

St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School



**Assessment Policy
2024-25**

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Our vision for assessment

This policy has been written for staff at St Joseph The Worker Primary School to set out our approach to assessing pupils' attainment, both formatively and summatively.

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 judgements of pupil progress and are what should inform planning and teaching.
- In relation to written and verbal feedback
 - 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 St Joseph The Worker 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

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, the school follows progression documents for all subjects, closely connected to the programme of study from the national curriculum. These documents also provide the basis for all teacher assessments of children.

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. Progression documents are also organised by strand where appropriate so that teachers can also see strengths and areas of development for different areas within a subject.

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.

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.

Assessment of the literacy curriculum

In Year R and KS1 children are assessed and grouped according to their phonic knowledge and the school delivers the phonics scheme Read Write Inc. 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 phonics 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.

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. Teachers 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.

In Writing, we use pupil checklists, 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. 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 1 - 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 St Joseph the Worker Primary School is based on the principles of Teaching for Mastery. In Maths, we follow the White Rose Maths scheme from R-Y6. 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 White Rose Maths topic, the children complete an end-of-topic 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 Stages 1 and 2, weekly arithmetic tests are also used to assess children's progress

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. There will be at least one arithmetic session per week dedicated to multiplication. These sessions will be based on the systematic teaching strategies from White Rose 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.

From years 1 - 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

In Science, we 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.

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 2024-25 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 online quizzes) for subjects which require more practical work (e.g. PE, 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.*

Learning conversations

We use a learning conversation model with staff as well as 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.

Subject Leaders 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 pupil progress 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 and times tables (if not captured on TT rockstars)
- *Literacy*: spelling tests, writing checklists linked to core texts, RWI and Fresh Start assessment
- Termly NFER assessment

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

- Class Dojo for positive messages
- Homework (but all should be following up if not recorded)
- Book lending lists
- Interventions proformas

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 DFE Reception Baseline Assessment tool is used to assess children in mathematics, literacy (including Communication and Language). This assessment is completed as soon as children have settled during the first six weeks of Reception. In addition to this, children are assessed, using observations and focus activities, against the 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. Reception children also complete WELLCOMM screening in the first half term to assess their language and communication skills. This is repeated on the child's fifth birthday where appropriate.

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*' 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 1 - 5. 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. By the end of the academic year, children falling within the range 100 to 109 will be deemed to be working securely at national standard. Children falling between the 90 to 99 mark will be deemed to be working towards a national standard and children falling above the 110 mark will be deemed to be working at greater depth. Scores below 90 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 documents 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 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.

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.

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 a pupil progress meeting. 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 meet with each member of staff and discuss the children's progress. 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 reading
- Additional RWI sessions
- WELLCOMM intervention for SLCN
- Handwriting Intervention
- Weekly multiplication lessons

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 KS2 children.
- Learning Mentor Intervention

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 Pre Key Stage Indicators Standards 1-4. The SENDCO 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. Those children moving on from Pre Key Stage Indicators but unable to access the work for their year group will be teacher assessed using the school's progression documents. The SENDCO will meet regularly with teaching assistants and teachers to monitor record keeping and target setting for these children. As part of the pupils progress review process, all phase leaders meet with the SENDCO team to discuss the progress of children with SEN and identify further actions for individuals e.g. involvement of external agencies and classroom strategies.

Teaching assistants should meet regularly with teachers in order to be prepared to effectively support children with SEND. Regular tracking of 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 endeavour to communicate well through newsletters, class Dojo, homework tasks, reading journals, reports, parental workshops and the school website.

Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Formal parent's 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.