

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING FOR LEARNING POLICY

Introduction

Assessment is an integral part of our curriculum planning and is inseparable from the teaching and learning process. It has a major role to play in increasing levels of achievement within Old Vicarage School.

We believe the key purpose of assessment is to move children on in their learning. Continued monitoring of each child's progress gives a clear picture of what each child is doing. It is important that the teacher knows what has been remembered, what skills have been acquired, and what concepts have been understood. This enables teachers to reflect on what children are doing and informs future planning. The outcomes of our assessments will help children become involved in raising their own expectations.

Assessment is an important link in the cycle of planned curricular experiences. Recording achievement is a positive way of identifying children's particular strengths and weaknesses through sensitive assessment. Sensitive assessment contributes towards a positive attitude, motivation and a desire to continue making progress.

We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. We give our children regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to do better. This allows us to base our lesson plans and individual targets on a detailed knowledge of each child. 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.

By concentrating on the individual, the opportunity is taken to ensure that children experience success and can thereby build on the self-esteem and motivation of every child. This is not a 'stand alone' policy but part of an integrated package along with those on marking, reporting, record keeping and differentiation. Unless assessment is seen as an integral part of the teaching process it can easily become an appendage utilising only a fraction of the benefits to be gained.

The purpose of this policy is to draw together the many aspects of good practice from both within and from outside of school in a coherent and practical framework. This will enable all assessment activities to have a direct impact on the foci of tracking progress, planning for improvement, and raising attainment.

Definitions

The word assessment comes from the Latin '*assidere*', to sit beside. This gives a valuable guide to the concept of assessment as a partnership between child and teacher. It also stresses the individual nature of assessment as opposed to whole class tests. Assessment refers to any situation in which some aspect of the child's education is in some way measured. This measurement could be by the teacher, an examiner (through standardised tests e.g. NFER) or by the children themselves. Assessment occurs when judgements are made about achievement. It is an integral part of teaching and is primarily used in an ongoing (formative way) to promote better learning.

Assessment can be either formative or summative.

Formative assessment is integral with learning, and takes place throughout learning. It provides "feedback", i.e. whether learning objectives are being reached. It is diagnostic, giving information on areas of weakness, also on strengths and potential. For pupils, it is a form of individualised learning and encouragement, and an important ingredient of motivation. The more immediate the feedback, the more useful is the information.

It is important in the shaping of future learning experience. All teachers should assess their class, group or individuals on a regular basis; so that they can plan the next stage in each

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child's learning. It helps teachers monitor progress, provide motivation for the children and helps inform planning. These types of assessment are ongoing, regular and involve:

- Individual assessments
- Group assessments
- Class assessments
- Self-assessments - self assessment by children promotes motivation and makes children feel valued and involved in their own learning.

Methods

- a) Observation
- b) Discussion
- c) Evidence of achievement – recording formative assessment.

Recording formative assessment helps to support judgements made and is important in informing future planning and learning.

A copy of each teacher's weekly plan is handed or emailed to the Deputy Headmaster every Monday morning. Apart from weekly plans and records there is no prescribed format to record keeping but evidence of achievement may come from a variety of other sources:-

- Individual child's records
- Teacher's mark books
- Teacher's diary (day book)
- Variety of records such as in English; comprehension exercises, spelling tests, independent writing
- Maths information e.g. reasoning exercises, sums, problem work
- Early Years Foundation Stage records
- Children's books
- Tick lists
- I.E.P.S.
- Target setting and attainment
- Teachers' notes of observations
- Record of interviews with parents
- Photographic evidence

Summative assessment is concerned with the final summing up. The judgements it makes are also for the benefits of people other than the learner. It usually comes at the end of a course – but it is less to do with timing, more to do with the intention of the assessor. The danger is that “the assessment tail may wag the curriculum dog”, i.e. summative assessments may determine rather than reflect the nature and methodology of the curriculum.

These are used to help us decide what a child can do at a particular time, and can be used as comparators. This is done through:

- ❖ Assessments for specific tasks – at the end of a topic or after teaching a specific skill or concept.
- ❖ See statement on assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage Policy inclusive of the EYFS profile
- ❖ Weekly/daily mental maths, verbal reasoning, vocabulary, times tables and spelling tests
- ❖ Mock Exams for Year 5 and 6
- ❖ Assessment week

Diagnostic Assessment

Staff help identify strengths and weaknesses of individual children by carrying out diagnostic assessments.

This may be done through:

- ❖ Individual programmes of work

- ❖ IEP's
- ❖ Group target
- ❖ Checklists
- ❖ Specific activities/tasks
- ❖ Individual target setting

Assessment of learning

- Assessment **of** learning is a summative assessment to ascertain the level a child has reached which could be termly, annually or at the end of a key stage.

Assessment for learning

- Assessment **for** learning is the ongoing day-to-day formative assessment that takes place to gather information on what a child or group of children understand or do not understand and how future teaching will be adapted to account for this. Effective ongoing day to day assessments would include effective questioning; observations of children during teaching and while they are working; holding discussions with children; analysing work and reporting to children; conducting tests and giving quick feedback and engaging children in the assessment process.
- The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) provide a helpful definition in 'Research-based principles to guide classroom practice' (2002): "Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there."

Principles for good practice

Good assessment practice:

- is based upon clear curriculum intentions
- plays an integral part in classroom activities
- is appropriate to the task
- focuses on learning processes as well as learning outcomes
- draws on a wide range of evidence
- indicates strengths and identifies weaknesses
- involves pupils in reflection and review
- informs about individuals progress

Planning Assessments

It is important that formative and summative assessments are incorporated into the planning process. Planning should indicate appropriate assessment opportunities.

Implementation

At Old Vicarage School we provide for differing abilities and strengths, and aim to provide learning experiences which accommodate a wide variety of learning and teaching styles. We use differentiation as a planned process of intervention in the classroom to maximise potential based on individual need. We, therefore, need to take account of adult perception as well as task and test results to analyse strengths and weaknesses of a child.

Aims and Objectives

- to support learning by identifying children's strengths and weaknesses and encouraging them to evaluate their progress and reach their highest possible levels of attainment;
- to enable our children to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work;
- to help our children understand what they need to do next to improve their work;

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- to enable teachers to identify the needs of each child including additional support if required;
- to allow teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each child;
- to provide a method of monitoring and developing the curriculum;
- to help staff evaluate their delivery of the curriculum and make any necessary adjustments to it in terms of curricular planning and approaches to teaching;
- to evaluate the success of the teaching;
- to provide meaningful communication between school and parents, that provides them with information about their child's achievements and progress, on a regular basis;
- to provide the Headmaster with information that allows judgements about the effectiveness of the school;
- to 'close the gap' between pupils potential and actual performance.

Principles of Assessment:

In order to satisfy the above aims, the school policy is based on:

- formal assessment that is planned and conducted on a frequent and consistent basis as a reflective process after completion of a unit of work;
- a shared understanding between children and teachers of the criteria which will be used in the assessment of learning;
- children being involved in this process as part of taking responsibility for their own learning, e.g. in developing their ability to be properly self-critical or in setting realistic targets for their subsequent work;
- teachers using the results of their assessment to set work which challenges and stretches their children;
- effective planning for teaching and learning which recognises the full range of achievements of all children by focusing on how children learn;
- recognising assessment as central to classroom practice;
- assessment being regarded as a key professional skill for teachers;
- sensitive and constructive practices because any assessment has an emotional impact;
- taking account of the importance of learner motivation;
- promoting commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which children will be assessed;
- providing constructive guidance for children about how to improve;
- developing the children's capacity for self assessment and recognising their next steps and how to take them;
- formative assessment activities will be emphasised as part of school routine; summative' activities will be kept to a minimum including statutory requirements.

Planning for Assessment

We use our school's curriculum plan to guide our teaching. In this plan we set out the aims, objectives and values of our school and give details of what is to be taught to each year group. In our school curriculum plan we also identify opportunities for assessment within each broad unit of work.

We take into consideration the National Literacy Strategy, National Numeracy Strategy and the national schemes of work produced by QCA to support our teaching. We use the assessment guidance in these schemes to help us identify each child's level of attainment.

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

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It is the policy of the school to ensure that children's work is assessed accurately, in relation to, the attainment targets in the National Curriculum subjects. All assessments should, therefore, give a clear and reasoned illustration of a teacher's decisions about the overall level in an attainment target. Teachers will need to review work done in a variety of contexts and across a range of different types of activity. It is unlikely therefore, that a statement of attainment will be reached during one piece of work.

Where children's achievements have been demonstrated through discussion and other forms of oral work, practical study and other ephemeral or less tangible activity, teachers' notes will be important evidence of attainment as will audio recordings or video.

Some questions to ask when making an assessment are:

1. What attainments are illustrated in this evidence?
Why does it illustrate this level and not the level above and below?
2. When I made this judgement, what other knowledge did I bring to bear:
 - about the child (e.g. observations or discussions at this time on in other contexts which were used in making the assessment)?
 - about the task?
 - on how it was presented to the child, how it was interpreted by the child, whether children formulated their own questions, worked together and used reference materials?

Assessment Procedure

Each child should have a school record of achievements. This should be marked off by the teacher in the year colour indicated. 'A' - means taught and 'X' - means fully understood at the time of teaching. Each child should also have Assessment Books, one for English, one for Maths and one for Science. In these books, two assessment and annotation forms are placed each term - thus six assessments each year.

Alongside this other assessments continue each term ensuring that all areas of each attainment target taught are covered and assessed. Results of weekly spelling tests and other subject tests are covered, assessed and results entered.

Photographic evidence may also be used and should be both dated and kept in the child's file. If it is a whole class activity, the photo should be placed in the school photo record album.

Target setting

Each class teacher, with their awareness of the child's abilities and areas requiring support, will create a tailored schedule of work each week. During the week teachers will assess attainment in each of the subject areas set as they mark each piece of work and it is this that will inform their decisions for the following week's target.

They may choose to reinforce, revisit or enrich particular subject areas depending on the child's progress. They may also feel that a child has grasped a particular concept and can move on.

Recording

The purpose of our recording is to provide information on each child's achievements, skills, abilities and progress throughout the curriculum. It should:

- regularly update information to reflect current achievements;
- show the strengths and achievements of each child;
- show the targets for each child.

We recognise various methods of assessing a child's learning. The type of assessment that we make varies from subject to subject. We think that it is unnecessary to keep a formal record of all these assessments; we record only information that affects future learning.

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We plan our lessons and individual targets with clear learning objectives. Teachers will record the individual progress of each child in one of two ways:

- Using the individual target progress spreadsheet. A traffic light colouring system showing a) Red - concept not acquired, present in another way, b) Amber - concept partially acquired - reinforcement needed or c) Green - concept acquired - child can move on.
- Using the individual target progress form indicating progress using the colouring key above.

(It is our intention to move toward the ICT option and staff development time will be planned to facilitate this)

Where a whole class lesson is appropriate teachers will use annotated lesson plans as a record of progress measured against learning objectives.

We take the objectives for individual lessons and targets from the broad learning objectives within the school's curriculum plan. These in turn reflect the demands of the National Curriculum. Our teachers record the progress of each child against these broad objectives. This enables them to make a judgement about the work of each child in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment. This allows us to monitor the progress of each child. Each teacher passes this information on to the next teacher at the end of each year.

Responsibilities

Teaching Staff

- To adhere to the requirements of this policy in planning the learning for the groups and individual children for whom they are responsible
- To involve and inform Learning Support Staff, and others working with pupils, of the role they need to have in the assessment of children's learning
- To keep records of children's progress in an agreed format as defined by this policy Appendix I
- To keep other such records as to inform and contribute to the agreed curriculum plans, records and reporting formats
- To report as required regarding the progress of their pupils

Learning Support Staff

- To be active in seeking out the expected learning objective for all pupil tasks
- To be aware of the teacher's expectations regarding specific assessment activities
- To contribute to the ongoing discussions regarding children's progress
- To consider the next steps for children's learning and be proactive in discussing with teaching staff how they may best support the children with whom they work
- To contribute to the assessment of the children with whom they work
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Subject/Phase Coordinators

- To know current levels of pupils attainment in their subject;
- To know strengths and areas for improvement within their subject
- To be responsible for the monitoring and identification of the above
- To report the outcomes of monitoring activities to the Head Master and Staff
- To plan strategies for subject improvement and development to be contained in an action plan that is updated annually

Core Subject Coordinators: English, Mathematics, Science, ICT

- To undertake Termly monitoring activities to assess standards in their subject. This may include some or all of the following:

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- Work sampling
- Pupil interviews
- Teacher Assessment evaluation
- Classroom Observation
- To report to the School Leadership Team, the outcome of this monitoring
- To plan for improvement in pupil progress and attainment

EYFS, KS1 and KS2 Co-ordinators

- To be responsible for the management of assessment and reporting activities
- To be responsible for the ongoing monitoring of assessment and reporting activities to the School Leadership Team.
- To consult with Subject Co-ordinators in order that they have the information/data required to monitor successfully their subject and that the result of subject monitoring is shared effectively.
- To report to the Headmaster the outcomes of assessment activities.
- To facilitate the exploitation of assessment data within the school.
- To liaise with/report to external agencies regarding the results of assessment activities when appropriate.

Headmaster

- To be aware of the assessment and reporting activities taking place within the school.
- To receive reports regarding pupils progress from professional staff.
- To be aware of the legal requirements regarding the assessment of pupils at The Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.
- To confirm agreement of agreed targets for school: agreement following discussion between the Head Master and the Deputy Headmaster.

Parents

- To participate in the opportunities offered by the school to be involved in discussions regarding their child's progress.
- To raise any concerns they may have about their child with the school, at the earliest opportunity.

Referencing Performance

It is important that we recognise the criteria we are considering when putting value judgements on a child's work. If we are able to define the aspects that make one piece of work better than another then we should be able to communicate this definition of quality to the children and thereby promote progress.

Much of the testing we do is norm-referenced with comparisons made between the child and his/her peers. Whilst norm referenced testing is necessary it is recognised disadvantage that by definition half of the children are always below average.

If all our assessment is norm referenced there are serious implications for less able children and those with specific learning difficulties.

Making assessments relative to some pre set curriculum objective can allow us to evaluate each child's progress, irrespective of their peers. The driving test is a good example of a criterion-referenced test where each candidate is judged against a set of required skills. If the candidate fails, the reasons for this are stated and the driver is able to direct future practice towards these areas of weakness. An advantage of criterion-referenced assessment is that it is possible for all learners to succeed.

A third form of assessment is self-referencing where each child compares their current achievement with what they could do previously. This gives an important extension of criterion-referencing, with the emphasis being on the progress of the individual.

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Creating an assessment balance in our teaching should have major implications on key issues such as differentiation, motivation and record keeping. We recognise the value of utilising a wide range of assessment techniques. The impact is increased by involving children in the assessment process and encouraging active learning.

Reporting to Parents

We have a range of strategies that keep parents fully informed of their child's progress in school. We encourage parents to speak to their class teacher during delivery or collection or for longer discussion, make an appointment. Parents need to feel involved and informed about their children's progress and to feel confident about the procedures established by the school.

Outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists need to have information about children with special needs to inform their own planning. Thus assessment should fulfil four main aims:-

1. to assist and support the child's learning;
2. to assist child and teacher to identify strengths and weaknesses;
3. to assist staff in evaluating and planning their teaching;
4. to provide information about progress and achievement of individual children for themselves, parents, staff and other interested parties (e.g. SEN support, inspectors).

In addition to the twice yearly Parent/Teacher Meetings there are daily opportunities for parents to meet Class Teachers. At the first meeting of the school year we review the targets that we have identified for their child and provide feedback regarding the settling in process in their new class. At the second meeting of the year we evaluate their child's progress as measured against the targets and provide feedback on formal assessments taken. Also at this meeting we review their child's written report and the targets identified in it for the next school year (see next paragraph).

We give all parents a written report of their child's progress and achievements after each Parent/Teacher Meeting to sum up the points made at the meetings. There is an annual written report highlighting the child's progress, achievements and identifies target areas for the next school term or year. In these reports the teacher also identifies how parents can support any elements of the work during the term or following year.

We write individual comments on all subjects of the National Curriculum. In this written report we include a space where the children can offer their own evaluation of their performance during the year. We also encourage parents to provide feedback on these written reports.

In reports for children in Year 2 and Year 6 we also provide details of the levels achieved in the national tests.

We offer parents of children in EYFS the opportunity to discuss the results of the Baseline Assessment with their child's teacher.

In addition to this, each parent receives a Half Termly summative report on their child's progress in each curriculum area after each Academic Assessment Meeting.

Feedback to Children

We believe that feedback to children 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 have an agreed code for marking, 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 we sometimes give feedback on a particular lesson at the beginning of the next one. When lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, we write comments on the children's work during marking. We give written

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comments to children of all ages. We do not always aim these comments at the children; quite often we write something that is useful to both parents and teachers.

When we give written feedback to a child, we relate this to the learning objective for the lesson. By so doing we make clear whether the objective has been met and we produce evidence to support the judgement. If we consider that the objective has not been met, we make clear why this was the case. In both cases we identify what the child needs to do next in order to improve future work. We also grade the child's work giving grades for **Attainment** and **Effort**. These grades are criterion reference and are based on the ability of the individual.

We encourage the children to make comments about their own work and the work of fellow children. We encourage Year 6 children to be the first markers of some pieces of work.

We allow time before both registrations for the children to absorb any comments written on their work. We do this to ensure that the time that our teachers spend marking really has an impact.

Consistency

All subject co-ordinators share examples of children's work within their subject area. Subject leaders use the national exemplification materials to make judgements about the levels of the children's work. All our teachers discuss these levels, so that they have a common understanding of the expectations in each subject. By doing this we ensure that we make consistent judgements about standards in the school.

It is each subject co-ordinator's responsibility to ensure that the samples that they keep of children's work reflect the full range of ability within each subject.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Standardised diagnostic assessment results are kept in each child's personal file. Individual children's records are confidential and access is only available to parents who make a request to the Headmaster and may only be viewed in school. Teachers keep results of class tests e.g. mental maths, spellings in mark books or on spreadsheets.

Reception

Reading records are kept in a record book, which goes home each day. Both parents and teachers write comments in these books.

Year 1-6

Homework & Reading diaries are used. Parents, teachers and older children write comments in homework diaries as a form of communication. These are monitored by class teachers.

Entry into Reception – to Year 6:

A child's current records will be sought from his/her previous school and will serve as a baseline assessment to inform staff of his/her achievements and abilities.

Information on children at entry enables the school to:

- Monitor the "value added" element in each child's education when summative assessment is undertaken.
- Set suitable challenging, but attainable targets for each year group/individual.

(An open door policy allows for parents/carers to communicate with the staff whenever necessary).

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On Transfer to Senior School

The agreed contents of the child's profile, all summative assessment materials and copies of past reports to parents may be passed on to secondary schools. At the moment it is a statutory requirement that such documents should reach the child's new school within 15 working days of any request

Monitoring Procedure

1. Evaluating termly schemes, weekly plans by the EYFS Co-ordinator.
2. Daily staff planning.

Associated Policies

- For further details of overall approach to assessment refer to whole school Assessment, Recording and Reporting.
- SEN Policy.

Reporting Summative Assessment

Such assessments take the form of two written Reports. Reports are based upon ongoing formative records, which all teachers keep.

Reports are informative and based upon teacher's records and detail the progress of each child in every subject. Comments are made about the child's general progress and any other achievements both within and in addition to the curriculum. All relevant staff contribute to these reports. Future targets can be referred to in individual reports.

Organisation and Management

1. Copies of each child's Performance Record to be placed in child's personal file at the end of each year.
2. Copies of End of Year reports to be kept in the child's file.
3. Performance Records are to be completed using pen and December and End of Year reports are word processed.
4. The format for the End of Year Report is kept on the staff computer.

Conclusion

The combined value of formative and summative assessment should not be underestimated. It also needs to be appreciated that alongside SATS, children in this school, are also required to succeed in external examinations to secure a place in the senior school of the parents' first choice.

Signed:.....

Date:..... September 2008

To be reviewed no later than:..... September 2009