

Bressingham Primary School Assessment to Inform Teaching Policy

Introduction

In September 2015 the government published the final report on the Commission on Assessment without Levels which has been used to guide and inform this policy.

From September 2015 the national curriculum levels will no longer be used for statutory assessments. Their use was always intended only for use in statutory assessments but schools use of them to monitor and track progress across all year groups meant that school assessment became fixated on levels. The use of day to day formative assessment became distorted. No pre-described approach has been given to schools and they are being encouraged to make their own plans for assessment based on their school's principles.

Good Assessment – should be clearly tied to its intended purpose i.e. to inform teaching. There are three forms of assessment used in school –

- In school formative assessment (often referred to as Assessment for Learning)
- In school summative assessment (used to evaluate what a child has learnt at the end of a teaching period – may involve use of a test)
- Nationally standardised summative assessment (used by the government to hold schools to account)

In school formative assessment or Assessment for Learning (AfL) is a powerful way of raising pupils' achievement. It is based on the principle that if children understand the aim of their learning and are clear about their strengths and areas they need to work on then they will improve most. AfL is central to effective teaching and learning.

What is AfL?

- AfL is central to effective classroom practice – assessment is used to inform the planning
- AfL is a key professional skill
- AfL focuses on how pupils learn
- AfL develops the capacity for peer and self-assessment
- AfL helps learners to know how to improve
- AfL promotes understanding of goals and criteria
- AfL develops a culture of collaborative learning
- AfL is sensitive, constructive and fosters motivation.

Good use of AfL makes:

- an accurate assessment – teachers evaluate on a day to day basis and tailor teaching accordingly
- a fair assessment – the methods used are valid
- a reliable assessment – judgements are consistent and based on a range of evidence
- a useful assessment – they identify barriers to learning, identify common misconceptions and inform next steps
- a continuity of assessment – enabling better transfer between years and schools.

Principles of assessment at Bressingham Primary School

Our principles for assessment are based on a shared understanding of what we shall assess, how we shall assess it and what we will do with the assessment information we gather.

We assess using the Herts for Learning approach

http://www.hertsforlearning.co.uk/sites/default/files/user_uploads/00_news/documents/developing_a_new_approach_to_tracking_pupil_progress_sept2014.pdf

- The criteria we are developing across the curriculum will be useful for teachers to use in a formative way, and hence teachers may refer to these frequently throughout the year.
- However the system of 'measuring' attainment, which is set out below, is a summative assessment tool only – taking a step back to reflect on the 'big picture' of where a child is in their learning journey – and as such we advise that these judgements are made no more frequently than once per term.
 - A wealth of educational research tells us that ongoing formative assessment is far more powerful than summative assessment in terms of enhancing learning and that there is a danger that summative assessment can undermine the benefits of formative assessment.
 - To guard against the negative effects of summative assessment, such as effects on self-esteem and the creation of a 'fixed mind-set' about one's ability, we do not recommend that the 'measurements' are used as part of a dialogue with pupils about their learning. The measurements proposed are intended purely as a means for recording attainment in a tracking system, as a management tool.
 - 'Big picture' criteria can be useful for teachers when considering a pupil's next steps and giving feedback; however a good understanding of the success criteria for the specific focus of learning is the most useful basis for feedback to pupils.
 - We believe that teacher assessment, based on a wide range of good quality learning experiences, is a better way to track progress than administering lots of tests throughout

The aims of assessment

- The system needs to be simple – so that it can easily be understood at a glance by internal and external users of the data
- The system needs to provide users with key performance indicators about the attainment and progress of children, which will inform self-evaluation and form a good starting point for demonstrating progress to Ofsted
- The system needs to enable users to determine with confidence whether or not children are on track to meet the expected standards in the statutory assessments which will take place at the ends of KS1 and KS2
- The terminology used needs to take account of the potentially harmful effects when describing the attainment of pupils who are working below the age-related expectation, e.g. pupils with SEN/D

Arrangements for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment

- This policy has been written by staff and is reviewed annually by school governors.
- Assessment practices in school are monitored by the senior management team. In addition they are monitored by the curriculum teams.
- Moderation is carried out thoroughly across the school and across the Acorn Cooperative Learning Alliance.
- Moderations are carried out by LA trained moderators within the Alliance.

How assessment outcomes will be collected and used

We collect data just before every half term three times a year.

We collect data for reading, writing, maths and grammar and spelling.

We assess pupils using the end of year expectations for each subject. We use the 'Not as you know it' version. In Years 2, 5 and 6 we use the end of key stage guidance. In years 5 and 6 this gives us an opportunity to identify gaps early and consistency in assessment within a mixed age class. Also we find that historically many pupils have reached end of key stage expectations by the end of Y5.

We check our assumptions and identify gaps to address in learning by using summative tests as follows:

- Headstart maths
- Rising Stars reading
- Rising Stars grammar and spelling

We use question level analysis to identify gaps.

In writing we assess purely from the end of year expectations 'not as you know it' version. This is done over the course of the term.

In reading, grammar and spelling and maths we moderate our judgements by: Assessing a lower, middle and higher ability child in each subject against the 'not as you know it' criteria. We use these judgements to judge whether the test outcomes are in line with the national curriculum expectations and use teacher judgement to adjust the assessments as necessary.

Assessments are recorded in Classroom Monitor. They are used to set targets for pupils (using FFT aspire as a guide in Y4-6). Pupils working below expectations or needing catch up are identified and an action plan is completed as part of the pupil progress meeting process.

Parent consultations are timed to coincide with data collection and this opportunity is used to share learning strengths and gaps with parents.

Teachers' end of year judgements are shared with parents through the report using statements such as, 'Amy is working at the expected level in writing.'

We sharpen our assessment practice and ensure that workload isn't excessive by meeting termly with colleagues in schools from the Acorn Alliance. These meetings serve the dual purpose of comparing practice and moderating judgements to ensure accuracy.

Pupil views are sought through school council and through regular self-evaluation.

The table below aims to summarise the main assessments used, why we have chosen to use them and what we will do with the information it provides:

| When? | What assessment will be used? | Year group |
|--------------|--|-------------------|
| September | EYFS baseline Assessment | EYFS |
| October | Maths – Headstart Primary | Yr1-6 |
| | Rising Stars - Reading | Yr 1-6 |
| | Rising Stars - GPS | Yr 1-6 |
| | Writing – assessment against end of year expectations using ‘Not as we know it’ materials for Y1,3,4 and EoKS materials for Y2,5 and 6 | |
| | EYFS – assessment against Development Matters bands. | EYFS |
| Mid-February | Maths – Headstart Primary | Yr1-6 |
| | Rising Stars - Reading | Yr 1-6 |
| | Rising Stars - GPS | Yr 1-6 |
| | Writing – assessment against end of year expectations using ‘Not as we know it’ materials for Y1,3,4 and EoKS materials for Y2,5 and 6 | |
| | EYFS – assessment against Development Matters bands. | EYFS |
| End of March | | |
| May | Statutory tests | Year 6 and Year 2 |
| June | Statutory Phonic Screening test | Year 1 |
| | EYFS Profile | EYFS |
| | Maths – Headstart Primary | Yr1,3,4,5 |
| | Rising Stars - Reading | Yr1,3,4,5 |
| | Rising Stars - GPS | Yr1,3,4,5 |
| | Writing – assessment against end of year expectations using ‘Not as we know it’ materials for Y1,3,4 and EoKS materials for Y2,5 and 6 | Yr1,2,3,4,5,6 |

Tests form only a small part of the assessment tools we use, with day to day ongoing assessment (AfL) being the most used.

What does AfL look like from day to day?

Staff will make use of a range of AfL strategies over the course of each year – see attached ‘AfL Checklist’. In each lesson however, teachers will –

- Share the **Learning Objective** (L.O.) - this can be part of the introduction, plenary or at some other appropriate part of the session using ‘To’
- Make clear the **‘Success Criteria’** – using ‘I can ...’ to make expectations clear (verbal and written), modelling / demonstrating an expected standard. Teachers are encouraged to involve the children in setting the expectations whenever possible.
- **Observe and listen** to the children as they work so that they can challenge misconceptions and provide extensions to learning where appropriate.
- Use **feedback** to engage children in their learning, to recognise strengths and show the next steps. (see the Marking and Feedback Policy for details)

As a school we shall be reviewing and refining our use of on-going assessment during the 2015-16 year by trailing new approaches and through on-going discussion with local schools. This policy will be updated to reflect the new approaches during the year.

Pupil Progress Meetings

Each term teachers will meet to review and discuss their assessment judgements for children's achievements in Reading, Writing and Maths. The Headteacher will always attend each meeting. This is a time when staff will professionally challenge and verify judgements made so that over time we can be assured that staff are making accurate and robust assessments. Next steps are discussed and documented with timescales and responsibilities made clear. This process aims to highlight the needs of particular children and ensure that all children's achievement is tracked over the year.

Inclusive approach

Our policy aims to be inclusive of all pupils including low attaining and those with identified special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.

External assessment systems

The school has used Classroom Monitor as an assessment system for the past few years. It is currently evaluating the value of this against other internally managed systems for monitoring.

Leadership and management of assessment

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that the school's assessment systems and procedures are effective and efficient. They need to be able to demonstrate how the assessment informs and improves the quality of teaching. They need to ensure that the system is manageable for staff and does not become time consuming, that staff are confident in making judgements (where necessary training and support is provided) and they are responsible for ensuring that statutory tests are conducted correctly and data returns are made in time to the LA/DfE.

The Governing Body are responsible for challenging the school and holding the Headteacher to account about school performance.

Accountability and Inspection

Ofsted is one part of the national accountability framework. Inspectors will look for evidence to support their judgement over the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils.

Links to other policies

(*) – This policy is linked to the

- Marking and feedback Policy

All revised subject policies should now make reference to this policy.