



Thornhill Primary School Assessment Policy

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INTRODUCTION

We aim for high quality teaching and learning, and the heart of this is effective assessment, underpinned by our belief that all pupils can succeed.

We use three main forms of assessment: in-school formative, in-school summative, and national standardised summative assessment.

By implementing all that is detailed in this policy, the staff and governors at Thornhill Primary School aim to ensure that every child reaches their full academic potential as a result of highly effective assessment policy, practises and procedures.

AIMS

The aims of assessments are to enable:

- Teachers to respond accurately to the learning needs of each pupil and, with the contribution of support staff, give ongoing support to enable all pupils to make progress
- Target setting
- Pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their learning
- Pupils to have an active role in identifying their own learning needs and know how to improve their work
- Parents to support their child's learning
- Leaders to evaluate and continually improve on the quality of provision for all pupils

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Using formative assessment to inform teaching, and providing for the learning needs of all pupils. Typical methods of formative assessment include:
 - Question and answer sessions
 - Targeting questions
 - Ongoing observations

- Opportunities for pupils to make their learning visible, for example, on mini-whiteboards
 - Discussions between staff working with groups of pupils
 - Verbal and written feedback
2. Recording pupils' skills, knowledge, abilities and achievements using consistent methods and approaches across the school. We ensure consistency in teacher assessments by:
 - Agreeing details of criteria
 - Moderating within year groups termly
 - Joining local authority (LA) and Cluster moderation activities
 - Discussing consistency in planning sessions
 - Feeding back
 3. Giving constructive feedback to pupils in a range of ways that enable them to have an active role in identifying their own learning needs and how to make progress. pupils are involved in contributing to their short-term targets by:
 - Discussing areas of development
 - Keeping targets visible to pupils
 - Reminding pupils of their targets and discussing progress towards them
 4. Using a systematic approach for informing parents of their child's progress and giving advice on how to support at home. We inform parents of pupils' targets by:
 - Meeting with parents informally and formally
 - Sending parents annual written reports
 - Informing parents of their progress
 5. Systematically monitor and evaluate pupils' progress on an individual and school basis, and use the results to plan for improvement. The senior leadership team (SLT) and year leaders are responsible for ensuring that:
 - Assessments are maintained consistently, and teachers are given advice and support in maintaining them
 - Assessment information is used to evaluate provision and improve practice through feedback and advice, and also improve attainment
 6. Involving staff in the process of assessment and informing them of the outcomes. To support staff, we:
 - Provide training in assessment processes and appropriate software
 - Provide relevant documentation
 - Give feedback to individuals or groups through monitoring activities
 - Provide opportunities for staff to identify their own training needs through the appraisal process
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At Thornhill Primary School we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) involves the use of assessment in a range of day-to-day classroom-based activities to raise pupil attainment and aid their progress. Formative assessment procedures are used to identify the achievement of pupils during lessons; these assessments are then recorded and used to ensure that future teaching is designed specifically to meet the current learning needs of the children. The use of assessment in this way leads to children understanding the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim, and how they can achieve this aim.

'Day to Day In-School Formative Assessment' is an integral part of teaching and learning. It helps children to measure their own strengths and areas for development. It allows teachers to understand pupil performance on a continuing basis, enabling them to identify when pupils are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress. In this way, it helps teachers to provide appropriate support or extension/enrichment activities as necessary and informs progress. It also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons.

Through 'Day-to Day In-School Formative Assessment', we will:

- support children in measuring their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives and wider outcomes, identifying where they need to target their efforts to improve.
- ensure that problems are identified at the individual level and that every child will be appropriately supported to make progress and meet expectations
- following Day-to- Day assessments record and report progress to parents; providing a broad picture of where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie and what they need to do to improve.

A range of 'Day-to-Day In-School Formative Assessments' will be used; for example:

- Making use of rich question and answers
- Targeting questions
- Marking of pupils' work, particularly highlighting areas of success areas and identifying areas for improvement
- On-going observations
- Regular short tests (spellings and tables)
- Discussions with children
- Pupil self-assessment e.g. traffic lighting, self-marking against agreed success criteria
- Peer marking
- Pupil conferencing

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT – ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Assessment *of* learning (summative assessment) involves judging pupils' achievements against national standards. Teachers may make these judgements at the end of a term, of a year or of a key stage; in some year groups these judgements are derived using formal tests, including SATs tests.

At Thornhill, the staff and governors understand that the Government has laid out the expectations of what children need to achieve by the end of each year; this understanding has been used to develop curriculum planning and related assessment documents organised by year group. The assessment criteria in the documents provide short, discreet, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what pupils are expected to know and be able to do.

We track children’s attainment through a system of steps. This allows us to communicate progression and attainment in a simple format. Each band is broken down into six steps.

1. Beginning: Pupils learning is mostly focused on the criteria for the band but there may be some elements of the previous band still to gain.
2. Working within: Children’s learning is fully focused on the criteria for the band. Up to 70% of the statements are confidently achieved
3. Secure: There is confidence in all the criteria for the band. Learning may still focus on gaining confidence in some minimal elements, but the broad expectations for the band have been met.

If a child achieves all that is required in the assessment document for their particular year group, they are deemed to be working at an ‘expected’ level; the grid below demonstrates how children will be assessed if they are working well below, below, above or well above the ‘expected’ level:

End of Reception	Year 1					Year 2					Year 3					Year 4					Year 5					Year 6				
Beginning/ Working at Working at + Secure Secure +																														

For children to be working at age expectation they would need to reach the ‘secure’ step at the end of the appropriate year. Secure + represents the consolidation of the band and identifies children who have attained a wide ranging grasp of the content and concepts

Note:

- If a child is deemed to be working at a ‘beginning’ level in the Pupil Tracking Document, then they will only have met up to 35% of the assessment criteria in a given year group
- If a child is deemed to be working at a ‘working at’ level in the Pupil Tracking Document, then they will have met up to 70% of the assessment criteria in a given year group
- If a child is deemed to be working at a ‘secure’ level in the Pupil Tracking Document, then they will have met up to 100% of the assessment criteria in a given year group
- If a child is deemed to be working at a ‘secure +’ level in the Pupil Tracking Document, then they will have mastered the learning in a given year group and will be working on mastering the skills they have learnt throughout the year.

At the end of the year, teachers will use their formative assessments to inform their judgement with regards to the attainment of each child. These end of year assessments will then inform the decision with regards to the curriculum starting points of the children as they move into the next year group; the following example demonstrates this:

Example: Children at the End of Year 1		
Attainment Level	Assessment Stages – End of Year	Assessment Stages: Start of the Following Year
Well Below the Expected Level of Attainment	Year 1 beginning	Year 1 beginning+
Below the Expected Level of Attainment	Year 1 beginning+	Year 1 Working at
70% of the band has been confidently achieved	Year 1 working at Year 1 working at +	Year 1 working at + Year 1 Secure
At the Expected Level of Attainment	Year 1 Secure	Year 2 beginning
Above the Expected Level of Attainment	Year 1 Secure +	Year 2 Beginning +

NB for the purposes of this illustration, the focus is only on children functioning within the Year 1 curriculum; however, the same principles apply even if a child is working at a curriculum level outside of their current year group e.g. if they have special educational needs.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Similar assessment procedures apply in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Summative assessments are made of the children on entry to Reception so that staff determine whether each child is working at the stage expected for their age. They also identify children who are working above and below this expectation so that they can be appropriately supported in their reception year.

At the end of each half term and at the end of the Reception year, a summative assessment of each child will be made so that learning activities can be well matched to their learning needs.

THE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The school uses Target Tracker for recording attainment and measuring progress across the school. School staff record their summative assessments in reading, writing and mathematics half termly on the system; summative assessments for all other subjects will be recorded at the end of each term.

INCLUSION

Assessment policies, procedures and practises are designed to be fair and fully inclusive. Ultimately, they can be applied to all situations and all children; ensuring that assessment is used to aid the achievements of every child.

Assessments are free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.

REPORTING ASSESSMENT INFORMATION TO PARENTS/CARERS

We have a range of strategies that keep parents/carers fully informed of their pupils' attainment and progress in school. Parents/carers are offered the opportunity to formally find out about their child's learning each half term via the following activities:

Autumn Term 1 st Half	Parents/carers' – discussion with class teacher curriculum expectations for the year are explained
Every Friday afternoon	Opportunity to look at children's work
Autumn Term 2 nd Half	Parents consultation meeting: Targets for the end of the year are shared.
Spring Term 1 st Half	Progress Report sent home <i>This report card will give parents/carers an overview of their child's</i>
Spring Term 2 nd Half	Parents/carers' consultation evening – discussion with group teacher <i>When a parent/carer meets with their child's group teachers, the teachers give each parent/carer a summary of the child's attainment and progress towards targets in reading, writing and mathematics; they also share areas in which the child needs further support and how the school will meet this support.</i>
Summer Term 1 st Half	Opportunity to look at children's work
Summer Term 2 nd Half	Annual school report <i>The annual report will provide parents/carers with an overview of their child's attainment in every subject i.e. whether the child is working at a level below national expectation (embarking), in line with national expectation (expected) or above national expectation (exceeding); it will also provide information about the child's behaviour and attitude to learning.</i>

Parents/carers can also seek information about their child's attainment and progress by speaking with their child's teacher at any time during the school year on an informal basis should they have any queries or concerns.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head Teacher, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary