

Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

*We are a caring Christian Community built on Compassion,
Trust, Friendship and Hope.*

Assessment Policy



Date of Policy:

July 2017

Date of Review:

July 2019

Adopted by Governing Body:

September 2017

Signed by Chairman of Governors:

Katherine Wright

Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

Our current assessment system is underpinned by these principles. (NAHT Commission on Assessment)

1. Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning:

-  It provides evidence to guide teaching and learning and the opportunity for students to demonstrate and review their progress.

2. Assessment is fair:

-  It is inclusive of all abilities and is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.

3. Assessment is honest:

-  Outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects and are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning;
-  Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy.

4. Assessment is ambitious:

-  It places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and expected standards;
-  It embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child, setting high expectations for learners.

5. Assessment is appropriate:

-  The purpose of any assessment process is clearly stated and conclusions regarding pupil achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (e.g. to age, to task);
-  It draws on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement and demands no more procedures or records than are practically required to allow pupils, their parents and teachers to plan future learning.

6. Assessment is consistent:

-  Judgements are formed according to common principles with results readily understandable;
-  A school's results are capable of comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally.

7. Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:

-  Pupils in developing their learning;
-  Parents in supporting children with their learning;
-  Teachers in planning teaching and learning. Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent;
-  School leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
-  Government and agents of government.

8. Assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

See below for Spalding Parish Church of England Day School's approach to assessment.

Statement of Intent

We are a community dedicated to learning. We support children to develop the skills for life. As learners we will make mistakes and learn from them; always making new mistakes. We will not fault find and blame others. We will listen and ask questions, discussing things openly. We will keep ourselves informed. We will have fun and laugh together. We will spend time becoming emotionally and inter-personally competent.

1) Introduction

Assessment is a continuous process integral to learning and teaching. It is how teachers gain knowledge of their pupils' needs, achievements and abilities, enabling planning and delivery to be more effective, thereby raising attainment for every child.

At Spalding Parish Church of England Day School assessment is incorporated systematically into teaching strategies in order to assess progress diagnose any needed developments whether on an individual, group, class or whole school basis.

Assessment is only effective if there is a regular review, communicated and acted upon at all levels. Our assessment procedures are free from bias, stereotyping and generalisation in respect of gender, class, race and stage on the SEN code of practice. However we do analyse the progress of different groups in order to ensure that we meet individual and group needs.

2) Commitment to Learning

Assessment is fundamental to be able to extend and challenge the children's learning so that all pupils at Spalding Parish Church of England Day School can reach their potential. It also provides a whole school framework at which all different levels and perspectives merge so that educational objectives can be set and used to inform class planning, children's next steps, resources, support, whole school objectives and training (see appendix 1).

By implementing a workable, explicit whole school practice and policy for assessment, we are moving further towards our goal of educating the children of today to be the adults of tomorrow within our learning community.

We recognise the potential for assessment in developing a positive self image in the child from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success which encourages further learning.

3) Aims and Objectives

Using the principles and processes of assessment, we aim to:

-  Promote, through our ethos, the opportunity for all children to succeed if taught and assessed effectively;
-  Gather information about the performance of individual pupils, groups, cohorts of pupils so that it can be used to inform target setting at a range of levels;
-  Gather information to inform teachers planning of what will be taught next, including identifying and tackling misconceptions and deploying resources accordingly;
-  Ensure that assessment and recording is an integral part of the school's performance management system and to identify areas of strength and for development across the school;
-  Provide information to inform the school's strategic planning;
-  Track individual progress as well as that of cohorts and groups of children in order to enable every child to make progress;
-  Involve pupils in their own learning and target setting;

-  Inform the LA, teachers, schools and parents about what a child has so far learned to do by the end of a particular stage and assist the transfer process.

4) Assessment and the School Curriculum

Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The National Curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum. The curriculum is what drives the school.

Highly effective assessment provides an insight into the quality of teaching and learning. As such, assessment underpins the aims of the National Curriculum which are:

-  To provide pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens;
-  To introduce pupils to the best that has been thought and said;
-  To help engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

The National Curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term and year to range beyond the National Curriculum specifications. The National Curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.

Following the removal of National Curriculum levels for the attainment and progress of children, schools have been given the opportunity to develop their own internal assessment systems that more closely support teaching and learning. Spalding Parish Church of England Day School has responded to these requirements by establishing a curriculum and assessment framework that more accurately shows pupils' attainment and progress, informs teaching and learning more appropriately and recognises the professionalism of teaching staff.

5) Forms and Purposes of Assessment

Assessment can take a range of forms and their outcomes can be used for a variety of purposes. At Spalding Parish we endeavour to select and use assessments judiciously, selecting forms of assessment appropriate to their intended uses.

Before using any assessment we need to consider:

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-  Why pupils are being assessed?
-  What it is that we are trying to measure?
-  What is the most appropriate assessment method?
-  How the information generated by the assessment will be used?
-  How will we report assessment outcomes?

At Spalding Parish Church of England Day School we use three broad forms of assessment:

a) Day-to-Day In-School Formative Assessment

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 supports teachers to provide appropriate support (corrective activities) or extension (enrichment activities to deepen understanding) as necessary and informs progress.

Formative assessment enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons accordingly. Confident and appropriate use of in-school formative assessment provides the school's Senior Leadership team with assurance that each child's attainment and progress is understood by teaching staff and that teaching is appropriate and responsive to the needs of all children.

In-school examples:

-  Observations
-  Asking probing, open ended questions
-  Marking of pupils' work
-  Regular short re-cap quizzes
-  Scanning work for pupil attainment and development
-  Discussions with children
-  Pupil self-assessment
-  Sharing success criteria
-  Peer marking

b) In-School Summative Assessment

In-school summative assessments are used to monitor and support children's performance. They provide children with information about how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time, providing feedback on how they can continue to improve. In-school summative assessments also inform parents about achievement, progress and wider outcomes.

Teachers make use of in school summative assessments to evaluate both pupil learning at the end of an instructional unit or period and the impact of their own teaching. Both these purposes also support teachers in planning for subsequent teaching and learning.

In-school summative assessments are also used at whole school level to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, to identify where interventions may be required and to work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and expected attainment.

In-school examples:

-  Baseline assessments
-  Reading Age Tests
-  Termly English & Maths Tests
-  Short, End of Topic or Unit tests or tasks
-  Reviews for SEND pupils
-  End of Year assessments

c) National Standardised Summative Assessment

Nationally standardised assessments are used to provide information on how children are performing in comparison to children nationally. They provide parents with information on how the school is performing in comparison to schools nationally. Teachers have a clear understanding of national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context.

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables the school's Senior Leadership team to benchmark the school's performance against other schools locally and nationally, and make judgements about the school's effectiveness. The Government and Ofsted also make use of nationally standardised summative assessment to provide a starting point for Ofsted's discussions, when making judgements about the school's performance.

In-school example:

 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2

6) Recording and Reporting Assessment Outcomes

Assessment data and information are collected termly and reported in a way that is clear and of use to the intended audience. Assessment data is collected to support educational outcomes for pupils.

Teachers make professional judgments of pupil attainment against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – the big ideas that tell us whether a pupil understands and internalised what they have been taught.

Teachers are expected to know if pupils are on track to meet age-related expectations, whether pupils are where they should be and are best placed to make such judgements through their professional knowledge. In presenting assessment information and data, we use a format that is most beneficial to the intended audience.

This approach aligns with Ofsted expectations:

Ofsted does not expect performance- and pupil- tracking data to be presented in a particular format.

Such data should be provided to inspectors in the format that the school would ordinarily use to track and monitor the progress of pupils in that school. (Ofsted inspections – clarification for schools, March 2015, No. 140169)

7) Governance, Management and Evaluation

The Progress and Achievement Leads (PALs) work closely with the Head Teacher to develop systems and processes that are designed to integrate assessment, recording and reporting with curriculum planning. They are accountable to the Board of Governors for the implementation of the Policy.

The Progress and Achievement Leads will:

-  Summarise formal reporting through various means including Summary Monitoring Report Form (SMRF);
-  Provide opportunities for staff to share assessment information with colleagues;
-  Develop a reasonable timetable of assessment requirements and monitor teacher's contributions and the results of the actions designed as a result;
-  Consult with colleagues and moderate assessments to ensure accuracy and consistency of assessment information, e.g. through moderation;
-  Organise, review, order and evaluate assessment materials;

-  Evaluate the whole school effectiveness of assessment, planning, learning and teaching and subsequent improvement including annual review of assessment action plan and setting priorities out for subsequent action plans;
-  Oversee and monitor all assessment processes and supporting staff;
-  Interrogate the data, including data from ASP/FFT, identifying trends and targets;
-  Set and share targets with all staff to ensure at least expected attainment and progression;
-  Build links with Phase Leaders and Core Subject Leaders to raise standards.

Phase Leaders will:

-  Keep Progress and Achievement Leader up to date regarding assessment issues within Phase, using appropriate systems including Summary Monitoring Report Forms (SMRF);
-  Prepare guidance and provide support for assessment within Phase;
-  Take a proactive role in Phase leadership and assessment through keeping up to date with current research and findings;
-  Systematically monitor their Phase as it is essential for the improvement of each area;
-  Update the Phase Leader's file;
-  Track the progress of pupils within their Phase, reporting back to SLT/Governors on findings;
-  Analyse data of groups of pupils including progress of groups of pupils and establish appropriate provision in response to this.

Class Teachers will:

-  Prepare initial assessment activities and evaluate the results;
-  Plan lessons that indicate attention has been given to assessment findings;
-  Assess the work and progress of all children in the class throughout the curriculum through formal and informal methods;
-  Consult colleagues for extra information, guidance, moderated judgements and assessment opportunities;
-  Provide information for informal and formal discussion with parents on the child's progress;
-  Tell the children what they are going to learn as well as how to do the task i.e. make the learning objective explicit;
-  Give clear indications of how improvement can be made and provide time for them to make these improvements;
-  Help children understand that errors are acceptable and are the starting points for learning and that learned work should not have repeated errors;
-  Reinforce 'Commitment to a Learning Community' in terms of mistakes being acceptable and in fact how we learn;
-  Encourage children to check work themselves and for each other;
-  Regularly assess pupils work, using information gathered to complete school tracking system, discussing outcomes with both Phase Leader and PAL.

The Senior Leadership Team monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy on teaching, learning and teacher workload. The central question at the heart of evaluation is this:

-  Are our assessment systems fit-for-purpose?

The school's data management system is continually reviewed and evaluated to ensure it supports the delivery of the school's assessment policy and is in line with the aims and principles outlined.

English and Maths Leaders provide teachers with a standards file to ensure judgements made in each year group, in each subject are fair and accurate. The standards files are used in whole school moderation and cross-school moderation to ensure continuity and consistency.

The Assessment Policy is reviewed and re-drafted at least every two years or earlier if there are significant changes to the education system that may impact on our practice. The review process involves all staff in dialogue and consultation and is informed by any significant changes to the education system or educational and assessment developments that will improve our practice. When all staff have been consulted and their views considered, the final draft is presented to the Board of Governors for final approval and subsequently made available on the school website.

8) Competence and Effectiveness of Staff

Spalding Parish Church of England Day School is committed to ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and continuous professional development.

All teaching staff have a shared responsibility for the application of the Assessment Policy.

The effectiveness of our assessments is supported through robust standardisation, moderation and exemplification of performance standards. We work with external advisors to provide assurance that our standards and assessment procedures are fit for purpose and represent demanding yet real expectations of performance.

9) Marking and Feedback

Effective marking and feedback is an essential part of the educational process. Marking work and giving children feedback ensures that monitoring of work takes place and informs future planning. It provides knowledge of results for pupils and helps to form learning targets or next steps. It provides opportunities for children's efforts to be valued, and promotes positive images of themselves as learners. As a result of marking and feedback, pupils should understand what they have done well, are clear about how to improve and make visible signs of improvement. All marking and feedback should be meaningful, manageable and motivating.

Meaningful: marking and feedback varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

Manageable: marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost/time-effectiveness of marking in relation to teacher's overall workload.

Motivating: Marking and feedback should help to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their pupils, this can become a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

-  The focus of marking and feedback should be on the quality of feedback and not the quantity.
-  Feedback can take the form of spoken or written marking, peer marking and self assessment.
-  Feedback can be given in different ways e.g. next steps, examples, scaffolds and challenges.
-  Comments (specific to learning objectives and/or KPIs) should be used in order to move children forward in their learning.

-  Every lesson should have clearly identified learning objectives and success criteria which are shared with the children.
-  Teachers are responsible for ensuring that marking and feedback is appropriate and proportionate.
-  Where appropriate, marking should be completed before the next task is set and in time to effectively inform future planning.
-  Marking and feedback must be sensitive to pupil needs and must not “obliterate” pupil’s work.
-  Marking and feedback must be consistent within all books and throughout Phases.
-  All marking and feedback is to be done in pink and green pen.
-  Stickers, stamps and/or team points are to be used to motivate and denote recognition of effort, application and achievement.
-  Any verbal feedback given can be recorded with a stamp.
-  Children must respond to marking by initialling comments and completing actions given.
-  Teachers/HLTAs/TAs must check actions/corrections.
-  Marking and feedback should also comment on presentation, if poor.
-  In some cases it may be appropriate not to mark work, e.g. final drafts for display.

Ofsted has stated the following:

Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to pupils, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of pupils in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning.

10) Data and Tracking Achievement and Progress

Termly spreadsheets are used to collect data for Mathematics, Reading & Writing.

Teachers make a judgement based on the KPIs taught (Key Performance Indicators) and award a child a 1 (working towards the expected standard), 2 (working at the expected standard) or 3 (working at a greater depth within the expected standard). At the end of each term teachers then decide if a child is Emerging, Expected, or Exceeding based on an overall judgement for the term. Again the overall judgement is based on the teacher’s professional opinion/teacher assessment.

The school’s data and assessment system calculates and judges whether a child working at the expected standard (Y) or not (N). Spreadsheets are updated continually throughout the academic year.

Pupil Progress Meetings

Pupil Progress Data Analysis sheets are completed each term. The teacher uses their knowledge of each pupil based on lessons, work in books, discussions, tests, school’s standards files and mark books to decide if a child is ‘working at the expected standard’ or ‘working towards the expected standard’.

Teachers also make notes regarding children who are working at a greater depth within the expected standard and those children who face barriers to their learning. Interventions are then put in place to ensure all children reach their full potential.

Progress Reports & End of Year Reports

Termly progress reports are sent home to inform parents of pupils’ attainment against the KPI’s taught that term, effort, behaviour for learning and attendance.

End of Year reports are sent out to inform parents if their child has met age-related expectations and these also report on effort, behaviour for learning and attendance.

11) Inclusive Assessment

A fully inclusive approach to assessment is one where policy and practice are designed to promote the attainment and progress of all pupils. Assessment needs to be holistic and consider long term wider outcomes such as the next stage of education, employment and independent living.

Assessment should reflect the extent to which a pupil understands and can apply their learning in a wide range of contexts. It enables teachers to evaluate their effectiveness and to determine targeted interventions or support to enable children to progress in all areas of their learning and development.

Assessment should contribute to the early and accurate identification of children and young people's special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

12) Equal Opportunities

At Spalding Parish Church of England Day School we promote racial and sexual equality, harmony, understanding and justice. We promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics) through the effective spiritual moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including through the extent to which schools engage their pupils in extra-curricular activity and volunteering within their local community.

The staff and pupils at Spalding Parish Church of England Day School uphold this requirement and act accordingly.

13) Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in two years.