

# St James' CE Primary School

## Policy for Assessment



Our original Assessment Policy is intended for staff to follow. The following is a more parent-friendly version. If you would like to see the full version, contact school.

*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. The main aims of assessment in our school are to:*

- plan work that meets the needs of each child, including 'gaps' in a child's learning
- identify children who need additional support or challenge;
- 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

We review the progress of each child using age-related expectations (ARE grids). There are ARE grids for Reading, Writing, Maths and for Science and Foundation Subjects. These are closely based on the National Curriculum.

**Good assessment leads to good planning which in turn leads to good teaching and learning.**

**All assessment should be used as a basis for subsequent teaching and learning.**

**Summative assessment** can act as a basis for planning with support and challenge. Teachers should refer to the previous year's assessment data and the age-related expectations.

**Formative assessment** will inform more closely how a child is doing, allowing strengths, errors and misconceptions to be addressed, possibly straight away in a lesson and certainly in a subsequent lesson as soon as possible.

### Formative assessment: on-going assessment

As well as tests, staff assess on an on-going basis. This is 'assessment for learning' (AfL) or formative assessment. These are carried out in all subjects, especially the core subjects.

**As well as in actual Reading, Writing or Maths lessons, staff will explore opportunities to assess at other times of the day, which offers the potential to effectively assess pupils using and applying their skills and knowledge.**

Reading	Maths
<p>Through guided reading, English and topic lessons and during class novel sessions, teachers and teaching assistants are able to assess using various methods eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listening to children read (assesses actual reading ability)</li> <li>• questioning</li> <li>• hot-seating and other drama</li> <li>• reading tasks (possibly in reading journals) eg story maps, story time lines</li> <li>• reading comprehension tasks</li> <li>• phonics assessment (including screening)</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers and teaching assistants can assess Maths in various ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written work (books and worksheets)*</li> <li>• questioning, especially open-ended questions</li> <li>• whole-class teaching</li> <li>• guided work</li> <li>• practical work (observation)</li> <li>• plenaries, including those which use previous SAT questions and real-life contexts</li> </ul> <p>* Rubbing out work, or doing calculations separately (eg on whiteboard) is strongly discouraged: it wastes time but, more importantly, prevents staff from assessing pupils' understanding eg it stops staff from identifying misconceptions.</p>
Writing	
<p>Teachers and teaching assistants can assess writing in various ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written work in books</li> <li>• whole-class white-board work (children's input during shared writing sessions)</li> <li>• guided work (eg where teacher acts as scribe and children contribute through talk / whiteboards)</li> </ul> <p>Teachers use a variety of evidence to assess writing (see below). When assessing writing, it's important that children are independent.</p>	

## Speaking & Listening

Teachers and teaching assistants 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:

- guided sessions (particularly in reading) as these involve sustained group work and interaction
- drama activities eg hot seating, conscience alley, class assemblies, end-of-term productions
- show and tell and class talks
- debates and discussions, including those following Talk Time homework

## Science and Foundation Subjects

Science and foundation subjects are assessed using assessment grids with criteria directly derived from the National Curriculum with some additional expectations and areas which we consider very important eg online safety (see our Grids for Assessment and Planning (GAPs) for Science and Foundation Subjects).

As Science is a core subject, we also assess all children's knowledge, understanding and skills at the beginning and the end of a relevant topic, and at the end of the year, using tests. Test progress is monitored and action is taken to address issues where they arise.

**Using the data derived from the grids described above, staff record children's attainment using the school's own assessment tracking system at the end of each term.**

### 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 Y1 upwards, children are tested regularly in Maths, Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.

For Writing, there are no tests but teachers do carry out at least six focussed assessments to serve as a summative assessment: a minimum of two each term, one fiction and one non-fiction.

### Summative assessment: judgements

At the end of a term, teachers use a combination of teacher assessment (using the ARE Grids) and test data to inform their final teacher judgements of pupil attainment. The test data should inform – not dictate – the judgements: teachers know their pupils better than the 'snap-shot' provided by a test.

Teacher assessments submitted during the year are based on a prediction ie whether a child is on-track to meet age-related expectations.

### Learning targets

Whenever it is best to do so, teachers should also record targets derived from formative **and** summative assessments. Pupils' targets, which might be gaps in knowledge, understanding or skills, or next steps for those who can improve even further. Addressing such targets will allow individual and / or group learning needs to be addressed.

We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. Target-setting is the means by which we identify specific and measurable goals that help to improve the standards achieved by all our children. Targets may relate to individual children, groups of children or whole cohorts of children. Targets can be seen as a gap in a child's learning that needs to be filled to enable the child to progress. It may not always be appropriate or useful to identify a target / gap. These next steps should be addressed as soon as possible in 'gap-filling lessons and / or interventions. Often, through self- and peer- assessment, children will identify their own targets. Regular feedback from teachers makes children aware of how they can improve their work and achieve their target.

**There are three types of learning targets that a child may have in school:**

**Individual Targets:** these arise from recurring, specific 'steps' (from a teacher's marking), specific areas to develop (eg to show capitals clearly; to know number bonds to ten) or extra challenge; there is no specific support for the targets but children are reminded about them and encouraged to consider how they will be achieved; they may even practise the skills at home.

**Intervention Targets:** these arise when a child is selected by the teacher and / or TA to have regular practice around a very specific target.

**Pupil Support Plan:** as part of the Special Needs process, some children have Pupil Support Plans which involve specific support towards a target.

Where relevant, we inform parents about the target-setting process and the targets for their children. They have regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress towards his or her target. This helps parents identify the ways in which they can support their child with work and encouragement at home.

## Tracking

**A tracking system is used by teachers and school leaders to ensure children's learning is progressing.**

Information from the Class Tracker will be used as a basis for pupil progress meetings.

		age-related expectations	'horizontal learning'	'vertical learning'
0	working towards	not yet at the age we would typically expect (for example, children with SEND*)		working at expectations from lower year group
1	emerging	accessing the year group's learning, possibly with support	can use and apply learning in some contexts	
2	expected	secure with the year group's learning, demonstrating confidence and pace	can use and apply learning in increasing number of contexts	
3	expected, with greater depth	very secure with the year group's learning, always demonstrating confidence, pace, fluency	can use and apply learning in wide range of contexts	
4	exceeding	well above the year group's age-related expectations (possibly two years above, especially in English at KS2)		may be – not necessarily – working on expectations from higher year group

\*SEND = Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

During the year, teachers will need to submit assessment details to senior leaders and to parents.

The 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 assessment 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.

## Monitoring and moderating

We ensure that we make consistent judgements about standards in the school. 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:

<b>moderating discussions</b> , where teachers evaluate assessments and pupil progress – book scrutinies are a central part of this process	<b>one-to-one pupil progress meetings</b> , where a teacher and a school leader will evaluate pupil attainment and progress in books with reference to planning and assessment, and – importantly – by speaking with individual pupils, too
<b>writing moderations</b> where teachers meet to moderate their own judgements	<b>external moderation meetings</b> - vital to review internal assessments

Teachers are an integral part of monitoring: it is not done 'to them', but 'with them' so the process is an opportunity for professional development. Teachers work together so they can learn and guide each other; we believe this is key to long-term improvements in practice.

## Science and foundation subjects

Similar practice takes place for Science and the foundation subjects.

Teachers assess using just three points: emerging, expected and exceeding.

## Reporting to pupils and parents

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

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 Marking and Feedback Policy). Pupils have many opportunities to reflect and discuss their progress towards targets eg guided work, Feedback Forms.

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.

Each term we offer parents / carers the opportunity to meet their child's teacher. At the first meeting of the school year (October) we review the assessments from the previous year – it's a chance to talk about overall progress made and establish expectations and targets that we have identified for their child. At the second meeting of the year (mid-year) we evaluate their child's progress as measured against the targets. At each of these meetings, we provide a **Learning Update** – a brief summary of attainment and progress, indicating how a child is performing against age-related expectations.

During the summer term, we give all parents / carers a written report of their child's progress and achievements during the year. In this report we also identify target areas for the next school year. An optional third meeting of the year is a chance to follow up comments and assessments made in the child's end-of-year report.

Teachers give parents a half-termly newsletter that identifies the main areas of study for that particular class. This includes how parents / carers can support any elements of the work during the term. In addition, the range of other communications we use (learning workshops, website pages etc) provide useful information about expectations.

## Mastery, deeper learning and using and applying

Teachers ensure that children move from the previous year's age-related expectations to the current expectations for their year group. **Children who have mastered these expectations should have their learning secured in ways which deepen their learning:**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deeper learning in Reading</b></p> <p>In Reading, children should use their reading skills and read a wider range of texts which they wouldn't typically be exposed to or choose to read, or be encouraged to develop a more holistic view of their reading:</p> <p>Children who prefer fiction should be encouraged (but not be 'forced'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to read a wider range of genres of fiction, or</li><li>• to read other books of a similar theme (but different writing style), or</li><li>• to read more about what critics say about an author, or</li><li>• to read some more non-fiction</li></ul> <p>Those who prefer non-fiction should be encouraged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to compare and contrast content, or</li><li>• to read about similar content from different sources, including the internet, or</li><li>• to read some more fiction</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deeper learning in Maths</b></p> <p>In Maths, children should not be encouraged to race ahead as this can develop 'shallow' learning where there is a lack of understanding (see below*). Instead, children may be encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explain why / how a process works (eg why does decomposition work)</li><li>• spot patterns / sequences and describe them (eg odd numbers have a spare 'one', as seen on a Numicon shape; vertices on a pyramid are linked to the base, plus one for the apex)</li><li>• make predictions (eg which problem is harder to solve and why?)</li><li>• draw conclusions (eg angles on all triangles total 180°)</li><li>• explain exceptions to a rule (eg 2 is the only even prime number)</li><li>• start with an answer and work backwards (eg filling in missing digits in a columnar calculation)</li><li>• apply their learning to other areas of maths (eg link fractions, angles and a clock face)</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deeper learning in Writing</b></p> <p>In Writing, children should use their writing skills – including their knowledge and understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar – to write more independently and / or with greater flair and impact for the reader:</p> <p>Children might be encouraged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to write something over a longer period of time (such as a story with chapters)</li><li>• to write similar content but in different genres</li><li>• to write about anything they like, deciding the purpose / audience and using their knowledge and skills of text types to choose and apply appropriate feature</li><li>• to present their writing in a professional way</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Using and applying core skills across the curriculum</b></p> <p>As children are learning skills in Reading, Writing and Maths, they should be encouraged to see how these core skills are crucial to other areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>For example, children might be encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• use accurate measurements during a scientific investigation</li><li>• make a connection between dates, chronology and Maths</li><li>• understand the bias which exists in different explanations of climate change</li><li>• create a diagram to explain a scientific process</li><li>• to use language accurately when explaining and drawing conclusions in Science</li></ul>

\* For Maths, the National Curriculum (Department for Education, 2013) states:

*The expectation is that the majority of pupils will move through the programmes of study at broadly the same pace. However, decisions about when to progress should always be based on the security of pupils' understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils who grasp concepts rapidly should be challenged through being offered rich and sophisticated problems before any acceleration through new content. Those who are not sufficiently fluent with earlier material should consolidate their understanding, including through additional practice, before moving on.*