

Assessment at Fairfield Infant and Colneis Junior – Information for Parents.

In April 2014 the Department for Education released 'Assessment Principles', a document outlining the core values all effective assessment systems should implement as part of the changes introduced with the 2014 National Curriculum. As the *'Government will not impose a single system for ongoing assessment'*, it is up to schools to implement a system that can: *'Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child's school, is performing, help drive improvement for pupils and teachers and make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation.'*

From September 2015, national curriculum levels could no longer be used for statutory assessments. The Commission on Assessment Without Levels was set up to provide advice and support to schools in developing new approaches to their own in-school assessment and to ensure they have information to make informed choices about what might work for their pupils, staff and curriculum. The Commission's Final Report summarised that levels needed to be removed because *'Too often levels became viewed as thresholds and teaching became focused on getting pupils across the next threshold instead of ensuring they were secure in the knowledge and understanding defined in the programmes of study. Depth and breadth of understanding were sometimes sacrificed in favour of pace. Levels also used a 'best fit' model, which meant that a pupil could have serious gaps in their knowledge and understanding, but still be placed within the level. This meant it wasn't always clear exactly which areas of the curriculum the child was secure in and where the gaps were.'*

In developing our own approach to assessment, we have carefully considered the guidance and advice in the Commission's Final Report, as well as that contained in the Government Response to the report.

Our Philosophy of Assessment

Assessment should have a purpose at every level for everyone involved:

- Pupils should be given appropriate feedback on their learning from the formative assessments carried out by class teachers.
- Class teachers should be able to use formative assessment to support planning and implementation of a curriculum designed to meet the needs of learners.
- Teachers and school leaders should be able to use assessment to help ensure that the pupils who need specified intervention are quickly identified, appropriately supported and monitored so that all can fully achieve their potential.
- School leaders should be able to use summative assessment as a tool for monitoring the progress and attainment pupils make, to ensure the school is helping all pupils achieve their potential.
- Parents should be able to get a clear and accurate sense of their child's achievement and progress as well as areas where they can support development.
- Governors should be able to use the data to ensure the school is supporting pupils learning effectively.
- The schools can provide data for inspection teams to show how children are performing.
- Local schools should collaborate to ensure assessment systems are robust through sharing of good practice and regular moderation.

The National Curriculum has set out clear expectations for what children should achieve by the end of each Key Stage, and for English, Maths and Science, has provided guidance as to when in each phase this content should be covered. In order to monitor the progress of our pupils towards meeting these expectations, we use a combination of systems including FFT Aspire Pupil and Curriculum Tracking, NTS standardised testing, Tapestry in EYFS, termly writing assessments and end of unit assessments in the foundation subjects.

Tracking Attainment and Progress in FFT Aspire Pupil and Curriculum Tracking

FFT Aspire Pupil and Curriculum Tracking is a 'common currency' approach that lets us build a complete picture for each child from a range of teacher assessments, informal checks, standardised tests and statutory assessment.

For reading, writing and maths, teachers will assess the children's attainment on an on-going basis against the curriculum objectives for their year group. For other subjects this will be completed either at the end of a unit or work or at a specific time. They will base these judgements on a range of evidence including work produced in class (both written and verbal), observations, discussions with children and summative tasks/tests.

On a termly basis, this information is used to inform the overall teacher assessment judgement which is shared with all parents in an interim report (see Reporting to Parents). This is either Working Towards the Expected Standard (WTS), Expected Standard (EXS) or Greater Depth Standard (GDS). For children working below the Key Stage curriculum, Pre-Key Stage standards are used. On a regular basis, teachers then review this picture of attainment that is building for each child and use this to inform their planning for the children's next steps in learning.

NTS standardised testing

In years 1 through to 6, the children sit a termly NTS test in reading and maths. In year 3 to 6 the children also sit a termly GAPs test in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS). These termly standardised assessments enable us to accurately measure and predict pupil progress in mathematics and reading and benchmark pupil performance against national averages, and the results provide reliable diagnostic information to support and guide effective teaching and learning.

EYFS

In Early Years teachers assess children on entry to Nursery and Reception. In the first 6 weeks of the Autumn term, teaching staff observe the children in a variety of task and play based situations to facilitate assessment judgements to be made. In this time, teachers will also complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a short and simple check of a child's early literacy, communication, language and maths skills when they begin school. During a 20-minute one-to-one session with their teacher or teaching assistant, each child will do a number of practical and interactive tasks which have been designed to check early maths and early literacy, communication and language skills.

WellComm assessments are also used to assess the children's communication and language skills on entry to Nursery/ Reception. This enables staff to support children where necessary with appropriate intervention and monitor their progress as they advance through school.

In Reception children are assessed against the Foundation Stage Profile. Evidence for judgements against each of the statements is collected through observations, books and discussions, and an online learning journey called 'Tapestry' enables some of these observations to be shared with parents. Each child has a focussed assessment week twice per half term. Parents also have the ability to post learning observations or comments from home. Depending on the teacher assessment judgements children may be described as having achieved the 'Good Level of Development' measure at the end of the Reception year. The school engages in regular moderation of these judgements within our pyramid of schools. The data is recorded on a termly basis in Tapestry for internal monitoring and target setting.

How is the assessment data used?

Each term class data is collected and analysed by class teachers and the leadership team in Pupil Progress Meetings. Individual progress is monitored as well as that of specific groups. Interventions are targeted and reviewed based on the data collected. The leadership team review the schools data in connection with the school raising attainment plan and pupil progress across classes, year groups and whole school is considered in light of this. The school governors receive regular updates about the data from termly Headteacher reports, School Improvement Summary Reports and data from Analyse School Performance (ASP) and the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR).

Standardisation and Moderation

Internal moderation of class books is carried out regularly each term. We take part in moderation meetings within our pyramid to ensure parity in our judgements and engage in Local Authority moderation processes to confirm our decisions.

Year 1 and Year 2 Phonics Check

In June all Year 1 pupils' progress in phonics will be assessed. Each child will be assessed individually by their teacher. They will be asked to read 20 real and 20 pseudo-words in order to assess their decoding ability. Any child currently in Year 2 who either did not take the test in Year 1 or did not achieve the pass mark last year will also take the test.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)

In June all Year 4 children undertake this check to determine whether they can fluently recall their times tables up to 12, as this is deemed to be essential for future success in mathematics. The MTC is an on-screen check consisting of 25 times tables questions. We will be able to view each child's results once all participating pupils have taken the check and these will be shared with parents.

Additional Assessments

In order to inform interventions and specific programmes of support, the schools also use a range of assessments, screens and monitoring tools that can provide valuable information to teachers, senior leaders and parents regarding progress and/or barriers to learning. Examples of these include:

- On entry Wellcomm assessments to identify children that may benefit from early intervention for speaking and listening.
- Salford and Youngs assessments to monitor reading and spelling age annually in KS2 and for targeted children in KS1.
- Sandwell, BEAM and Dynamo Profiler assessments to inform a range of maths interventions.
- Dyslexia and Working Memory Screens to assist in identifying specific difficulties
- Phonological assessment battery to identify specific gaps in sound acquisition

Further information regarding these assessments and their application is available from our SENDCo.

End of Key Stage Assessments

From 2016, children have been assessed at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 against the National Curriculum 2014. Following the Government's response to the 2017 consultation on primary assessment, the DfE announced that assessments at the end of KS1 would become non-statutory from the academic year 2023 to 2024.

From 2016 attainment in national curriculum tests was no longer reported in levels and scaled scores are used. Scaled scores help test results to be reported consistently from one year to the next. National curriculum tests are designed to be as similar as possible year on year, but slight differences in difficulty will occur between years. Scaled scores maintain their meaning over time so that two pupils achieving the same scaled score in different years will have demonstrated the same attainment.

A scaled score of 100 will always represent the 'expected standard'.

Key Stage One

The optional KS1 tests are designed to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of the KS1 programmes of study. Schools can choose to use these to support in the measurement of pupil attainment.

The optional KS1 tests consist of:

English reading Paper 1: combined reading prompt and answer booklet

English reading Paper 2: reading booklet and reading answer booklet

mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic

mathematics Paper 2: reasoning

English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: spelling

English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: questions

In our school, most children in Year Two will sit the optional tests, and they will be administered as part of normal class room practice during May. Teachers will use the outcomes of the tests along with a broad range of other evidence to inform their teacher assessments. All teacher assessment is now non-statutory at the end of KS1. Schools are encouraged to continue to use the end of KS1 teacher assessment framework to support classroom practice. The Teachers Assessment Framework for KS1 and the Pre Key Stage Standards for KS1 are the standards against which teachers will make their assessments for children engaged in subject specific study; the Engagement Model is used for children not engaged in subject specific study.

In reading, writing and maths, depending on a child's depth of understanding of the KS1 programme of study, they may be teacher assessed as either working towards the expected standard, working at the expected standard or working at greater depth within the expected standard. If a pupil is deemed to be working below the standards of the optional tests, then they will be assessed against the Pre-Key Stage standards, or if they are not engaged in subject specific study the Engagement model is used.

Key Stage Two

KS2 national curriculum tests consist of:

English reading : reading booklet and associated answer booklet

English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: short answer questions

English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: spelling

mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic

mathematics Paper 2: reasoning

mathematics Paper 3: reasoning

There are only 1 set of tests for each subject. The tests include a small number of questions designed to assess the most able pupils so separate tests are no longer required.

Most children in Year Six sit the tests, and they are administered in a single week in May.

In addition, science sampling tests are taken biennially in a sample of schools selected by the STA. The STA will contact selected schools early in the spring term. If selected, representatives from the STA administer the tests.

In addition to the outcomes of the tests, teachers will also use a broad range of other evidence to inform their teacher assessments of writing and science. The Teachers Assessment Framework for KS2 and the Pre Key Stage Standards for KS2 are the standards against which teachers will make their assessments for children engaged in subject specific study; the Engagement Model is used for children not engaged in subject specific study.

For science, depending on a child's depth of understanding of the KS2 programme of study, they may be teacher assessed as either working at the expected standard or working below the expected standard. For writing, there is a broader range of possible teacher assessment outcomes as this is the sole measure of pupil attainment in writing at the end of KS2. For writing, they may be assessed as either working towards the expected standard, working at the expected standard or working at greater depth within the expected standard. If a pupil has reached the chronological age where an outcome must be reported but the pupil is deemed to be working below the standard of the National Curriculum assessment, then they will be assessed against the Pre-Key Stage standards, or if they are not engaged in subject specific study the Engagement model is used.

Reporting to Parents

All parents receive an interim report of their child's progress and attainment in the Autumn and Spring terms, along with a more comprehensive written report in the Summer term. Targets are shared in these reports, including any SEND targets for children on the SEND register. Where appropriate this will also include the results of any National Curriculum tests. In this report, the children's attainment in the foundation subjects is also detailed in relation to their year group attainment targets, as well as an assessment of the child's effort in these subjects. All parents are also offered formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and attainment in Parents' Evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms, with parents of children on the SEND register also offered a further formal meeting in the Summer Term in line with the SEND Code of Practice.