



Lowick and Holy Island C of E First Schools

Assessment Policy

Reviewed by	Teaching staff and then the Governing Body
Signed by	(Headteacher)
Date of review:	Autumn term 2023
Date of next review	Autumn term 2024

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

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- › The recommendations in the [final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#)
- › Statutory reporting requirements set out in [the Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#)

3. Principles of assessment

We have agreed principles of assessment which are to understand that we will use different types of assessment as appropriate – formative and summative – in order to ensure that we are well informed as to the understanding, retention of knowledge and skills of our children. We intend to use this information to improve our teaching and ensure all children learn and progress to the best of their ability.

We have taken into account teacher workload and work/life balance together with the leading concern of ensure all assessment is useful, not unwieldy and contributes to the education of all our children in a positive way. We have considered practice in other schools and settings and agreed a way forward which we think suits our context best whilst still being effective and of a high standard.

4. Assessment approaches

We see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- › **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- › **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- › **Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

We will use assessment criteria based on the objectives for the teaching session which are available to the children as well as staff. Parents are able to access this information for their children when visiting school such as when we share books with them at parents' evenings for example.

The objectives enable the teacher and support staff to check understanding during the lesson and, where possible, provide live feedback during the session as the child is working. We believe that this is the most effective way of tackling misconceptions, before they become embedded and to push on learning toward the next step. We will use assessment for learning techniques such as questioning, quizzes, self and peer assessment as well as observations to feed into our understanding of what our children know, remember and can do. We are able to do this effectively due to the advantage of our small class and group sizes which mean adults in school have the time to give feedback during lessons.

Alongside the objective for a particular learning session we include assessment box pictures to help the children focus and target key skills and characteristics of effective learners which will support them across the whole curriculum. For example, reasoning, listening, working in a team effectively.

Pupils are able to use the objective on the session sticker as well as 'assessment box pictures' to identify their own learning and skills in each session and become more reflective learners with ownership of their own learning of knowledge and skills over time.

After the learning sessions teachers will check work in books where appropriate and will use written comments where they would be useful and effective. We note this is not always appropriate and recognise other approaches such as changing planning for the next session, scheduling one to one catch up time or a conversation the next session may be more effective and we ask teachers to exercise their professional judgement in this approach.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school 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 evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

In each unit of learning we have an overall assessment sheet or assessment which allows staff and pupils to evaluate learning and understanding. This enables staff to check the impact of their teaching and allows pupils to reflect on how well they have understood a topic over time. This will facilitate conversations on how learning can be improved.

Parents are kept informed of pupil progress through either parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms where they can access the assessment which is kept in the children's books and discuss their child's progress, strengths and areas to improve with teachers. The school also shares progress and attainment information with parents through an end of year report in the summer term.

As small, village schools we value our ongoing communication with parents and carers on an informal basis throughout the year as we are available for chats and meetings at the beginning and end of each school day within reason.

To help us ensure we are assessing our children accurately (and to standardise and validate our assessment) we make use of moderation meetings across our county as well as with other local schools. We also use exemplification materials for each year group to compare writing standards. We use CGP practice questions and tests for reading comprehension and grammar, punctuation and spelling for years 1-4 as well as their end of year tests for reading comprehension. We chose CGP after discussion with other schools and after comparison of available materials from other companies. We feel they are an appropriate resource to allow us to gain a clear understanding of the children's learning and retention. In year 2 we use past KS1 SAT papers to supplement our assessment in English and maths.

In maths, we use White Rose unit assessments on an ongoing basis to check learning (usually about two thirds or three quarters of the way through a unit to pick up on misconceptions as well as learning so far so that we can address any gaps or misconceptions before the end of the unit). We then give the children the assessment to complete or improve (using purple polishing pens) at the end of the unit to check impact of the teaching and learning of the unit and track improvement over a shorter period of time. To check for retention of learning we also use the White Rose termly assessments to demonstrate learning, retention and skills over a period of time and to demonstrate improvement. We chose to use White Rose assessment materials as it matches our curriculum well.

In phonics, we use Read Write Inc to assess children on a half termly basis which informs our grouping and teaching on a regular basis. We also use guided reading sessions for all pupils to assess on an ongoing basis the children's reading skills, including those children who have 'graduated' from Read Write Inc phonics.

In science, we supplement our ongoing unit assessment as outlined above with knowledge checkers from 'Developing Experts' which has before and after checks to track progress as well as unit tests. We are also drawing on Teaching Assessment in Primary Science (TAPS) resources. This helps us to standardise and validate our assessment. We chose to draw on TAPS as it is widely recognised as a useful tool for assessing primary science and is supported through Bath Spa university.

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
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1
- Multiplication Check in year 4

4.4 Early Years assessment

Throughout the Early years we use the formative assessment of observe, assess and plan which informs our everyday practice and provision. From observing the child in play, we can assess their needs and provide the experiences and knowledge they need to make progress.

At various stages of development, we use the summative assessment of the 'online passport checkers'. These have been developed by Northumberland County council to promote continuity between settings. These checks are shared with parents and used by teachers and support staff to enhance the provision. They also provide evidence of whether outside agencies are needed and are an important tool to support transitions between settings and key stages.

We conduct the baseline check at the beginning of Reception and moderate the EYFS profile at the end of the year.

5. 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.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 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
- Monitoring that school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school

6.2 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
- › Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessment competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities

6.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- › Following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy
- › Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they teach
- › Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice

7. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by teaching staff. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Teaching staff share responsibility for ensuring that the policy is followed as monitored by the Headteacher.

Subject leaders will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through: book looks, observations, staff meetings, pupil voice and moderation sessions. They will liaise with the Headteacher, where appropriate, to ensure all staff are on the same page to ensure effective assessment and feedback to support learning and progress of all pupils.

The Headteacher and, where appropriate, subject leaders, will discuss assessment and the effectiveness of our systems with governors and school improvement partners on a regular basis.