

Assessment



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| Review Date | September 2024 |
| Review Frequency | Annual |
| Date for Next Review | July 2026 |
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Assessment at Whale Hill Primary School, is an integral part of teaching and learning and provides a vital mechanism for raising standards and pupils' achievements. We have a continuous and systematic assessment system in place which forms a fundamental part of the effective teaching strategies across school. This policy has been written to reflect the current DfE Teachers Standards, Teachers Pay and Conditions document and the OFSTED Inspection Schedule for schools. In addition, this Policy should also be read in conjunction with our Marking and Feedback Policy. By implementing a workable, explicit, whole school assessment policy, we continue to strive towards our goal of 'continuous improvement towards the very best imaginable'.

Introduction

Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning and lies at the heart of the process of promoting children's learning and Whale Hill. It helps us to ensure that teaching is appropriate and that learners are making expected progress. It provides a framework for setting educational objectives, monitoring and communicating children's progress. At Whale Hill Primary, assessment must be a part of all teaching strategies, to help identify areas for development and track progress. It helps us to strengthen learning across the curriculum and helps teachers enhance their skills and judgments so that all learning is personalised to enable all children to make progress in each lesson.

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

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment. The policy refers to the recommendations in:

- Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.
- Making Data Work
- Teacher Workload DfE Report
- Ofsted Inspection Schedule for Schools
- Teachers Standards

3. Principles of assessment

The key assessment principle for Whale Hill Primary School, is to ensure that the purpose and the use of assessment and data is clear, relevant and in-line with school's aims and values.

Assessment for learning and assessment of learning are distinguished clearly in our understanding of the key types of assessment: formative and summative and within this, our aims are:

- To gather, only necessary, information about the performance of individual pupils, groups, and cohorts which is used to set specific targets, related to learning, at different levels and to ensure that effective interventions are in place.
- To ensure that all data collection is proportionate and that practices are helpful for pupil progress and measures, without increasing the expectations put on teaching staff that would increase teacher workload.
- To provide information for planning, teaching and curriculum development, as well as part of our SEN monitoring and interventions.
- To ensure that assessment procedures are fair and consistent for all pupils.
- To inform parents of their children's progress at parent consultations in the autumn and spring terms and through the mid-term report in February and annual report in July.
- To ensure that efficient assessment and recording are key parts of Whale Hill's performance management policy, in line with the Teachers Standards.
- To ensure that assessment is used to inform curriculum provision.
- To allow pupils to show what they know, understand and can do in their learning; as well as helping them understand what they need to do next to achieve their targeted levels.

4. Assessment approaches

At Whale Hill 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.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to understand 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.

At Whale Hill, we ensure that formative assessment is pivotal in each lesson and forms the basis for the next steps of learning which will be taking place. We adopt a wide range of formative assessment strategies and techniques in school. The main strategies are listed below:

- Marking and Feedback forms part of formative assessment and this is outlined in the Marking and Feedback policy.
- Questioning is a main part of any classroom teaching and at Whale Hill, we strive to ensure effective questioning is central to understanding, developing and consolidating new skills and concepts.
- Self-assessment and peer-assessment is used throughout, a variety of, sessions where children can, for example, use linked or other strategies to work out if their, or their work partners, original response or answer is correct.
- Learning objectives are always shared at the beginning of each lesson with the children to ensure that they know the expectation and the outcome that they should have secured.
- Oral feedback along with marking also plays an important role and is often used to explain more complex steps or when reading teacher feedback becomes a barrier to a child accessing their own feedback.
- Children are always encouraged to recognise and evaluate their work against the lesson objective and success criteria.
- Teachers and children, reflect on performance and set targets for further development and plan for intervention.
- On-going formative assessment, provides the evidence for the basis for making foundation subject assessment judgements at the end of each academic year.

Ongoing formative assessment ensures that; knowledge, skills and understanding are continually assessed and that the next steps of learning are supported and developed; that gaps are identified, and interventions or sessions are put in place to address this and that misconceptions are quickly acknowledged and addressed.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Assessment, at Whale Hill, serves many purposes, but the main purpose of assessment in our school is to help teachers, parents and pupils plan their next steps in learning.

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 to form plans for intervention.
- **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.

At Whale Hill Primary School, we use the outcomes of assessment to check and support our teaching standards and help us improve. Working with other schools, is crucial in this process, along with using external tests and assessments. We assess pupils against learning objectives and success criteria, which are short, discrete, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what a pupil is expected to learn, know and be able to do. This assessment criteria is derived from the school curriculum, which is composed of the National Curriculum objectives.

The achievement of each pupil is assessed against all the relevant criteria three times per year, at the end of the: autumn, spring and summer terms, for reading, writing, mathematics and science and at the end of each summer term for foundation subjects. Within this, children are continually assessed against their age-related expectation with: '**at**' being the expected, '**below**' being those children who have not met their age related and '**above**' being the children who are working within their age-related expectation at greater depth. Where a pupil is assessed as exceeding the relevant criteria in a subject for that year, they will also be assessed against the criteria for Greater Depth standard.

Assessment judgements are recorded and backed by a body of evidence created using observations, records of work and testing. Assessment judgements are moderated by colleagues in school and by colleagues in other schools to make sure our assessments are fair, reliable and valid.

At Whale Hill, no one resource is used to base in-school summative assessment, as we believe this gives a much wider picture of ability and thus a more reliable measure of attainment and achievement. An overview of assessments used are detailed below by subject:

In maths:

- The White Rose 'end of unit' short assessments are used at the end of a unit to ensure that teachers have an understanding firstly, of how the children are doing with a particular concept and both the effectiveness of their teaching. Additionally, this information is used to plan for maths intervention. Outcomes are recorded on yearly spreadsheets.
- Testbase end of term assessments are used. These assessments allow teachers to make informed judgements along with a child's end of unit tests, work within their book and along with discussions how a child has performed over the term and then this outcome will be recorded on Arbour.

In reading:

- Testbase standardised assessments are used at the end of each term in years 1 (end of year only) and 2 to 5.
- Year 6 use a range of past SATs practise papers
- The aim of the above is provide teachers with the basis to form a judgement, along with work within a child's English book and reading journal along with discussions how a child has performed over the term and then this outcome will be recorded on Arbour.

In writing:

- Independent writing tasks take place during each half term for every phase in school. These tasks, along with other pieces of independent writing, are used to make a judgement on a child's writing outcome. This outcome will be recorded on Arbour termly and moderated both within school and across the trust.

In science and across other foundation subjects:

Work from investigations, discussions and books is monitored continually to assess whether a child has met the desired outcome for a unit of work in science and in other foundation subjects. This is then recorded and the end of each unit and recommendations are in place for future teaching and learning in a particular subject. Subject leaders use this information to monitor and plan

accordingly. The expectation for schemes that we follow are slightly different as for some subjects the scheme assessment feature is used. This is currently the case for PE.

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

At Whale Hill, nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- Multiplication Tables Check in Year 4
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6)

5. Collecting and using data

At Whale Hill, as well as providing information on outcomes, summative assessment is a vital tool in improving future learning. We focus on the following principles for evaluating and collecting data at Whale Hill.

- **We ensure that data collected is clear and focused on our school audience.**
The data collected is based upon work overtime and this gives a more reliable measure of the effects of teaching and learning. The data collection surrounds being continually assessed against their age-related expectation.
- **We understand the limitations of the data we collect and what we can infer from it to make improvements over time.**

At Whale Hill, we acknowledge that we can never know what each child has learned exactly, nor can we know what our children are capable of at all times. Considering this, we strive to ensure that the data that we collect provides us with an accurate judgement of a child's attainment against what is age related. We ensure that the data collected is based up on a range of evidence for each term.

- **We ensure that the collection of data is proportionate.**

Each term, for reading, writing, maths and science, teams work together to enter their judgements on to our Arbour assessment system and at the end of each academic year, judgements are made against the foundation subjects. Entering data on to Arbour, is incorporated into staff meeting time and becomes part of our normal working hours.

- **We ensure that analysing data is central to the collection and improving future teaching and learning.**

Once the data has been entered on to Arbour, analysis documents are produced for each team. This data analysis includes:

1. Points progress made for all groups of learners over the term, and since the end of the previous key stage end.
2. Where children are in relation to their age-related expectation across all groups of learners.

Within, team meetings, staff ensure that they dedicate time to analysing their performance and the performance of: the cohort, groups of learners or individual children. From this, teams identify the focus for their following teaching. The data collected is shared in school with relevant staff and also communicated with parents in parent consultations and on school reports.

In addition to the above, each term pupil performance meetings are set up between team leaders and assessment leader. In this time, discussions surround knowing the data and the threads to follow for improving future learning. At this point, intervention discussions will take place to ensure that improvement is made over time.

Lyndsay Haith, Assessment lead, will ensure that all data is added onto Arbour within the time frame for collection and will distribute analysis to teams, subject leaders and SLT within school. A whole school review of data will form part of SLT discussions and governors meetings each term.

6. Reporting to parents

Reporting to parents and carers is a fundamental part of our assessment practices at Whale Hill to encourage, engage, motivate and improving future learning. Assessment data is reported to our parents in the form of both consultation evening and written reports. The format for reporting to parents is outlined below:

- Autumn term consultation meeting discussions surround details on: attainment and progress performance over the term, attendance data and future learning targets.

- Spring and summer term consultation meeting discussions surround details on: attainment and progress performance over the term, attendance data and future learning targets. This meeting coincides with mid-term written reports and the opportunity for discussion.
- Summer term, end of year reports are issued.

The basis for our written reports is to ensure parents are informed about:

1. Progress.
2. Attainment against age related expectation.
3. Attendance as a percentage with the number of unauthorised absences.
4. Brief achievements in all areas of the curriculum.
5. Targets for improving future learning
6. Results of external examinations taken.

7. 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.

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.

For pupils with a special educational need, a more suitable measure of their progress is made using the current ARBOUR system and the process in place for reporting below a child's age-related expectation. Additionally, we also assess some children with significant needs using the PIVATs criteria which highlights small steps of progress for that child.

8. Training

The School Data Company provide continuing support on the development of school assessment procedures and developments on a regular basis.

- Updates are communicated to all staff as and when is necessary.
- Head teachers, assessment leader and subject curriculum leaders are responsible for keeping all teachers up to date with advances in school assessment and ensuring that staff have access to continuing professional development opportunities in assessment.
- Methods for assessment and recording are monitored amongst all staff as part of learning walks and book scrutinise.

- We stay abreast of good assessment practice by keeping up to date with assessment research, working alongside other schools and sharing practise and from being part of The School Data Company network.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 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.

9.2 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

9.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy

10. Monitoring

- This policy will be reviewed annually by Lyndsay Haith. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.
- All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Lyndsay Haith responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.
- Lyndsay Haith will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through: moderation, learning walks, lesson observations, book scrutinise and pupil progress meetings.

11. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Curriculum policy

- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Marking and Feedback policy

