

Assessment Policy

2023-24

Overseen by: Katharine Young (DHT)

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Our vision for assessment

This policy has been written for staff at Elmhurst Primary school to set out our approach to assessing pupils' attainment, both formatively and summatively. This policy should be read alongside our Teaching and Learning and Feedback and marking policies.

The purpose and aims of this policy and our approach to assessment are to:

- Improve pupil outcomes
- To evaluate the impact on learning of our intended and implemented curriculum
- Inform teachers and pupils of their next steps in learning
- To ensure we identify pupils falling behind and provide them with the right support to catch up
- Ensure assessment is not onerous for teachers, through thinking carefully about the purpose and frequency of data collection and data input

We believe that all forms of assessment should be used to improve teaching and learning.

- The best forms of assessment result from ongoing dialogue and interactions with children.
- Frequent interactions are what provide the soundest judgments of pupil progress and are what should inform planning and teaching.
- As outlined in our feedback policy:
 - We believe the more precise the feedback is, the greater the clarity in terms of the teaching and learning steps
 - Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their own work; it should not take away from this responsibility by adults doing the hard thinking work for the pupil.
 - Wherever possible, children should receive 'live' feedback either within the lesson itself or in the next appropriate lesson.
- We recognise that progress in learning is not linear and therefore children should not be judged solely on the basis of a test.
- Where data is gathered, it should also be used as a means to support those children who are underachieving or to extend the most able.

We have agreed on the following principles as the basis of our assessment system:

- All forms of assessment should be used to improve teaching and learning.
- Simple to use and understand.
- Testing should be rigorous and reliable
- Underpinned by a knowledge of the curriculum.
- Informs planning and delivery of the curriculum
- Helps a child to recognise the next steps in their learning.
- No unnecessary paperwork that does not contribute to teaching and learning
- Provides reliable information to parents about how their child is doing
- Ensures that Elmhurst is keeping up with external best practice

This policy has been informed by:

- EEF report - Assessing and monitoring pupil progress
- Assessment without levels - DFE report
- The work of Kate Jones, Dylan William and John Hattie

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is the most crucial type of assessment as it informs the next steps in teaching and learning. It is also an opportunity to find out which children are reaching expected outcomes and those exceeding or falling behind. This information should be used to ensure that any children who are falling behind are helped to catch up. We believe that teachers know their children better than anyone and are the most accurate judges of their children's progress. We use a range of information to inform teachers' formative assessments.

National Curriculum Expectations

The National Curriculum and the Programmes of Study provide the backbone of our formative assessment framework but, as they are not ready to use as an assessment framework in themselves, we have developed a set of progression documents for English and Maths, closely connected to the programme of study from the national curriculum. These documents also provide the basis for all teacher assessments of children in the core subjects (reading, writing and maths) providing clear broken down statements of yearly expectations.

The progression document for each year group stipulates a benchmark standard for children on entry to that year group. Children not accessing their year group material can therefore be assessed according to their actual ability by tracking back through the document to previous year group expectations. All progression documents are also organised by strand so that teachers can also see strengths and areas of development for different areas within a subject. These are used in reading and writing to help plan next steps in reading and writing lessons.

Assessment against the planned curriculum

All foundation subject leaders and the core subjects of computing and science have 3 key documents that form the foundation of their planned curriculum. They are: 1) subject statement of intent 2) the subject curriculum map detailing the links and connections across the curriculum, 3) Threshold concepts map detailing the key concepts that should be understood and at which points. All medium term plans reference these documents so that all staff are clear on what should be taught/ learnt and when. Assessment tasks or 'Proof of progress tasks' are being mapped in to our Medium Term Plans so that teachers can ensure children are being assessed against the right criteria.

Feedback and marking

- Feedback and looking at pupils' work is the teacher's day to day or week to week means of assessing pupil progress and of planning work to meet pupils' needs.
- Quality and timely feedback indicates to the pupil what they have achieved and what they need to try to do next / how they can improve their work.
- We provide feedback ***in line with the planned curriculum***, the careful planning of which identifies the knowledge or skill to be learnt in that lesson or sequence of lessons.
- The best feedback should be timely and specific. We encourage live feedback in lessons, either to an individual, a group or a class.
- Good feedback will support children there and then to improve their work or move on.
- In addition to feedback on lessons, pupils' common errors should be brought to the child's attention so that they are able to improve on these too. e.g. incorrect formation of particular letters, common spelling errors/grammatical errors etc.
- Books should be looked at every day in order to inform next steps and all work done by the child should be acknowledged by the teacher.

(Please see the feedback and marking policy for details on our approach to feedback in different subjects)

Assessment of the literacy curriculum

In Year R and KS1 children are assessed and grouped according to their phonic knowledge. Each child reads books that match their phonic knowledge. All children are formally assessed on entry to the programme in reception. Termly assessments are carried out to check that children are placed in the correct reading group. In year 1 children complete termly screening checks to ensure that they have acquired the appropriate phonics knowledge. New pupils entering the school also undergo this assessment so that they can be fully supported in learning English. Apart from formal

assessments, ongoing day to day assessment means that groups are constantly adjusted to ensure the best progress for each child. Reading teachers listen to all children reading every day and are skilled in identifying when a child is either struggling in their reading or exceeding the expected standard.

In Reading, teachers use formative assessment during lessons and use live feedback marking to respond to whole class or to individual student needs based on any misconceptions or areas for improvement. We do not use hands up to avoid certain children dominating class discussions: teachers should circulate the room when asking pupils to talk to their partners so that they can gather a clear picture of the progress being made by the class. We do not provide next steps marking. The next step will be the next lesson.

In Writing, we use pupil conferencing, which makes the children active and thoughtful participants in their own learning. This process helps children to recognise their successes and to identify and take ownership over how to improve. We have found that this approach means that children are able to pinpoint their individual next steps in learning, rather than being given a generic target.

Spelling tests are given regularly. These are based on words that have been studied in class rather than on a random selection of words. These spellings are also sent home for pupils to learn as homework.

In Grammar, teachers use formative assessment to assess pupil understanding and knowledge during the lesson. Live feedback marking will be used as appropriate. Next steps marking is not provided but it is expected that where whole class feedback is required, additional whole class teaching is provided. Grammar concepts for each year group are revisited every year to ensure that pupils learn more, know more and understand more.

From Yr 2 - 5, a termly summative assessment of reading is taken using the NFER tests (see details below). A summative assessment of writing is also undertaken using the writing progression document to support teacher judgements on a termly basis, using evidence from children's work for that term. In Year 6, previous SATs papers are used to provide a summative assessment at different points in the year.

Assessment of the maths curriculum

Mathematics teaching at Elmhurst Primary School is based on the principles of Teaching for Mastery, which originally came from exchanges with teachers in Shanghai. In Maths, we follow the Maths No Problem scheme and in Year R, 1 and 2 Number Sense. Formative assessment is the most important approach to learning in mathematics. We do not provide next steps marking. The next step will be the next lesson.

At the end of each Maths No Problem chapter, the children complete an end-of-chapter review as a way for the teachers to assess their learning throughout that particular topic. Three times a year, the children also sit summative assessments on all areas of the maths curriculum. In Key Stage 2, arithmetic tests are also used to assess children's progress (up to fortnightly in Year 6, but more rarely in other year groups).

For the 2023-24 academic year, we will continue to have a focus on fast and automatic recall of number facts. Each week, there will be dedicated time within maths lessons to teach an arithmetic skill and then throughout the week, a selection of questions to lead towards automatic recall. These will be based on the systematic teaching strategies of addition and subtraction from Number Sense Maths.

By the end of year 4, children should be proficient in all of their times-tables up to 12x12. In the summer term, the children in Year 4 sit the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) to test their knowledge of times-table. To support the learning and continued practice of times-tables, we use Times Table Rockstars (TTRS). This is an online platform where children engage in a range of games to improve their speed and accuracy with times-tables. The platform provides detailed information of children's proficiency, enabling us to target additional support to pupils not meeting the standards.

Prior to learning their times-tables, children need to become proficient in their basic addition and subtraction skills. To support this, we use Numbots. This is linked to TTRS, but children compete this time to become faster and more efficient at their basic number bonds. All children are encouraged to practise on the relevant game daily at home and weekly at school and teachers monitor the progress of each child so that they can be supported effectively.

From years 2 - 5, a termly summative assessment of maths is taken using the NFER tests (see details below). In Year 6, previous SATs papers are used to provide a summative assessment at different points in the year.

Assessment of the Science curriculum

Like our other core subjects, science assessment takes place in two ways. The backbone of the science assessment is the science threshold concept map. This document is split by year group and is organised by core areas (biology, chemistry and physics). There is also a strand dedicated to working scientifically. Within each strand, each year group has come up with the key big scientific ideas, linked to their taught content. Within each big idea are statements that explain what the children should be able to demonstrate. Children are judged to be WTS, EXS or GDS, according to how they meet these statements. We do not require a certain amount of statements to be ticked to achieve a certain standard. Rather, teachers use the document to help them form an overall judgement of science attainment for the year. The document is also used formatively; teachers plan from it to ensure all areas of the science curriculum are covered and met.

In Science, we also use topic based concept maps or tables as a means of children showing their learning journeys. At the start of a topic, children explain what they know about a specific topic, then as the topic develops week by week, children add to their map using key words of annotated diagrams. A completed concept map provides a good indication of the level of a child's understanding and their development throughout a topic area.

Mini end-of-unit tests, concept maps, low-stakes quizzes, test base questions, investigations and composite tasks are just some of the ways that teachers track pupil progress and address misconceptions effectively. In order to prioritise teaching and learning rather than testing, we are looking to replace our end of unit tests with a baseline assessment and end of year test for KS2. The data from these tests would be used to inform teaching and teacher assessment.

Assessing the impact of our wider curriculum

As a school, we do not require teachers to collect individual assessments of pupils' attainment in the foundation subjects. We do, however, expect them to be able to talk with confidence about each child's progress in all subjects benchmarked against our planned curriculum. Teachers are expected to know if their pupils have learnt what has been taught and to what extent. All teachers are expected to understand the core learning and concepts for the units they teach, to be able to articulate the school's vision for that subject and to know how that unit builds on or fits into the wider curriculum for a subject.

Teachers already monitor the impact (what pupils know) in a variety of ways such as looking at pupils' work in books on a daily basis and providing feedback and through regular insightful questions and conversations in class. They provide low stakes quizzes to assess pupil understanding.

For the 2023-24 academic year, one of our ongoing school priorities will be to assess pupils' attainment according to the planned curriculum to ensure that children are learning what we have taught. Each subject lead will be working on how to build a comprehensive assessment of planned sequences of work to assess pupils accurately and to ensure that learning is 'sticking'. This could take multiple forms, moving from quick quizzes of knowledge learnt from previous lessons or units of work to a debate looking at two sides of an argument or to an end of unit assessment task that requires pupils to synthesise and display their learning of an entire unit. We will gather this assessment information in different ways (such as using FlipGrid or online quizzes) for subjects which require more practical work (e.g. PE, French, Computing, Music).

We will focus developing purposeful assessment tasks to:

- *provide teachers with meaningful, useful insight (assessment for formative purposes) in the form of information about a child's learning and ability to apply their learning to a broad range of contexts;*
- *enable dependable claims to be made about children's learning (particularly when communicating with parents).*
- *Specific tasks and questions should be designed which require children to do things in order to demonstrate their learning.*

EEF - assessing and monitoring pupils' progress

Learning conversations

We use a learning conversation model with staff instead of a book scrutiny approach to assess the quality of units of work and of pupil outcomes. This includes a conversation with pupils about their learning in that unit, which provides teachers and SLT with a good understanding of learning gleaned within a unit.

SLT are also expected to regularly carry out similar conversations with pupils informally to review what they have learnt and to support teachers in reviewing units of work to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Teacher mark books - Recording Information

We expect teachers to keep assessment books, either on paper or on line, detailing the results of summative tests given within the classroom. The results in teachers' log books will not be collected centrally, rather the purpose is to use this information formatively, to inform the next steps in each child's learning, to identify whole class areas of concern, and to help identify children performing above or below national expectations. During termly assess and review meetings, teachers should use this information to inform line managers of children who require additional support, so that support can be provided in a targeted and timely fashion.

The following information **must** be kept by all staff:

- *Maths*: arithmetic tests if done, end of unit test data, times tables (if not captured on TT rockstars)
- *Literacy*: spelling tests, writing register of each writing project, reading challenge books read (KS1)

The following information (and any other information useful to the teacher) **could** be kept

- Termly NFER assessment
- Conferences and author's chair
- Certificates
- Phonecalls home for positive messages
- Homework (but all should be following up if not recorded)
- Book lending lists
- Interventions - names and notes from any responsive maths intervention.

The mark book can also be used to inform parents of children's areas of strength and weakness.

Summative testing

Summative assessment is the formal testing of what has been learned in order to produce marks or grades which may be used for reports of various types.

Reception

The NFER Reception Baseline Assessment tool is used to assess children in mathematics, literacy (including Communication and Language) and the personal and social aspects of learning. This assessment is completed as soon as children have settled during the autumn 1 term. In addition to this, children are assessed, using observations and focus activities, against the new 7 strands of the EYFS Development Matters statements to provide a baseline assessment in all of the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. Children are also assessed in their phonic knowledge using the RWI assessment tool on a half termly basis. Data from these assessments are recorded in the RWI portal.

Years 1 - 6

Children are given formal tests in the core subjects of Mathematics and Literacy at three points in the school year. Autumn term testing provides a baseline for the year, spring tests provide mid-year data to identify whole cohort progress and also children who need further support and intervention and summer tests give the final judgment for the year. Test results are collected in the early Autumn term, mid spring and late Summer. Teachers will have the opportunity to provide a teacher assessment alongside any test data submitted. This is especially relevant for EAL and SEND children, who may not achieve test results. Alongside this, we ask teachers to set targets for each child at the

start of the year and to reflect in assess and review meetings on whether students are on track to meet their EOY targets. These results are all stored centrally and provide us with a whole school picture, which we can analyse in different ways.

We believe that summative tests need to have '*validity and reliability*' (EEF AMPP report) so that they can provide the most accurate information of how our children are doing in line with national averages. For Mathematics, Reading and SPaG we use the NFER standardised tests for Years 2 - 5 (and Year 1 in Summer term). We use previous SATs papers in Year 6. We are confident of their robustness as they are drawn from a large sample size. We have selected an age standardised score to report our data. The results of the tests will be reported as an age standardised score, with 100 being the national average. Children falling within the range 100 to 115 will be deemed to be working at national standard. Children falling below the 99 mark will be deemed to be working towards a national standard and children falling above the 115 mark will be deemed to be working at greater depth. Scores below 80 and above 130 will be considered exceptional (as set out by the NFER), so these scores will be a way of identifying children falling significantly below or performing well above national expectations.

The shared language of testing in our school is:

- Expected Standard (EXS),
- Working towards National Standard (WTS)
- Working at Greater Depth (GDS)
- Children working significantly below age related expectations will be marked as SBN.

Summative judgments of writing

During the termly assessment cycle (Autumn, Spring and Summer), teachers will use the writing progression document to provide a summative judgement of writing at three points in the year. This judgement will be based on the writing that pupils have produced in Class Writing Projects, Personal Writing Projects and any other written work that they have produced since the last assessment cycle. A best fit approach is used.

Statutory National testing

During their time in school children will sit some external national tests. These are as follows:

- Reception Baseline (September) and EYFS profile (submitted in June)
- Year 1 – Phonics screening test – June
- Year 4 - Multiplication check
- Year 6 – KS2 SATS in Reading, SPaG and Mathematics May – externally marked. Teacher assessments in Writing, Reading, Mathematics and Science.

Target setting and benchmarking

When using data to judge progress, we would expect most children to enter the year group working towards the standards within that year group. A small proportion of children would be at National Standard already (achieving a scaled score of 100 or more in the Autumn tests). We appreciate that progress is not always linear and some children move on faster than others but by the Summer term, we would expect at least 85%-90% of children in each year group to be achieving the National Standard in the core subjects and around 25-30% should be working at greater depth.

As well as looking at this broad measure of progress, we also look in more depth at a child's standardised age score and calculate the changes within the score over the course of the year and year on year. This helps us to measure the progress that the child has made over the course of the year and from one year to another.

At the start of the year, we set end of year targets for each child and derive a target for the year group on that basis. We expect targets at National Standard for each year group to be roughly 85%-90%, with around 25%- 30% working at Greater Depth. The targets we set are more ambitious than the highest set by FFT. By the end of KS2 we aim for

around 90% - 95% at EXS in all subjects, between 30 and 35% GDS in reading, around 40-45% GDS in writing and around 45% GDS in maths.

Monitoring progress - Assess and review

Top level data is important to see how whole or parts of cohorts are performing, but it is also imperative to drill down to the progress made by individual children and to intervene to support those children when necessary. To this end, we finish off the termly assessment cycle with an 'Assess and Review' process. Here, teachers look at their particular groups (core subjects) and assess how they are doing. They consider issues that the whole group might be struggling with and how they may address this in class, as well as thinking about individual children and what can be done to support them.

Members of the leadership team then meet with each member of staff and discuss each child. Children who are struggling, not making progress or who are a concern for their teachers in any way are then picked up individually. The relevant member of the Leadership team, alongside the teacher, will decide on a course of action for that child, which may include a course of intervention, a possible referral for SEN or a social intervention. That child is then followed up on each term to monitor their progress.

Support and Interventions

In order to ensure that all children achieve, the school has established a rigorous catch up programme, tailored to the needs of the child. Some of our offerings are as follows:

Academic

- Daily 1:1 catch up sessions run each afternoon in literacy and maths, which focus on the specific needs of the child attending.
- Assembly interventions run by the teacher during assembly times, for Maths and Literacy with targeted children.
- An extensive 10 week tuition programme is available for KS2 children, again aimed at closing the gap and addressing their particular areas of improvement. Where possible this is with a member of staff. Tuition is either after school or on Saturday mornings.
- TAs trained in our Maths catch-up programme
- NELI - Nuffield early language intervention for our younger children
- Weekly handwriting club for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Weekly times-table club in Years 3, 4 and 5

Learning or emotional support

- Speech and Language programme – children have a tailored programme to follow, delivered by a trained teacher or TA.
- Weekly social skills group for years 3, 4, 5 and 6 children.
- Counselling service (2 days per week) for specific children.

Children with SEND

The school has a number of children who have learning needs and who may therefore not be accessing the curriculum for their year groups. Those with high needs SEND, who are working below the yearly progression documents, are assessed using the p scales (using the BSquared programme). The SEND team is responsible for collecting their data. The class teacher and relevant 1:1 support staff are responsible for the upkeep of individual SEND children's records of progress and data. Their data will also be included on the centralised SIMS system. Those children moving on from the p-scales but unable to access the work for their year group will be teacher assessed using the school's progression documents. The SENCO will meet regularly with teaching assistants and teachers to monitor record keeping and target setting for these children. As part of the termly assess and review process, all phase leaders meet with the SEND team to discuss the progress of children with SEN and identify further actions for individuals e.g. involvement of external agencies and classroom strategies. These actions are then reviewed and discussed in the leadership tracking meetings.

We now have a high number of pupils who have ASD, for these pupils we will use SCERTS planning targets as well as curriculum or P level targets. SCERTS is the framework for planning for children with ASD, which is used in Newham. SCERTS stands for Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and transactional supports and recognises the need for children to be regulated in order to be able to learn. It also prioritises the need for children to develop their social communication skills in natural environments with the support of transactional supports such as visual timetable and core vocabulary boards. Supporting adults have an important role to play in ensuring that the transactional supports are prepared and set up daily for children to be able to access learning and routines throughout the day.

Examples of SCERTS targets and P levels are stored on the google drive as well as in each teacher's SEND planning file which is kept in the classroom. We believe that all adults working with a child should be aware of their planning and should have access to it at all times. Teaching assistants should meet regularly with teachers in order to be prepared to effectively support children with SEND. Regular tracking of SCERTS targets and curriculum planning for pupils with SEND will inform planning in the cycle of 'Assess, plan, do, review' as recommended in the SEND Code of Practice.

Reporting to parents

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's learning. We aim to provide an open door policy whereby parents can seek advice or support from any member of staff. We endeavor to communicate well through newsletters, termly curriculum maps, homework tasks, reading journals, reports, open days, parental workshops and the website.

Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Formal parents evenings are held in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. A full report is sent to parents at the end of the year. This report will provide information about the child's performance in all National Curriculum subjects. In Year 1 it will include details of the phonic screening check; in Year 4 it will include detailed of the Multiplication Tables Check and in Year 6, it will indicate the results of the child's Statutory Assessment Tests as well as the level awarded through Teacher Assessments in Reading, Writing, Maths, Science and SPAG.