ASSESSMENT POLICY

Introduction

We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. We give our children targets and regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to improve. We give parents regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, children and parents are all working together to raise standards for all our children.

Types of assessment

Assessment is not a singular activity; it is both about the measurement of performance at a given point in time and an ongoing process of Assessment for Learning (AFL). The types of assessment we use are explained below.

Formative

Assessment for learning is an integral part of teaching and learning. It allows teachers:

To identify what pupils have understood, when they need consolidation and when they are ready to move on

To plan lessons to meet the needs of learners

To enable personalised learning by setting targets

Summative

Assessments of learning are measures of the children's learning at certain points in the school year. They inform whole school target setting and predictions of a cohort's future attainment. Examples of summative assessment at Maryland:

Baseline assessments on entry to Nursery and Reception

Termly Maths, English and Science assessments

Providing age related expectation information

Ensuring statutory assessment requirements (SATS, phonics screening etc.) are met

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Statutory Assessments

Statutory assessments provide performance information which is used to benchmark Maryland against other schools both locally and nationally. These include:

Foundation stage profiles

Year 1 and Year 2 Phonics Screening checks

End of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATS assessments

This information is shared with parents, governors and other stakeholders as well as being published nationally.

Learning objectives and success criteria
We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives, which are generated from National Curriculum objectives. Success criteria link directly to the learning objective and should be skill specific. Evaluations of how well pupils have met learning objectives inform future planning.

Target setting
Non-negotiables: We use sets of 'non-negotiables' based on the National Curriculum age expectations of pupils as targets in numeracy, reading and writing for all pupils. These targets are in pupils' books, so that they can be referred to in lessons. These targets are reviewed regularly and pupils are encouraged to self evaluate how well they are doing in relation to these targets.

SEND Support Plan (SSP) targets: SEND (Special, Educational Needs and Disability) pupils have individual targets contained in their SSP which are reviewed regularly by all adults working with the child. The targets are set by the teacher, parent and SENDCO twice a year. The SSPs include targets for Communication and Language; Personal, Social and Emotional development; Physical, Sensory and Medical, Self Help and Independence as well as curriculum targets.

Blue dot targets: From our summative assessment tracking data, we identify children who are performing just below average for their age and in an effort to boost their achievement we nominate them 'blue dot' pupils. These pupils will have their own personalised targets set on a bookmark in their exercise books.

Testing
Children in Years 2 and 6 sit SATS tests in May each year. They complete termly practice papers in order to get used to the test arrangements and to support teachers in predicting end of year outcomes and next steps for pupils.
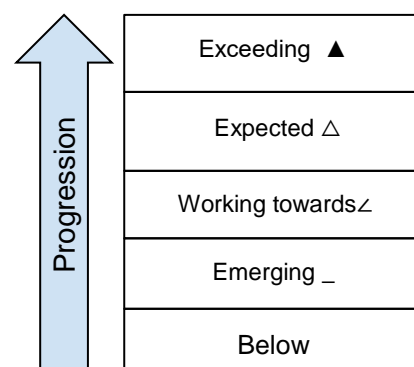
Children in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 complete a PIRA (Progress in Reading Assessment) and PUMA (Progress in Understanding Maths Assessment) each term to help teachers reach a judgement for the child and identify next steps. These tests give a standardised score for each pupil, with 100 being average. Scores above this indicate a child is achieving above average and scores below this indicate a child is achieving below average.

Pupils in Year 1 also sit a Phonics Screening Check test in June each year.

Tracking of pupil progress
Pupil progress is tracked across the whole school using the OTrack web based system. Ongoing formative assessments are recorded against National Curriculum statements. This provides a gap analysis which informs future planning.

Teachers also record their assessments against end of year expectations on OTrack termly. Teachers make use of PIRA/PUMA test results and their ongoing formative assessments to reach their overall judgements. For their programme of study, pupils will be assessed as below, emerging, working towards, expected or exceeding. We use a visual triangulation system alongside these descriptors.

Progression

Exceeding ▲
Expected △
Working towards∠
Emerging _
Below

In order to ensure consistency within assessments teachers will moderate their judgements regularly within their year teams and with the Senior Leadership Team. Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 may be moderated externally during the Summer term.

Pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
A small percentage of pupils, due to the nature of their needs, are not able to access the relevant programme of study. It is important that the progress these pupils make is recognised. Progress for these pupils against their targets is tracked through the SSP system. The SENDCO, class teacher and teaching assistants assess progress against targets regularly.

Early Years Assessment
In the early years, pupils are assessed on entry into and at the end of Nursery. On entry into Reception, pupils are given 'baseline' assessment within the first 10 days. Baseline assessments will be used for the first time as a benchmark for assessing progress of the 2015 cohort when they reach Year 6, and for years after that.

Pupil progress meetings
At termly pupil progress meetings, class teachers are given the opportunity to discuss the progress of groups and individual pupils. At these meetings, through rigorous and robust conversations and analysis, pupils requiring additional support are identified for interventions. Advice and support are offered to teachers by SLT to resolve any barriers to learning being experience by identified pupils. Pupils may be identified as 'blue dot' pupils if they are performing just below average. Once identified a set of formative procedures will be put in to place, including intensified marking and booster teaching. Higher attaining pupils are also discussed to identify ways in which they can be challenged. The performance of groups including SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), EAL (English as an additional language) and Pupil Premium will also be discussed and actions put in place to boost attainment if necessary.

Reporting to parents
Working in partnership with parents is important to us. We have a range of strategies to keep parents informed of their child's progress in school, so that they can support at home including:

Written reporting: Parents will receive written targets termly. Parents will also receive an annual report in July, which informs them how well their child has achieved and what their targets are for improvement. There is an expectation that parents support their child with their targets at home. During the Autumn and Spring terms, parents will meet with teachers to discuss the progress their child has made with these home targets. End of year reports for pupils in Year 2 and 6 will include details of the national curriculum results achieved in national tests. For Year 1 pupils we report the pupils' result in the phonics screening. For pupils in Year R, we give parents a written summary of the child's achievement against the Early Learning Goals.

Parents evenings: We offer parents the opportunity to meet their child's teacher four times a year. At the first meeting of the school year we introduce the year group team and explain the curriculum and work that will be covered in the year ahead. At the second and third meetings teachers explain how pupils are performing against their year group expectations and review targets for improvement with parents. In the final meeting of the year, the child's end of year report is shared and targets are identified for the new academic year.

<u>Year 6 Academic Review Day:</u> In Year 6 we hold an additional, longer one to one meeting with parents prior to SATs on Academic Review Day. In these meetings we discuss predictions for SATS tests based on attainment in 'mock' SATs shortly before the Easter holiday.

<u>Foundation Stage Profile:</u> We offer parents of pupils in Year R the opportunity to discuss the results of the Foundation Stage Profile with their child's teacher and the detailed profile and learning journeys are sent home at the end of the year.

Feedback to pupils

We believe that feedback to pupils is very important, as it tells them how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work. We have an agreed code for marking, progressive for each phase, as this ensures that we all mark in the same way.

We give children verbal feedback on their work whenever possible. We usually do this when the children are working during the lesson although sometimes we give feedback on a particular lesson at the beginning of the next one. When lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, we provide written comments on the child's work during marking. We give written comments to children of all ages. We do not always aim these comments at children; quite often we write something that is useful to both parents and teachers.

We encourage children to assess their own work and the work of their peers. We encourage older pupils to be the first markers of some pieces of work, giving them valuable, immediate feedback on their work.

We allow time at the beginning of the day, for pupils to review and improve their work in response to the teacher's marking. We do this to ensure that teacher's marking has impact on future learning.

Equality

The school is committed to implementing both Newham's Race Equality Policy and the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. We aim to ensure that all children are fairly assessed and that assessment information is used positively to help children accelerate their progress regardless of their gender, colour, religion or cultural background.