government (DfE)**

All statutory information (including relevant teacher assessments) are sent to the Local Authority and DfE as required.

### **Moderation and Standardisation**

Moderation is important to ensure a consistent approach to assessment across the school. When teacher assessments are carried out, it is important that there is evidence recorded to justify judgments made.

At St. Mary's the following takes place:

- Termly Moderation of Reading, Writing and Mathematics assessments made on OTrack (at Pupil Progress Meetings)
- Small Schools' Cluster: Moderation of Reading, Writing, Mathematics, RE and EYFS assessments
- When selected, Local Authority moderation also takes place

### **Monitoring Progress**

The school uses 'O-Track' to store data relating to achievement and attainment of the pupils. Teachers are responsible for entering data into the system on a termly basis. The system is also used by teachers and the Senior Leadership Team to monitor progress of the children throughout school and is then used to inform teaching and support strategies. It is an individual teacher's duty to ensure that data in O-track is accurate and up to date.

**James Leech**

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