

St. James the Great Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School



Assessment Policy

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Rationale

“Every lesson pupils embark on a journey. The fact that they begin it from different places, travel at different speeds, in different directions and on different modes of transport presents a considerable challenge for their guides.” (Tweak to Transform, M.Hughes, 2002)

At St. James the Great school, assessment is the key to understanding and enhancing each child’s learning journey. From the moment they come into school to the moment they leave, we take on the roles of teacher and facilitator. To fulfil this role we need to have a detailed understanding and awareness of, not only where each child has been, but also of where they are travelling to next.

Aim

Our aim is to raise pupil achievement through clearly established assessment, monitoring, target setting and review processes that inform planning and teaching.

Principles

We adhere to the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL) –based on the idea that pupils will be more likely to improve if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim (closing the gap).

Assessment begins with clear learning intentions, established at the planning stage. These should be made explicit to pupils and success criteria explained.

Assessment systems should be useful and manageable.

Children learn more effectively when encouraged to self-evaluate.

Purposes of Assessment

- To monitor progress and support learning.
- To ascertain whether children have understood what has been taught, what they have achieved and what they need to focus on.
- To ensure different groups of children have appropriate challenge.
- To inform target setting for individuals, groups and cohorts.
- To guide future planning, teaching and curriculum development.
- To identify children with Special Educational Needs and who are Able, Gifted and Talented.
- To provide information about strengths, weaknesses and progress when reporting to parents and other interested parties.
- To comply with statutory requirements.

Types of Assessment

Formative Assessment: ongoing teacher assessments to determine what a child knows or can do and are used to inform planning.

Diagnostic Assessment: identifying children’s strengths and weaknesses in order to help them achieve their potential.

Summative Assessment: takes place at the end of half term, term, year or Key Stage, where the overall achievements of the children are recorded.

All forms of assessment take place regularly but some of the diagnostic and summative assessments involving formal and standardized testing occur at particular times throughout the year. These are detailed below:

Year Group	Assessment	Time
Nursery	Aspects	Autumn 1 & Summer 2
Reception	CEM Baseline	Autumn 1 & Summer 2
Year 1	Rising Stars Progress Tests English & Maths GL Assessment Reading Age Test Rising Stars Optional Tests (avail. Mar’16) Phonics Screening Check	Ongoing Summer 2 Summer 2 Summer 2
Year 2	Rising Stars Progress Tests Reading & Maths Rising Stars Writing Assessment Tasks GL Assessment Reading Age Test KS1 SATs	Ongoing Ongoing Summer 2 Summer 2
Year 3	Rising Stars Progress Tests Reading & Maths Rising Stars Writing Assessment Tasks GL Assessment Reading Age Test Rising Stars Optional Tests	Ongoing Ongoing Summer 2 Summer 2
Year 4	Rising Stars Progress Tests Reading & Maths Rising Stars Writing Assessment Tasks GL Assessment Reading Age Test Rising Stars Optional Tests	Ongoing Ongoing Summer 2 Summer 2
Year 5	Rising Stars Progress Tests Reading & Maths Rising Stars Writing Assessment Tasks GL Assessment Reading Age Test Rising Stars Optional Tests	Ongoing Ongoing Summer 2 Summer 2
Year 6	Rising Stars Progress Tests Reading & Maths Rising Stars Writing Assessment Tasks KS2 SATs	Ongoing Ongoing Summer 1

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by pupils and their teachers to decide where the pupils are in their learning, where they need to go and

how best to get there. When carried out effectively, informal classroom assessment with constructive feedback to the pupil will raise levels of attainment.

The key principles of AfL are that it:

- Is embedded in the teaching and learning process.
- Shares learning intentions with pupils.
- Helps pupils to know and to recognise the standards to aim for.
- Provides feedback which leads pupils to identify what they should do next to improve.
- Actively involves the pupils in their own learning.
- Involves both teacher and pupils in reviewing and reflecting of pupils' performance and progress (target setting process).
- Involves adjusting teaching strategies (planning) to take account of the results of assessment.
- Recognises the profound influence of assessment on the motivation and self-esteem of pupils, both of which are crucial influences on learning.
- Acknowledges the need for pupils to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

Assessment is effective when pupils:

- Improve their attainment.
- Are actively involved in formative assessment processes, e.g. setting targets, peer or self-assessment, recognising progress in written work, skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Show changes in their attitudes to learning and in their motivation, self-esteem, independence, initiative and confidence.
- Show changes in their responses to questions, in contributions to plenary sessions, and in explanations and descriptions.

To use assessment effectively, teachers need to:

- Know their pupils well, know why pupils make mistakes, and be able to make judgements about next steps or interventions.
- Share learning intentions (WALT – We Are Learning Today) with pupils and use them to mark work or give feedback or rewards.
- Share with pupils the success criteria (WILF – What I am Looking For or WMG – What Makes Good) upon which their work will be judged.
- Build in review time for themselves and their pupils.
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning by providing opportunities for pupils to describe their response to learning intentions or targets, the strategies they use and the judgements they make in relation to their progress.
- Give pupils examples of a variety of skills, attitudes, standards and qualities to aim for i.e. sharing examples of work.
- Analyse pupils' performance in tests and use the information in future planning.

- Feel confident and secure in classroom practice.

Record Keeping

The school uses Target Tracker as the central record keeping system for assessment data. Each class has also has a green assessment folder which remains with the cohort, is handed into the Assessment Leader at the end of each term, and is passed up to the next teacher at the end of the academic year.

These folders include:

- Termly teacher assessments for Writing, Reading and Mathematics.
- End of unit teacher assessments for R.E.
- End of year teacher assessments for the foundation subjects, Science and Computing.
- Summative assessments based on testing e.g. Phonics Screening Check & SATs.

These assessments are reviewed at the end of each term by the Assessment Leader in conjunction with Senior Leadership Team in order to:

- Monitor the progress of individuals or specific groups of children.
- Track cohort progress against set targets.
- Decide where support or extension programmes need to be put in place.

For all subject areas (except R.E. which uses the old levels system), teacher assessment is used to make a judgement as to whether pupils are beginning to work at year group expectations, are working within year group expectations, are secure in year group expectations or are exceeding year group expectations.

For Reading, Writing and Mathematics, teachers also complete ongoing formative assessments, highlighting on Target Tracker the National Curriculum statements according to whether a pupil is working towards, secure or exceeding them. Teachers are encouraged to use these records to inform future planning intentions for the class and individual pupils.

Evidence to support teacher assessments, including pupil books/folders, class folders, test papers etc., are located within the classroom.

An essential aspect of the assessment process is teacher observation which may include observation of:

- The pupil in the class or group.
- The extent to which the pupil is on task.
- The match of work to the pupil's needs or abilities.
- The pupil's use of time.
- The pupil's understanding of the task.
- Evidence of original and creative ideas.
- Ability to work collaboratively in group situations.
- Ability to plan and organise work.
- Skills in using books and resources.

Although there is no formal requirement to do so, teachers may, in their own way, keep notes on any of the above areas; this may be particularly relevant where no written work is produced. Such observations are of value and can be a useful tool for meeting the pupils' educational needs and developing their full potential.

Planning and Assessment

Long and Medium Term Plans: These are monitored by Subject Leaders, to ensure continuity and progression throughout the Key Stages.

Short Term Plans: Weekly plans are produced for English and Maths lessons, highlighting cross curricular planning with the Science, Computing and the Foundation Subjects. This planning should be available on the server by the Monday afternoon of the week being planned for. The short term plans should ensure and record:

- Learning outcomes.
- Differentiation.
- A balanced, and where appropriate cross-curricular, curriculum.
- Appropriate pace – built-in review time and flexibility.
- Efficient classroom organisation (including planning for any additional adult support).
- Assessment criteria for feedback and marking, peer and self-assessment.
- Time for teacher assessment and feedback to pupils.
- Monitoring, evaluation and if necessary modification to short term and/or medium term planning.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring this planning in conjunction with the Maths and English Subject Leaders.

Such plans provide a framework for lessons and should in no way prevent opportunities to develop learning in the context of professional judgements that would see aspects of lessons carried over into a second or even third session.

Role and Responsibilities

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Producing clear planning with appropriate learning objectives shared with the pupils.
- Using assessment information to inform future planning.
- Adopting a range of assessment methods – especially AfL.
- Providing effective feedback to pupils – both verbal and written.
- Involving pupils in their own self-assessment.
- Identifying pupils in need of additional support and liaising with the Inclusion Manager.
- Setting (and reviewing) next step targets with the children. These targets should be visible to the child and shared with parents.
- Administering school based and/or national statutory tests and record achievements.
- Recording assessment data on Target Tracker and updating green assessment folders.

- Ensuring pupil information is transferred to the next class.
- Reporting to parents on pupil achievement and targets for future learning.

Subject Leaders are responsible for:

- Appropriate assessment opportunities being identified in schemes of work.
- Monitoring planning to ensure that assessment informs planning.
- Monitoring standards and levels of attainment through the school.
- Compiling a portfolio of work to reflect standards throughout the school.
- Ensuring consistency of judgements.
- Ensuring a current subject SEF is maintained.
- Reporting to the SLT, Governors and other interested parties re standards throughout the school.

The Assessment Coordinator is responsible for:

- Updating the policy statement.
- Ensuring a consistent approach to assessment throughout the school.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory obligations in regards to national testing and reporting.
- Staff development and training.
- Collating assessment data from national tests to monitor standards and to inform the target setting process.
- Overseeing Target Tracker and supporting colleagues in its use.
- Reporting to the SLT, Governors and other interested parties re standards throughout the school.

The Inclusion Manager is responsible for:

- Liaising with class teachers and monitoring progress against Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.
- Maintaining the SEN register.
- Administering specific diagnostic assessment tasks as appropriate.
- Liaising with external agencies, especially formal assessment for statemented pupils.
- Supporting class teachers with differentiated planning and next steps in learning.
- In consultation with class teachers, liaising with the parents of pupils on the SEN register or those being considered for registration.

Reporting to Parents

There are a range of strategies that keep parents fully informed of their child's progress in school. We encourage parents to contact the school if they have any concerns about any aspect of their child's work.

Each term we offer parents the opportunity to meet their child's teacher. In the second meeting of the year we will review the next step targets we have identified for their child and in the third meeting, evaluate their child's progress as measured against these targets.

During the Summer term all parents receive a written report of their child's progress and achievements during the year. Pupils are assessed against the main aims of the National Curriculum in English and Maths in terms of whether they are working towards, meeting or exceeding end of year expectations. In this report we also identify targets areas for the next school year. We write individual comments on all subjects of the National Curriculum and on Religious Education. We also include a space for pupil and parent feedback.

In the Summer term, parents of Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 will be provided with information on the outcome of their children's formal assessments. More detailed information can be provided if requested.

Monitoring

The Assessment Policy and practices will be working effectively if there is evidence of:

- Sharp and focused learning objectives – medium/short-term planning.
- Pupils being provided with a broad and challenging curriculum which meets their needs.
- Pupils reaching or exceeding their agreed targets.
- No significant gap between Teacher Assessment and national test outcomes.

Most importantly, the assessment process will be succeeding if there is improvement in standards throughout the school.

Linked Policies

- Target Setting
- Marking and Feedback
- Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning
- SEN

Next Policy Review Date: Autumn 2016