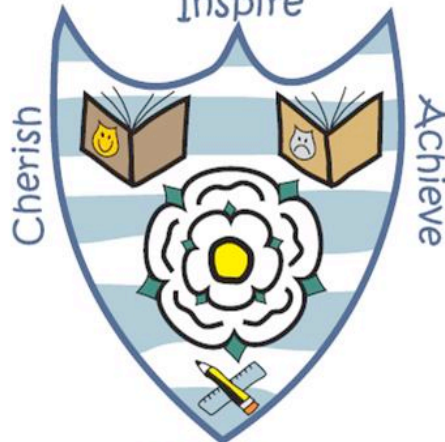


Birkwood Primary

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School

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

**UPDATED OCTOBER 2015**

*Those who cannot assess cannot teach. Assessment is therefore too important to be the sole preserve of national tests and assessments. Assessment is the means used by good teachers to evaluate that progress and diagnose the needs of the pupil. Assessment helps pupils engage more fully in their own development and learning. Assessment helps parents to understand and, as relevant, participate in their children's educational journey. Assessment helps head teachers and governors to plan strategically the use of the resources of the school. Assessment of individual pupils and school accountability are interdependent. Assessment includes externality and objectivity.*

**Headlines from Lord Stuart Sutherland's report in the NAHT Commission on Assessment, February 2014**

## **1. Rationale**

We believe that assessment provides the basis of informed teaching, helping pupils to overcome difficulties and ensuring that teaching builds upon what has been learned. It is also the means by which pupils understand what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Formative assessment creates a positive learning environment where children can see the steps necessary for their own success. It enables teachers to set appropriate work at the level necessary for the children's continuing progress. Summative assessment is important for accurate information regarding a child's attainment and progress. It informs whole school target setting and prediction of a cohort's future attainment.

## **2. Aims and objectives**

The underpinning principles of assessment:

1. Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning.
  - a. Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning.
  - b. Assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate and review their progress.
2. Assessment is fair.
  - a. Assessment is inclusive of all abilities.
  - b. Assessment is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.
3. Assessment is honest.
  - a. Assessment outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects.
  - b. Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning.
  - c. Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy.
4. Assessment is ambitious.
  - a. Assessment places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and expected standards.
  - b. Assessment embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child.
  - c. Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners.
5. Assessment is appropriate.
  - a. The purpose of any assessment process should be clearly stated.
  - b. Conclusions regarding pupil achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (to age, to the task and to the desired feedback information).
  - c. Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement.
  - d. Assessment should demand no more procedures or records than are practically required to allow pupils, their parents and teachers to plan future learning.

6. Assessment is consistent.
  - a. Judgements are formed according to common principles.
  - b. The results are readily understandable by third parties.
  - c. A school's results are capable of comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally.
7. Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:
  - a. pupils in developing their learning;
  - b. parents in supporting children with their learning;
  - c. teachers in planning teaching and learning. Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent;
  - d. school leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
  - e. government and agents of government.
8. Assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

***Taken from the NAHT Commission on Assessment Report 2014***

### **3. Types of assessment:**

We use a combination of formative and summative assessments:

#### **Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning – AfL)**

Formative assessment is a powerful way of improving pupils' achievement. It is based on the principle 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 the aim.

Formative assessments are used to:

- identify children's strengths and gaps in their skills/knowledge
- identify next steps for learning
- inform future planning
- enable appropriate strategies to be employed
- facilitate the setting of appropriate targets for the class, group, and individual
- track children's rate of progress
- facilitate an evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- inform future teaching and learning strategies
- identify individuals and groups for specific intervention support.

#### **Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)**

Summative assessment is important for informing both parents, governors and teachers of a child's attainment and progress. This will also inform whole school target setting and prediction of a cohort's future attainment.

Summative assessments are used to:

- identify attainment through one-off standardised tests at any given point in time
- record performance in a specific area on a specific date
- provide age standardised information
- provide end of key stage test data against which the school will be judged
- ensure statutory assessments at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are met
- provide information about cohort areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future

### **4. Planning for assessment**

- The 2014 National Curriculum objectives and Development Matters are used to guide our teaching. These documents provide us with the framework to ensure breadth and balance in our curriculum.
- The school ensures that there is progression of skills planned in year on year.

- Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives and success criteria, based upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each child. We strive to ensure all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability.
- The Sheffield Teaching and Assessment Tool (STAT materials) is used alongside the New National Curriculum and this is used to make assessments for all pupils in Reading, Writing, Spelling Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) and Mathematics. STAT is effective in informing teachers about their pupils and enabling them to plan with clear differentiation.
- Teachers use focused marking to assess children's progress in relation to the planned learning objectives and set next steps to show where the child is in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim. Teachers use this information when planning for subsequent lessons.

### **Assessment and Reporting in the Foundation Stage**

Children in the Foundation Stage are observed regularly against the 'Development Matters' objectives. Observations are ongoing and recording in many varied ways. Often, learning is captured through photographs, recorded on labels and on documents filed for each child. All the evidence for each child will help teachers make judgements on the Foundation Stage profile.

**Focus Activities:** during focus activities, teaching staff write comments on the child's work, often identifying the level of support needed or if the work was done independently. Next steps are also identified. Children, where possible, are encouraged to comment on their learning and next steps are also discussed with the children in child friendly terms.

### **Assessment and Recording in Key Stage 1 and 2**

- Teachers use assessment for learning (AfL) to provide on-going assessment, through the use of focused marking and/or observations of children's work against learning objectives and success criteria as per our Marking Policy. This information is then used to assess progress towards meeting learning targets and to identify and set next step targets for each child.
- Teachers use the STAT tracking grids for each child on an on-going basis to record progress and to identify next steps for learning in reading, writing, SPaG and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is recorded in steps, corresponding to each year group.
- Year group targets set expected National Curriculum levels for individual children to reach at the end of each academic year.
- Annotated plans and planning notes made by class teachers and other adults involved with each child record other important information about the progress of children in the class.
- A variety of tests may be used from time to time as part of the assessment process to identify progress and gaps in learning.
- Children with identified special educational needs and those children not making expected progress are supported appropriately and their needs assessed regularly.
- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to identify and analyse progress and set targets, in reading, writing, SPaG and mathematics for all classes.
- Assessments are passed on to the receiving teacher at the end of each academic year.

### **5. Moderation**

Regular moderation of pupils' achievements takes place regularly to ensure consistency of judgements. Teachers meet in phase groups and within the NE Collaboration of schools to analyse children's work against National Curriculum level descriptors, STAT materials or Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Moderation between schools takes place to ensure consistency in judgements.

During the summer term, teachers in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 are involved in formal teacher assessments, as part of end of Key Stage assessments and local authority moderation. Pupils in Year 1 are tested on Phonics using the National Phonics Screening test.

### **6. Links to other policies and documents**

Please refer to:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Marking Policy

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body reviews this policy every 2 years; however, they may review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

This policy will be reviewed in October 2017.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Date \_\_\_\_\_