

Wellgate Primary School

Assessment Policy

Introduction

This is a working policy. As 2008/2009 is a year of significant development in assessment at Wellgate Primary School, this policy will be a work in progress over the year with a review each term. The policy will stand as a completed document by the end of the school year.

Assessment is a continuous process of judging a child's work. Assessment 'establishes standards for performance of all pupils in the subject it includes. These standards can be used to set targets for improvement, to measure progress towards these targets and to monitor and compare performance between individuals, groups and schools'.
(National Curriculum)

This policy statement and guidelines should not be read in isolation, but in conjunction with the relevant National Curriculum document and all other school policies. Particular attention should be paid to the school's aims, the marking policy and the teaching and learning policy.

Aims

Our aims are:

- To assess, record and report on the wide range of a child's achievements
- To use the outcomes from assessment, recording and review of progress to monitor and evaluate curriculum planning
- To track individuals and cohorts throughout the school to monitor achievements and set targets in order to raise the levels of progress
- To gather systematically, record and review evidence of pupil attainment in relation to National Curriculum level and the statutory attainment targets
- To analyse school results and tracking systems, both within school and nationally in order to raise levels of attainment
- To use assessment information for school improvement
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in the school provision

Assessment in School

Assessment is the judgement that teachers make about a child's attainment, based on techniques such as observation, questioning, marking and testing

Assessment can be;

- *Diagnostic* – determining the knowledge and skills that a child possesses, and helping to identify strengths and weaknesses to enable appropriate guidance and support to be given
- *Formative* – informing future planning in the learning and teaching process.
- *Summative* – aiding the writing of reports to parents, and required teacher assessments
- *Evaluative* – providing indications of the successfulness of teaching strategies and schemes of work, as well as identifying implications for resourcing and staff development

At Wellgate we believe Assessment:

- Is vital in facilitating effective teaching
- Is about making informed judgements about pupils' progress and achievements, measured against the National Curriculum
- Is an on-going process and should not be seen as separate from teaching
- Is integral to successful Short Term Planning
- Is effective when clear learning assessment objectives are shared with the pupils
- Should form the basis for reporting on pupils' progress and attainment
- Should be manageable and useful for the teacher

Assessments should be:

- Part of the teaching and learning process and need to be built into teachers' planning
- Based upon evidence of what pupils know, understand and can do
- Based upon ensuring pupils receive feedback to support their learning
- The basis for target setting which is realistic but challenging
- Based upon an agreed written recording system, alongside the retention of evidence
- Arranged effectively so that teachers' judgement about pupils' work is moderated
- Able to involve the pupils' in their own judgements about their work

We assess children according to clear curriculum intentions in school subject guidelines and schemes of work, related to National Curriculum programmes of study.

Foundation Stage Assessment

We ensure that children are assessed using a baseline assessment on entry to the Foundation Stage in order to give us a clear starting point. We use the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document to guide our teaching. Our practitioners record the progress of each child against these objectives. This enables them to make a judgement about the work of each child in relation to the level of attainment. This allows us to monitor the progress of each child. We use the assessment guidance in these schemes to help us identify each child's level of attainment.

In our plans we set out our learning intentions for each area within the foundation stage and give details of the activity being provided to help reach each particular goal. We also plan focussed activities each day where a child will work with a member of staff. Opportunities for assessment are identified within each focussed activity.

We plan for our learning environment with clear learning objectives. We base these upon the practitioner's detailed knowledge of each child. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. Our weekly plans make clear the expected outcomes for each activity. We make a note of those individual children who do not achieve at the expected level for the lesson, and we use this information when planning for the next lesson. We also keep this information as a record of the progress made by the group.

We recognise various methods of assessing a child's learning. The type of assessment that we make varies from subject to subject. During adult focussed and child initiated activities observations are recorded, ensuring that all children are assessed in all areas of learning. Children's significant spoken, written, drawn, constructed, painted, printed (etc) achievements are discussed by practitioners and, if necessary, annotated and copied for records. Significant use is also made of photographic evidence.

We believe that feedback to pupils is very important, as it tells them how well they have done and what they need to do next in order to improve their work. We always give the children verbal feedback on their work. We do this when the children are working on a particular activity during the lesson so that it is immediate. Adults take time to listen to the pupils and question them about their understanding, then respond accordingly giving encouragement and further clarification.

During the child's year in F2, we begin to use J2SL as a summative assessment tool. We enter the data on a half termly basis. This accumulates throughout the year to inform the Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the children's year in F2.

Key Stage One and Two

Long term planning

The structure for formal Assessment includes the SATs at the end of KS2 and KS1, the optional SATs at the end of Y3, Y4 and Y5 and the Foundation Stage Profile used at the end of F2. An assessment calendar for the current year is in the appendix. Opportunities and priorities for assessment in the long term are set by subject co-ordinators and the Senior Leadership Team.

Medium term planning

Opportunities and priorities for assessment are identified by class teacher in their medium term planning. These will often take the form of end of unit assessments but may also include on-going assessments. Whenever possible these will be levelled using the level descriptions and the exemplification material.

Short term planning

Assessment in the classroom is a constant process and includes listening to pupils, asking questions to assess understanding, observing pupils and setting tests and tasks at the end of a series of lessons. Assessment information is also gathered through the work completed by the children when they work with TAs. As a teacher receives any feedback from a pupil (and this includes the marking of books) they are carrying out assessment but this informal response also needs to be balanced with more formal assessment arrangements. This means assessment needs to be identified in the weekly planning. The type of assessment and the Learning Objective being assessed needs to be clear in the planning and then clearly communicated to the pupils using the WALT (We Are Learning To) and WILF (What I'm Looking For) system. The Evaluation column on each Short Term Planning form should also be used to reflect the teachers' assessment of the learning that has taken place against the learning objective.

Marking

Literacy : We currently mark literacy books using the yippee yellow and growing green system. Work is marked against the WALT given to the children at the beginning of the lesson. At the end of each unit, children's independent written work is marked against Roz Wilson and levelled with a national curriculum sublevel. These written assessments are then recorded on a monitoring form for each class. In reading, class teachers record assessments on a guided reading record form (sub levelled and specific to the ability of the child) and in the children's individual reading record (again, sub levelled and specific to the ability of the child).

Maths: Teachers use the key objectives from the framework to set objectives for the children's learning and match the children's attainment from these points.

Involving children in assessment

Children are better motivated when they understand what they are to achieve and recognise the progress they are making. At Wellgate, teachers help them improve their performance by discussing with them what they can do, and what they need to improve. The children are aware of the targets set for them in literacy and in maths. Depending on their age, they are involved in the marking of their own work and the marking of the work of their peers in a number of different ways.

The Role of Target Setting and Tracking

All teachers are expected to set sub levelled targets for the children in their class in reading, writing, maths and science and track the children's progress towards these. These targets are set at the beginning of the academic year and build on the end of year attainment from the previous class. We expect highly of all our children and will set targets that are realistic but challenging.

These targets are given to the assessment co-ordinator who analyses the data for the end of year predicted outcomes and addresses any issues that arise. The targets are also given to the parents at Parents' Evening. Depending on the age of the children, the end of year targets may also be given to the children themselves.

At the end of the Autumn and Spring Terms, teachers are expected to assess children's performance and analyse their class' progress towards their targets. They then meet with members of the SLT in a Pupil Progress Interview. At this point progress towards targets in all areas for all children and any potentially vulnerable children are discussed. If needed, support programmes are put into place.

In addition, the assessment co-ordinator analyses the progress towards end of year targets in order to track children's progress. A data report is produced and any issues are addressed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each teacher has a responsibility to assess children, record attainment and verify their assessment.

In addition the Headteacher will need to ensure that:

- National Curriculum is being implemented. This includes the statutory assessment arrangements
- There is a coherent school policy for the gathering, recording, retaining, reviewing and using of evidence
- Teachers have adequate opportunities to become familiar with National Assessment Standards
- Schools assessment standards conform to National Standards and there is a developing understanding of these within the school

The Assessment Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring:

- SATS are administered during the appropriate period of time and to all Year 2 and Year 6 children
- All relevant standardised scripts are ordered and supplied to the appropriate teachers
- All special arrangements are organised
- The headteacher has copies of all standardised test results
- A profile is produced to show data in a tabloid form for school prospectus and other official documents
- There is regular agreement trials to assist the development of consistent assessment standards
- The review of the schools assessment and policy arrangements
- The development of the school's policy and practice in assessing and recording
- Appropriate liaison with other subject co-ordinators within the school

Year 2 and Year 6 teachers will be responsible for:

- Administering the Standard Assessment tasks in English, Mathematics and Science as and when required as specified by Q.C.A.
- Completing the appropriate record forms and the results to parents by the end of the Summer term
- Undertaking appropriate assessment training
- Preparing official transfer summative record sheet

All teachers will be responsible for:

- Administering marking and standardising tests
- Contributing to whole school agreement trials
- Maintaining the children's finished work as evidence for parents evening and other purposes
- Preparing official records for transfer to receiving schools at the request of the Headteacher
- Planning and executing assessment activities for units of work and as outlined in their planning
- Participating in arrangements for target setting
- Maintaining progress records in numeracy/literacy

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We aim to ensure that there are opportunities for all children of all abilities to complete appropriate assessment tasks free from stereotyped or biased expectations. There must be equality for those learning English as an additional language and for all pupils from different learning backgrounds.

Assessing at an early age is essential to ensure that we effectively help children to overcome difficulties. The ways we support children with SEN are detailed in our policy for Special Educational Needs. Progress of children with SEN is monitored by the SENCo.

Review

After the policy is concluded at the end of 2008/2009, this policy will be reviewed and modified every two years.

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