

Ashdown House

Assessment Policy

To include boarding and day Pupils.

This policy is reviewed annually

In formulating our Assessment Policy, we have used the guidance provided in the 'Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels' (September 2015) and the subsequent government response.

Background

In setting out the rationale for the removal of levels, the Commission stated that:

Despite a wider set of original purposes, the pressure generated by the use of levels in the accountability system led to a curriculum driven by Attainment Targets, levels and sub-levels, rather than the programmes of study. Levels came to dominate all forms of assessment. Not only were they used for both statutory national curriculum tests and statutory reporting of teacher assessment, but they also came to be used too frequently for in-school assessment between key stages in order to monitor whether pupils were on track to achieve expected levels at the end of key stages.

The Commission believes that this has had a profoundly negative impact on teaching and learning. Alongside the Government's changes to ways of reporting national curriculum test outcomes and statutory teacher assessment, the freedom for schools to develop their own approaches to in-school assessment means that the three forms of assessment – formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessments – can be appropriately tied to their different purposes. Overall this will better serve the needs of pupils and promote a higher quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

The principles of assessment

Effective assessment must be fit for purpose. It is an integral part of teaching and provides evidence to inform teaching through formative assessment and information for a wider audience through summative assessment. In adapting to 'life after levels', it was essential to review:

- Why pupils are assessed
- What the assessment is intended to measure
- What the assessment is intended to achieve
- How the assessment information will be used

Different forms of assessment may serve different purposes for different people and organisations, including pupils, parents, teachers and support staff, future schools, ISI inspectors etc.

Our Approach to Assessment

At Ashdown House, **formative assessment** is a continuous process and part of the teaching and learning cycle. The purpose is to inform teachers of what children have learned and the gaps in their knowledge, thus informing future planning. All assessment should be sensitive, constructive and foster motivation. Children should be active partners in the process, promoting metacognition (thinking about thinking) and an understanding of what they need to do to improve. The most common forms of formative assessment used are:

- Questions and answers in class
- Observing children at work and intervening where appropriate
- Quick fire quizzes (at the start of the lesson to assess prior knowledge or in the plenary to assess learning during the lesson), with answers on a white board shown to the teacher
- 'What I know/ want to find out' grids which are used at the beginning of many new topics and revisited at the end

- Marking, which may be scanning of work to in depth marking with responses required from the children
- Recording assessment against objectives taught (including steps to success) within each curriculum area
- Book scrutiny to assess progress over a given period of time
- End of term progress assessments, including tests
- SEND (IEPs) reviews of progress towards targets
- Regular pupil progress meetings

Summative assessment may take place at the end of a particular unit of work, or at the end of a school year/term and informs teachers of how well children have understood, retained learning and the progress they have made over a period of time. It can be used to inform the following year's teacher, to inform parents of their child's progress and attainment, or to inform school improvement. Examples of summative assessment are:

- End of unit assessments, e.g. in Science
- Phonics screening in year 1 (May)
- End of term/year tests/exams
- Half termly assessment cards sent to parents with an evaluation of effort and attainment and targets on how to improve (see *Curriculum Policy* for further details)
- Unaided pieces of writing
- Annual reviews for children with an EHCP in conjunction with the LA
- IEPs for relevant pupils with SEND are reviewed termly
- Extra English targets for EAL children are reviewed termly
- Recording assessment against objectives taught within each curriculum area
- Please note that the final summative assessment in Year 8 is Common Entrance or senior school scholarship examinations, based on the iseB syllabus and standardisation will vary from school to school.

In addition, **National Curriculum summative assessments** may be used, which measure children's abilities against national standards.

At present we use Access maths, and NFER reading and spelling tests twice a year to track pupils' progress. In addition to this, we also use GL Assessment Progress Tests in science in the summer term. At present the latter are administered by academic age (where a child is out of year group) rather than chronological age. This ensures that they are being assessed on the curriculum covered and provides a useful comparison with other age standardised scores. The GL Assessment series has been piloted for the first time in the summer term 2017 and following review, it's continued used will be in science, with English and maths using the aforementioned providers.

Management and evaluation of assessment

Recording of assessment information should be manageable and useful as well as being sufficient for legal reporting arrangements and accountability purposes.

Pupil Progress Meetings are held at least twice a year following CATs, access maths, reading and spelling tests in order to share data and decide on action plans for future pupil progress.

The Deputy Head is responsible for maintaining the policy and ensuring its effectiveness.

The criteria for its effectiveness are:

- How well it is being followed by staff
- The impact it has on children's learning, e.g. their response to marking comments
- The impact on children's learning, e.g. in the progress made at Pupil Progress meetings and how secure children are achieving depth of learning across the curriculum – within and across years
- How quickly underachieving children are identified and resulting action taken
- **The DoS updates a pupils tracking document with contains all their standardised scores and cognitive data. Individual pupils are also discussed at least twice a year following their internal exams and their performance/progress is reviewed in conjunction with their standardised scores.**

How assessment outcomes are collected and used

Results inform teaching for the next term: underachieving children are discussed and effectiveness of any interventions reviewed by the SENCO; where appropriate, additional plans are put in place, e.g. a different intervention, Speech and Language assessments, Ed. Psych assessment

To reduce teacher workload, numerical data is entered only at the end of each term. The assessment leader (Deputy Head), SENCO and HoDs of core subjects analyses data summaries to check progress of each class and year group against targets set and to check how pupils are performing. This information is discussed with teaching staff at regular meetings at least twice a year.

Reporting to Parents

Information on how each child is achieving against the curriculum is discussed with parents at the Parent/Teacher meetings, half termly assessments and end of term reports. Parents are welcome to make an appointment with their child's teachers to discuss their progress at any other point in the school year. Information may also be used in IEP reviews reviews, EHCPs where applicable

Feedback to pupils

Feedback to pupils is the most important part of assessment and it is essential in order for children to make effective progress. Children need to understand what is expected of them, when they are achieving well and how they can improve their performance. Pupils are also encouraged to comment on their own work and that of their peers and make suggestions for next steps in their learning. The feedback can be verbal or written. Written feedback is usually related to the learning objectives and success criteria for the lesson. For information about written feedback please see the Marking Policy, or individual departmental policy guidelines

Target Setting

Targets are set for individual pupils across the school. These are for English and maths, but may also relate to other areas, such as behaviour, attitude and independence.

Targets need to be:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time related
Evaluated
Reviewed

Wherever possible, children should be involved with the target setting process, identifying new targets and discussing ways to achieve their targets. Targets can be individual or group targets in order to meet the children's needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Assessment Leaders: Paddy Mason (Deputy Head); Victoria Mason (Director of Studies); Caroline Hawkins (SENCO)

- Lead the development of assessment policy
- Organise staff training ensuring development of practice
- Develop and help to monitor school assessment policy and practice
- Keep up to date with current assessment thinking and practice
- Ensure that assessment priorities are addressed in the School Development plan
- Liaise with HoDs and class teachers
- Assist Headteacher with setting challenging whole school targets
- Analyse results

HoDs

- Lead whole staff moderation meetings in their subjects;
- Monitor consistency of standards across the school, through work scrutiny
- Analyse results and tracking information in their subjects
- Advise staff of outcomes of assessment

Class Teachers

- Make on-going assessments to inform their daily and weekly planning
- Moderate children's work regularly
- Make formal, **moderated** assessments termly
- Keep a record of children's achievements in line with this policy
- Report to parents
- Use Assessment for Learning strategies in their lessons
- Give children guidance and feedback on their work so they know how to make progress

Senior Management Team

- Monitor assessment practices, including marking and strategies used in lessons
- Interrogate analysis of data
- Carry out regular Progress Meetings with each year group

SENCO

- Co-ordinates the identification and assessment of children with SEND
- Monitors effectiveness of interventions
- Leads interventions where professional teaching skills are necessary
- Liaises with LA and stays up to date with available intervention schemes

Moderation of policy

The Headmaster is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Development Plan

- Exploring a more effective way of tracking pupil progress, which takes into account gender, EAL, boarder/day pupil, ethnicity (where appropriate). At the same time, we are a small school which can also focus on the pupils as individuals. ACHIEVED
- Track inclusion of SEND pupils in the school's extra-curricular programme. TRIALLED and Discontinued
- Electronic tracking system for the school (budget depending) At the moment, this is done on google sheets and is updated and monitored by the DoS

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