ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Assessment Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

This policy refers to the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.

It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

3. Principles of assessment

As a staff, we have taken time to develop our rationale for assessment and have agreed on the following principles:

- Assessment will be used to check pupil's understanding to inform teaching so that children reach their unique God-given potential.
- Accurate assessment will assist teachers in producing clear next steps for pupils so they know what they need to know and be able to do at the end points in the curriculum
- Retention practice activities will be used to help children embed their learning.

- Planning for progression and clear sequencing of lessons is crucial to ensure that children are able to make good progress through a series of lessons.
- Assessment will allow the school to meet statutory regulations for the annual reporting of pupil progress, in line with government guidance.
- Assessment should not be overly burdensome and we will only collect data where there is a specific need to record a summative judgement.

5. How do we assess?

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum. We are clear about the purposes of assessment to ensure that is does not become too burdensome and create unnecessary workloads for staff. This policy has been written to take in to consideration staff and pupil wellbeing. We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

Knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the end of Key Stage expectations are developed by:

- tracking progress from entry data and the school's baseline assessments;
- using end of year assessments as a measure to track progress and attainment of pupils towards the end of Key Stage expectations;
- using the essential learning objectives as a method of tracking progress within and across subjects;
- planning work for children who are falling behind or with special educational needs, giving due regard to information and targets contained in their IEP and provision maps;
- setting targets for all groups of pupils (including SEND, disadvantaged and the most able) in each academic year based on their success and what they need to improve.

5.1 In-school formative assessment

Formative assessment is pivotal in each lesson and forms the basis for the next steps of learning which will be taking place. All teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons to identify where there are any gaps. This helps to inform the teacher of what to focus on in the current and future lessons and enables the teacher to consider how his or her teaching approach can be adapted for the next stage in each pupil's learning. It helps the teacher to monitor progress and provide motivation for the pupils. We believe that all staff should have realistically high expectations of all pupils based on a thorough understanding of their prior attainment.

We adopt a wide range of formative assessment strategies and techniques in school including:

- Use of Effective Marking (see Feedback Policy)
- Questioning – individual, open ended, whole class with feedback cards/mini whiteboards
- Verbal feedback on independent work during the lesson
- Live marking
- Self-assessment and peer-assessment
- Sharing learning objectives
- Sharing targets and next steps
- Retrieval Practice activities
- Low stakes quizzes

- Active involvement of pupils in their own learning linked to metacognition

5.2 In-school summative assessment

Summative assessment is a snapshot of the child's attainment.

From Year 1 to Year 6, the school uses formal tests in Maths at three data snapshot points throughout the year (Christmas, Easter, Summer).

From Year 2 to Year 6, the school also uses formal tests in Reading, Spelling & Grammar.

In Year 1 teachers complete termly phonics screenings throughout the year; the final one being reported nationally. Pupils in Y2 who are still following the phonics programme will also have termly phonics screenings.

In Foundation 2, teachers baseline pupils within the first six weeks of starting school and then make on-going observations throughout the year which are tracked and analysed at three data points throughout the year. (see Early Years Foundation Stage Policy)

Pupils with SEND are tracked on a separate system using tests from the relevant year group.

This summative assessment data is discussed with members of the Senior Leadership Team at Data Reviews in relation to pupil's targets to ensure teachers are aware of pupils who may be falling behind or who can go beyond their target.

This summative assessment is used to track and demonstrate improvement over the course of a school year, Key Stage or whole school career.

What do we use summative assessment for?

It is used for planning, reporting and recording. It can be used to place the child in comparison with peers. It enables school leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment. It enables teachers to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period of time and the impact of their own teaching. It enables pupils to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It enables parents to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Aspirational Targets

All pupils have an aspirational end of year target. This target is based on prior attainment, knowledge of the child and their current attainment.

At each Data Review, the pupil's progress towards their target is discussed. Where a pupil is not on track to meet their target, a range of measures will be put in place to accelerate learning. Targets are fluid so that if a pupil meets their target within the year, the target will be increased.

Summative Assessment

Assessing Writing

Writing is teacher assessed at 3 snapshot points throughout the year using a range of pieces of writing as evidence. A judgement is made and this is then moderated with other teachers in this school and in other schools. We use a numerical system to track progress towards each writing objective. This identifies gaps in children's learning which are used to inform teaching. Gaps are shared with pupils in terms of writing targets so that they are clear about their next steps.

Assessment in Foundation Subjects

On-going formative assessment is used in Foundation subjects to check whether pupils are keeping up with the intended skills and knowledge development as set out in the Skills/Knowledge Progression documents.

Where children have not grasped a concept/skill, this will be addressed before/during the next lesson so that they catch up. This can take the form of Fix It groups/ whole class feedback as part of the Effective Marking policy or individual work with the teacher or LSA.

Ongoing formative assessment ensures that knowledge, skills and understanding are continually assessed and that the next steps of learning are supported and developed and that misconceptions are quickly acknowledged and addressed.

It is expected that children will make expected progress if the lesson follows the intended plan linked to the progression documents and children are engaged and on task during the lesson. Questioning from the teacher will check this.

Where cover supervisors teach a lesson, they use the Effective Feedback book so that assessment information is shared with class teachers.

In the end of year annual report, parents will be informed whether their child has a developing, secure or deep understanding of the subject based on the formative assessments throughout the year.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1 and year 2 re-sit
- Year 4 Multiplication Check
- Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 (Y2).
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (Y6).

5. Collecting and using data

We collect, track and analyse data using EazMag, an online data tracking platform.

We collect data at the end of Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 2.

This data is analysed with Senior Leaders and discussed with staff at termly Data Reviews. It is reported to governors in detail at the Curriculum Committee meeting and as headlines at Full Governing Body meetings after each snapshot. Governors are invited to ask critical questions about the data at each of the meetings. These are high-lighted in the minutes.

Data analysis is then used for forward planning.

6. Reporting to parents

Assessment data is reported to parents through a mini report, an annual report and parents' consultations.

The annual report includes:

- Information on attainment and progress in Maths and English
- Brief details of effort and progress in Foundation subjects and activities forming part of the school curriculum
- Comments on personal development and attitudes to learning
- Arrangements for discussing the report with the pupil's teacher
- The pupil's attendance record including:
    - The total number of possible attendances for that pupil, and
    - The total number of unauthorised absences for that pupil, expressed as a percentage of the possible attendances
- The results of any statutory assessments taken, by subject and grade.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

8. Mental health and wellbeing

The school recognises that for children and young people who are generally anxious, the experience of sitting tests or completing assessments can be threatening and could lead to increases in anxiety levels. Children who find schoolwork a struggle, or those with special educational needs or mental health difficulties, may be more likely to experience academic anxiety. However, so can high achievers, particularly children who are overly perfectionist or whose parents have very high ambitions for them.

Staff put measures in place to alleviate pressure on children. These vary dependent on year group. The youngest children would not know that they were sitting a test or completing an assessment as the teacher would manage this is a subtle way. Older children in KS2 will be more aware. Staff are expected to develop a safe environment and a supportive culture that puts children at ease. Where a teacher feels it would help, a child could take their test in a smaller group or 1:1 with an adult outside of the classroom.

The school may gather evidence and use national access arrangement indicators to establish whether pupils may benefit from additional measures during formal test conditions. This will always reflect normal classroom practise.

Staff make more use of low-stakes quizzes rather than high stakes tests which reduce pressure on children.

Staff are also asked to be alert to signs of stress among pupils and follow up to ask if they are alright.

9. Training

The school has training for all teachers on how to use EazMag as well as regular briefings on any changes or updates. Good practice on how to assess effectively is shared through regular staff meetings, research lessons and briefings. All staff are trained on how to moderate writing. Teachers new to Year 2 and Year 6

access external training on how to prepare for and deliver the statutory tests. Where a member of staff is struggling with assessments, the Senior Leadership team offer support to ensure accuracy in tracking and analysis.

10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

10.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years

10.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy

11. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed as required by the Curriculum Committee. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The deputy headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The Deputy Head Teacher will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school and the Senior Leadership Team will be evaluate effectiveness through moderation, lesson observations, book looks, and data reviews.

12. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Curriculum policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Feedback Policy
- SEND Policy