

Assessment Policy

Background

In September 2015, the Department for Education directed a change from the use of levels within school to school' own assessment systems for marking out progress and attainment.

In September 2014, a working party was formed of representatives across all schools with the Trust at this time. Together, they created the current assessment system used by all Trust schools as a non-negotiable.

In September 2017, the Assessment Steering Group (ASG) was formed by Headteachers with a view to set strategic direction for assessment throughout the Trust. The ASG meets each half term and then feeds back to the Assessment Working Party. The working party continue to meet on half termly basis to evaluate the impact of the assessment system and quality assure the use of it across all schools. They then disseminate this back to schools. The approach is strongly embedded in the use of effective assessment for learning techniques across classrooms within the Trust schools.

The Primary First Trust's approach to assessment is based upon guidance issued in the following documents:

- *Assessment information for schools from the DfE (2014)*
- *The Final Report on the Commission on Assessment Without Levels (2015)*
- *Myths and facts for schools (DfE, Spring 2015)*
- *NAHT Assessment Commission Guidance (2015)*
- *DfE Assessment Frameworks (2018)*
- *OfSTED Framework (2018)*
- *Dylan Wiliam – Assessment for Learning: Why, What and How?*

Philosophy

Within our Trust, we undertake two different but complementary types of assessment: assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning.

Assessment *for* learning (formative assessment) involves the effective and instant identification of where pupils' are and the quick response to this in order to raise pupil achievement and enable pupils to make rapid progress. Crucial to this principle is the idea that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim, and how they can achieve this aim (i.e. to close the gap in their knowledge).

Assessment *of* learning (summative assessment) involves judging pupils' performance against national standards. Practitioners may make these judgements at the end of a unit of work, of a year, or of a key stage. Test results, too, describe pupil performance, in terms of levels.

Although our assessment system allows for us to make assessments *of* learning, it is assessment for learning that lies at the heart of our system and of the process of promoting children's rapid progress. Our assessment system provides a framework within which educational objectives may be set and children's attainment and progress expressed and monitored. This is done in partnership with the children, parents, staff and Governors.

Assessment for learning is incorporated systematically into all teaching strategies in order to diagnose any problems and chart progress. Our assessment system enables practitioners and stakeholders to clearly identify successes and next steps and respond to them immediately. Our assessment procedures are free from bias, stereotyping and generalisation in respect of gender, class, race and disability.

Aims and Objectives

- To gather information about the performance of individual pupils, groups and cohorts or pupils so that it can be used to inform target setting at a range of levels.
- To track progress made by individuals and groups of pupils to facilitate early intervention and effective targeting of resources.
- To provide information to inform the school's strategic planning.
- To analyse records to help clarify patterns of performance over time and responses to specific teaching approaches.
- To review and, if necessary, adjust curriculum provision in terms of breadth and balance.

Formative Assessment procedures

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) – read in conjunction with the Schools' EYFS Policy

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the **end** of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes a variety of forms including observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement and is sent to the Local Authority.

Early Years Leaders created the Early Years Outcomes document based on 'Development Matters' and adapted it. The document is split into ages and stages of development for the seven areas of learning and also includes the Early Learning Goals and Early Years Outcomes Plus (for the more able children). The assessment system is on SIMs, where teachers mark off when they have sufficient evidence. Teachers then award children a best fit stage of development with an indicator of how securely they are working at this level (b, w and s).

As part of the system on SIMs, teachers also assess children's development in the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' and measures children's wellbeing and involvement through the 'Leuven Scales'.

EYFS Formative assessment

During the first few weeks in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. This assessment also takes into account parents views and transition information from feeder settings although the teacher makes the final judgement.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children within different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play based activities. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Learning Journeys, record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations. IN addition to this we also use the Tapestry App to gather evidence in the form of formal and informal observations. These observations are shared with parents as they are created.

Parents are asked to contribute to assessment through the use of the Tapestry App. Parents are sent notifications as the observations occur and have the opportunity to both comment and record their own photographic and video evidence. We also use Parents' Evening as an opportunity to discuss strengths of the children and where they need support.

EYFS Baseline assessment

Baseline assessment will be carried out using the EExba baseline materials during the children's first few weeks in the setting. The Reception Baseline Assessment will provide a snapshot of where children are working when they arrive at school. It is an activity based assessment focusing on the children's ability in Language and Communication and Maths. We will use this alongside our own school baseline to inform our planning and intervention work.

EYFS Moderation of judgements

The school has a duty to moderate judgements made to ensure all are accurate and robust and in line with national exemplifications. We do this by:

- Moderating judgements within the EYFS between teachers and other staff as appropriate, looking at evidence and listening to the teacher's professional voice.
- Moderating judgements as part of the whole school moderating process

- Working alongside another local schools to discuss statements, look at exemplification material and agree judgments
- Attending Academy trust moderation meetings half termly
- Attending Local Authority moderation sessions
- Attending information sessions to ensure teachers knowledge is current

Transition from EYFS to KS1/SEALS

When children leave EYFS, it is expected that they will be well-prepared to be ready to access the KS1 curriculum. Where this is not the case, these children will remain working on the EYFSP until the end of the Autumn term. At this point, any children not working at 1B will transfer to being assessed using the PFT SEALS.

SEALS are an addition to the school assessment system and are aimed at children who at the end of Autumn 2 in Year 1 are not able to access Band 1. Though in some circumstances teachers, in conjunction with the SENCo and Senior Leaders, can use their discretion as to whether SEALS need to be started earlier. They could also be used with older children, who are bridging the gap between P8 and Band 1 (having been identified as having SEND or being new to the education system).

SEALS are used to assess progress in Reading, Writing and Maths. Only a small number of children will need to access this system and they will be closely monitored by class teachers, Assessment Leaders and SENCOs. Progress of children using SEALS will be reported to the Raising Standards Team at their termly meetings and reviewed during Pupil Progress Meetings.

Children in Year 1 who do not make rapid progress through SEALS should be referred to external agencies for assessments to identify areas of SEND which are a barrier to their learning and progress.

Children in Year 1 are not able to access the curriculum at Band 1 of the assessment system will be baselined during the Autumn term, ready to start using SEALS in Spring 1.

Key Stage 1 and 2

Across the Schools in the Trust, an assessment system has been created using the 2014 National Curriculum. Statements have been created for each year group (now known as a band) for reading, writing, maths and EGPS from Years 1-6. These statements have been recorded on ALS (Assessment for Learning Sheet). A specific amount/type of statements needs to be achieved for a child to have reached a certain 'step'. All of the statements have to be met so that a child can be considered as 'secure' in that subject. There are 6 steps per band: B (beginning), B+ (beginning +), W (within), W+ (within +), S (secure) and S+ (secure +).

On the ALS, some statements have a more significant weighting; these are called KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and are written in blue. A specific amount of KPIs have to be met for a step to be achieved; this varies for each subject. Although these statements are of higher importance, all statements have to be met to be 'secure' by the end of the academic year.

When coming to a judgement, it is vital that teachers understand that you have to use the exact criteria prescribed to achieve each step; **it is not best fit.** It is at the teacher's discretion as to whether a statement has been met, however a teacher needs to be confident that a child can meet the statement independently.

The Assessment Leader will inform staff of the date that the data needs to be submitted onto SIMs; usually, the end of Autumn, Spring and Summer Term. Before the data is submitted, it will be moderated within schools on a half termly basis and there will be three Trust hub moderation events throughout the year.

New children entering the school at either KS1 or KS2 must be baselined using the ALs marksheets on Sims which will generate a baseline for them using the specific criteria. A baseline must then be recorded on SIMs.

Due to the nature of the use of summative assessment at the end of Year 6, Year 6 teachers are using test data to track progress, identify gaps and ascertain attainment using past SATs papers. The order of the test papers used throughout the year are decided upon at the ASG at the start of that academic year. Due to their scrutiny of scaled score outcomes on termly testing, there isn't an expectation for Year 6 teachers to use SIMs assessment system. Progress is evidenced in books and the continual progression of individual scaled scores.

Expectations of Attainment and Progress

The expectation is that children in Year 1 will achieve at least 5 steps progress, whereas Years 2-5 the minimum expectation is 6 steps progress. To be at age related expectations by the end of the academic year, children would be working at an S (secure). Where children are not on track to meet or exceed end of year expectations, the number of steps progress targeted for that child will be greater than 6 steps in order that this gap is closed. It is expected that Trust schools will use their own booster, gap fill and intervention systems in order to close these gaps.

KS1 and KS2 Moderation of judgements

Schools have a duty to moderate all assessment judgements made to ensure all are accurate and robust and in line with national exemplifications. We do this by:

- Moderating judgements within KS1 and KS2 between teachers and other staff as appropriate, looking at evidence and listening to the teacher's professional voice.
- Moderating judgements as part of the whole school moderating process
- Working alongside another local schools to discuss statements, look at exemplification material and agree judgments
- Attending Academy trust moderation meetings 3 times a year
- Inter trust moderation for the EYFS, Yr 2 and Yr 6
- Attending Local Authority moderation sessions
- Attending information sessions to ensure teachers knowledge is current

Marking and feedback in Early Years, KS1 and KS2

Marking and feedback is designed to enable pupils to evaluate their own learning and to act as a mechanism to further embed and develop skills, concepts and understanding in every

subject taught. There are key styles of marking and feedback that fosters pupils' development and mastery of skills.

Please refer to the school's feedback policy for its philosophy and specifics related to marking.

In Early Years, the details of the observation and marking guidance can be found in section 2 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and each schools EYFS policy.

Summative Assessment in KS1 and KS2 - External

Year 1 Phonics Screening

At the end of Year 1 (a week in June), every child will complete a phonics assessment. The phonics screening check is a short, light-touch assessment to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. Every year a pass mark (threshold) is set by the Standard and Testing Agency. Any children who did not meet the threshold will retake the assessment in Year 2. The assessment is administered internally by teachers. The assessment consists of a list of 40 words, half real words and half non-words, which Year 1 children read to a teacher. Administering the assessment usually takes between four and nine minutes per child.

Key Stage 1 SATs

The KS1 SATs are more heavily weighted by teacher assessment rather than the results of a test. Teachers will determine an outcome for each child in Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing, Maths as well as an overall outcome in Science. To help inform the teacher assessment judgement, children will sit tests during a week in May. The tests are as follows:

- Two reading papers
- Two maths paper (arithmetic and reasoning paper)
- English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test

Key Stage 2

At the end of KS2 children will sit tests in Reading, EGPS and Maths. The tests are as follows:

- One reading paper
- Three maths papers (one arithmetic and two reasoning papers)
- EGPS paper

The outcomes of the test will be generated using a scaled score. The scaled score will have a lower end point below 100 and an upper end point above 100. A pupil's scaled score will be based on their raw score. The raw score is the total number of marks a pupil receives in a test, based on the number of questions they answered correctly. The pupil's raw score will be translated into a scaled score using a conversion table. A pupil who achieves the national standard will have demonstrated sufficient knowledge in the areas assessed by the tests. This will mean that they are well placed to succeed in the next phase of their education.

All Schools within the Trust will include results from the national curriculum tests in their annual reports to parents and on the school's website (summative). Schools will report the pupil's scaled score and whether or not they met the national standard.

DfE Assessment Frameworks

The DfE have issued assessment frameworks which support Teachers' understanding of the key skills required for the tests in KS1 and 2. The contents of these will be used by teachers to supplement the content of the Year 2 and 6 ALs:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-assessment-frameworks-at-the-end-of-key-stage-1>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-assessment-frameworks-at-the-end-of-key-stage-2>

Summative Assessment in KS1 and KS2 – Internal

Each half term, children in Years 2 and 6 will complete an assessment for Reading, EGPS and Maths using SATs past papers. (Children in Year 2 will start this during Autumn 2) The tests will be marked internally and results will be gap analysed. The gap analysis is used to identify next steps in learning and ensure that appropriate intervention is planned. Results are then used to complete data prediction spreadsheets which are submitted to the Trust.

Booster, Gap Fill and Intervention Systems

Booster Groups are formulated and timetabled based on review of all children's progress and attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at the end of each half term. The review is carried out by members of SLT and Phase Leaders before the end of each half term, after that half term's 'data capture' and is part of the Pupil Progress Meeting cycle. During this process, class teachers and Phase Leaders inform those who conduct the booster groups of the needs of the group. The booster groups are timetabled and documented with the particular need. Booster sessions are undertaken by LPAs and teachers. The impact of the Booster sessions is reviewed within Pupil Progress Meetings and as part of the data fed back at Raising Standards meetings held each half term.

Our responsive teaching model enables with the opportunity to give the children instant feedback. It allows our class teachers to be reactive in their approach to gap fill and groups are therefore fluid and updated on a daily basis, based on responses to teaching from the day before.

Interventions are planned according to the specific needs of children and are monitored by our school inclusion lead. Please see Inclusion Policy for further details.

Speech and Language interventions are based on programmes provided by the speech and language therapists following assessment of a child's needs, and are delivered by trained LPAs. These needs can be linked to their expressive and receptive language or to articulation.

Maintaining Effective Assessment Communication with Stakeholders

It is a core belief of our assessment approach that all stakeholders should have knowledge of and contribute to our assessment systems and processes for assessment for learning.

Communication of Assessment between the Trust, Leaders and Wider School Team Members

Each half term, every school within the Trust generates a Milestones Document which is analysed by all Raising Standards Leaders and the Schools' Trust Leading Head Teacher. This document is used in the termly Raising Standard Meeting to assess the impact of work undertaken since the last meeting, assess rates of progress and attainment and to plan next steps for improvement across the next half a term. The Milestones Document is used to report school progress to the Local Governing Body and the Trust Board of Directors. Annually, leaders also analyse the reports published on ASP (Assessing Schools Performance). Again, these documents are used to report successes and next steps to the Local Governing Body and the Trust Board of Directors.

It is expected that head teachers and assessment leaders report Milestones findings to all members of school teams at the start of each and every term.

Communication of Assessment to Parents

There are a number of ways in which the school communicates with parents with regard to their child's assessment:

- **Annual School Report**

All pupils receive an End of Year Report towards the end of the academic year. This occurs in all Key Stages. The report gives an indication of the aptitudes and abilities, along with the experiences and enjoyment each child has had within each subject area. Within the report, parents are informed of how much progress their child has made, along with whether they are 'working at the expected level for a pupil of their age', 'working towards the expected level for a pupil their age' or 'working above the expected level for a pupil their age.'

Each class teacher also comments on the children's personal attributes and experiences at the end of the report with further 'next steps', as does the Head Teacher. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss the report with their child's class teacher, after the report has been taken home.

- **Parent's Meetings**

Formal Parent's meetings are held twice a year. Parents/Carers are invited into school to meet with their child's class teacher to discuss their child's progress. At this meeting, the child's parent(s)/carer(s) is informed of their child's attainment and progress thus far along with how the child will continue to make progress with advice offered as to how the parent(s)/carer(s) can assist with this at home.

Parents are made aware that they are able to meet with their child's Class Teacher at any time throughout the year to discuss their child's progress and their child's assessment outcomes. They may be invited by the school or class teacher to do so if necessary.

Assessment Leader Responsibilities

Assessment Leader will:

- Set the dates for assessment levels to be handed in.
- Liaise with staff concerning the assessments, supporting them as necessary.
- Plan moderation staff meetings, when staff can discuss assessed work and also look at a sample of the children's written work.
- Analyse data so that it can be brought to Raising Standards Meetings to share with staff and governors the children's progress, identifying priorities for the future.
- Work closely with the PFT Assessment Associate to discuss, implement and monitor Trust wide assessment procedures.

Children with Special Educational Needs – Read in Conjunction with the Schools' Inclusion Policy

Children who are working below Band 1 will be assessed using the SEALS system as previously explained above.

Equal Opportunities

In our school every child has an entitlement to an assessment process that:

- Accurately identifies and tracks their progress.
- Highlights strengths and difficulties along with strategies to manage them.
- Raises the expectations of success and celebrates a broad range of achievements.
- Provides reliable and creditable information to support learning.
- Is motivating and actively involves them in reviewing their work and setting realistic target setting.