

**St Gabriel's Primary School Assessment Policy 2021
(Including January 21 update)**

Assessment is a vital tool for teachers. It tells teachers not just what each child can already do, but also what they need to do next. Effective, balanced and constructive assessment is the cornerstone of pupil progress. Regular assessment, both formally and informally, enables teachers to plan lessons based on a detailed knowledge of each child. The teacher judgements which are informed by our assessments are also moderated on a regular basis to ensure consistency across the school against national standards. This moderation process is secured by our work with practitioners from within school and local clusters. We endeavour to give parents regular feedback, through annual reports, parent evenings and informal conversations, on their child's progress so that teachers, children and parents are all working together to ensure all our children achieve their full potential.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of assessment in our school are:

- to enable our children to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work;
- to help our children understand what they need to do next to improve their work;
- to allow teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each child;
- to provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning;
- to ensure a consistent expectation and application of standards across the school through moderation.
- to provide school leaders and governors with information that allows them to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school.□

How do we assess?

There are two key elements to an effective assessment cycle:

Formative assessment, also known as **Assessment for Learning**: This helps to identify the next steps and targets what a child needs to tackle to make further progress in a curriculum area. Formative assessment helps to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

Summative assessment, also known as **Assessment of Learning**: This enables teachers to make a judgement about where a child is compared to a recognised set of criteria. It is most often used at the end of a unit / year group etc.

Teachers use a range of assessment tools to assess their children. The tools they use will depend upon the age of the child, the context of the assessment and the information the teacher needs to gain from the assessment. The assessment tools we use include: verbal questioning during lessons, peer and self - assessment, work produced by children in their books, pupil conversations, review and evaluation activities, asking children to apply their knowledge to a new area and formal assessments - including, where age appropriate, written tests.

Moderating Teacher Judgements

A key element to an assessment cycle is always the moderation of teacher judgements.

Moderation takes place across year groups, key stages, the whole school and with practitioners from other settings. This includes teachers from other schools as well as advisors from the Local Authority and other backgrounds. Moderation opportunities are also arranged with other schools within the Belgrave Learning Network and the Lichfield and Tamworth Catholic Primary Partnership. This moderation ensures that we have a consistent application of national standards at all stages of our school.

Teachers, and other stakeholders, moderate by comparing a range of children's work with the national standards and ensuring that the judgements are consistent, accurate

and evidenced based. Within school, Senior Leaders moderate the judgements teachers make on a termly basis and organise opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues from other schools to ensure that our judgements are consistent with the bigger national picture.

Curriculum 2014

As you will be aware, there have been a number of significant changes to the curriculum that the children follow at school. Since September 2014, schools have been following a new National Curriculum. This new curriculum has seen a significant change in the expectations for the knowledge and understanding children need to have as they progress through primary school. The main changes to the two core areas, English and Mathematics, are detailed below:

English - The new programme of study for English is knowledge-based; this means its focus is on knowing facts as well as developing skills and understanding. It is also characterised by an increased emphasis on the technical aspects of language. English is set out year by year in Key Stage 1 and two-yearly in Key Stage 2. Appendices give specific content to be covered in the areas of spelling and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. These are set out yearly across both key stages.

Mathematics - The main areas in the new programme of study for mathematics are called domains. These are number, measurement, geometry, statistics, ratio and proportion and algebra. Two of these, number and geometry, are further divided into subdomains. The way that the curriculum is organised varies across the primary age range - every year group has a unique combination of domains and subdomains. There is no longer a separate strand of objectives related to using and applying mathematics. Instead, there are problem-solving objectives within the other areas of study. Most of the changes to the mathematics curriculum involve content being brought down to earlier years.

Another significant change being created by the introduction of the new curriculum is the removal of the 'Levels' which schools previously used to assess children. The government has asked schools to create their own systems to assess and track the children they teach.

Schools will no longer describe children as being a '3B' in Writing, for example. Each school will create their own assessment system which will measure the progress the children are making against the New National Curriculum.

Under the previous curriculum, children were expected to progress through the levels as they moved through school. Once they had achieved all the criteria of one level, they were expected to move onto to the next one straight away. The new curriculum takes a different approach. Each Year Group has a clear set of Learning Objectives which the children are expected to cover. Once a child has covered each of these Learning Objectives successfully, rather than move onto the next Year Group's Objectives, they are expected to broaden and deepen their understanding of the Objectives they have already covered - this is sometimes described as working at greater depth.

How will we track the attainment and progress of the children?

At St Gabriel's, we use a tracking system called School Pupil Tracker Online (SPTO). This system allows teachers to record and track the achievement of each child at key points during each academic year.

At key points during the year, SLT and class teachers hold Learning Reviews which analysis the rates of attainment and progress within each class. Data from termly assess and review weeks, as well as on - going work evidence in children's books, form the basis of these professional conversations. At each Learning Review, class teachers are asked to identify those children who are 'on - track' to reach their age - related expectations and those who are not. SLT and class teachers then create Action Plans to both support those identified children who are in danger of not reaching age - related expectations and to stretch those children who are working at greater depth.

The evidence base for the Learning Review includes data from formal assessments (PiRA and PUMA tests / Scholastic National Standards Tests) and evidence from the work children have produced in their books.

Reporting to Parents.

At the end of the academic year, class teachers produce a written report for each child detailing their attainment and progress. Within these reports - for Reading, Writing, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling and Mathematics - children will receive a teacher judgement / assessment based on how they have achieved against their age - related expectations. Each child - for each of the four curriculum areas - will be assessed as being one of 'working at age - related standards,' 'working towards age - related standards' and 'working below age - related standards.'

Below is an explanation of each of these terms:

Working at age - related standards.

A child has fully accessed and worked confidently with their year group curriculum. He or she has fully achieved the key learning objectives within their year group.

Working towards age - related standards.

A child has accessed and worked within their year group curriculum. He or she has achieved a number of the key learning objectives, although not all.

Working below age - related standards.

A child is working within the standard of a year group curriculum which is below that of their chronological year group.

Within each child's report, class teachers will identify how - if a child is 'working towards age - related standards' or 'working below age - related standards' - they are being supported to close the gap with their age - related standards. Reports will also identify - for a child who is 'working at age - related standards' - how that child is being given the opportunity to work at greater breadth and depth, where appropriate.

End of academic year reports go out to parents in July of each year. Once parents have received their child's report, they have the opportunity to discuss the report with their child's class teacher.

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January 2021

Assessment Policy - Update to Assessment Policy (January 2021)

In light of the government's direction that all primary schools should move to remote provision, except for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers, the following statutory assessments, have been cancelled:

- KS1 teacher assessments
- KS2 tests and teacher assessments
- phonics screening check
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Department for Education (DfE) have said that they know that schools will 'continue to use assessment to inform teaching, to enable them to give information to parents on their child's attainment in their statutory annual report and to support transition of KS2 pupils to secondary school' (Standards and Testing Agency Update 07.01.2021). The DfE has strongly encouraged schools to use past test papers in their assessment of pupils. Once we have received guidance on when and how children will be returning to school we will be able to plan in more detail how we will use formal assessment this academic year.

Assessment - informal and formal, formative and summative - remains a key part of our provision on an on-going / every day basis. Teachers continue to use informal formative assessment at the start of sessions to help identify learning needs / gaps in knowledge etc. and use summative assessment at the end of sessions / units of work to identify what has been learnt. Teachers have had to make alterations to on-going assessment in light of the switch to remote learning - for example using online quizzes, and we will continue to develop our practice in this area.

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