

# St John's CE VA Primary School

## Assessment Policy



*‘Those who cannot assess, cannot teach. Assessment is inevitably part of every teaching activity. “How is she getting on?” “Did he understand that?” Assessment is therefore too important to be the sole preserve of national tests and assessments.*

*In good education, assessment is of the progress of the whole pupil throughout their educational journey. Assessment is the means used by good teachers to evaluate that progress and diagnose the needs of the pupil. True assessment is neither wholly formative, nor wholly summative; it is embedded in the classroom rather than an activity of reflection outside the classroom.*

*Assessment helps pupils engage more fully in their own development and learning. A pupil responds better to new challenges if they grasp what is necessary for progress and why.’*

**NAHT Commission on Assessment report, February 2014, Foreword by Lord Sutherland**

### 1 Rationale:

At St John's we are Loved by God - Learning with Jesus - Living by the Spirit.

Assessment is happening in every classroom, every lesson, every day at our school and it involves everyone! We are passionate in our belief that learning is without limits, every child can succeed and make progress in their learning journey, and it is the assessment of where children are in this journey that allows teachers to decide where they need to go next and how best to get them there.

Following the New National Curriculum and the [Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#) (September 2015), all schools have been given the opportunity to develop innovative approaches to their own in-school assessment.

Our system was designed in tandem with our Curriculum and thus the link between the two is intrinsic; the philosophy and core beliefs underpinning the curriculum policy provide the foundations of this policy - building into a cohesive whole, which will shape and develop values for life and embed a love of learning rooted in consistently high aspirations.

### 2 Our assessment procedures:

- **Identify** what children know and what they need to learn next
- **Inform** planning (school/ class/ group/ individual), target setting, information for parents and governors.
- **Measure** and provide reliable and credible information to support progression in learning.
- **Evaluate** the effectiveness of teaching methods/ interventions
- **Motivate, actively involve and support** teachers and pupils

- **Comply** with statutory requirements; align school with national standards and are manageable, sustainable and consistent.

### **3 At St John's our Assessment provides:**

**Learners** - an understanding of where they are secure, what it is they need to do to rectify any gaps and the next steps needed to extend their learning in line with our marking and feedback policy.

**Teachers** - the detailed knowledge of their pupils' achievements, which they can use to inform future learning, their planning and their teaching.

**Parents and carers** – timely reporting on their child's progress in meeting expectations. By providing parents with a broad picture of where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie, we ensure that teachers, pupils and parents can work together to secure learning and raise standards for all children.

**School leaders and governors** - information that they can analyse and use to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, to identify where interventions may be required and make decisions about future actions to improve standards, learning and teaching in the school.

**External agencies and partners (including DfE and Ofsted)**- the evidence that the school knows its pupils well and sets and maintains ambitious standards in learning and teaching as part of the school's public accountability to its pupils' future.

### **4 General Note on Forms of Assessment:**

There are different forms of assessment, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, and each supports a different purpose. For example, in-class formative assessment is a vital part of teaching and learning and can provide teachers and pupils with useful, real time information about what needs to happen next; Nationally standardised tests are not as helpful diagnostically.

On the other hand, standardised tests (such as those that produce a reading age) can offer reliable and accurate information, whereas summative teacher assessment can be subject to bias.

### **5 3 Forms of Assessment at St John's**

### **5.1 Day-to-day in-school Formative Assessment:**

We believe that 'in-school formative assessment' is at the heart of all good teaching and learning. It is what should be happening in every lesson, in every classroom every day. It allows teachers to understand pupil performance (knowledge, skills and understanding) on a continuing basis and enables teachers to identify – in real time - when pupils are struggling; when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress.

In short – formative assessment is about knowing our children inside out. If teachers know their children, they can plan the right lessons and provide the right amount of support or extension.

**Formative assessment** has the potential not just to measure pupil's learning, but to increase it. There is no intrinsic value in recording formative assessment; what matters is that it is acted on. If it is acted on there is likely to be other evidence in pupils' work or lesson plans to show this.

Key Principals of Formative Assessment:

- Building relationships;
- Quality Feedback: See the St John's Feedback Policy;
- Dialogue as the most effective form of Assessment;
- Knowing the Curriculum – the journey is key to effective teaching and assessment;
- Effective questioning is key to extension through depth and challenge;
- A culture of error - 'mistakes are how we learn';
- Growth mind-set – learning is without limits.

### **5.2 In-school Summative Assessment:**

In-school summative assessment enables teachers to evaluate both pupil learning against extrinsic, externally set measures and as such, the impact of their own teaching. Both these purposes help teachers to plan for subsequent teaching and learning.

The demonstration of 'Secure' learning is context free (without pre-teaching), thus 'snapshot' summative assessments, which support and underpin our formative assessments, help us know that we are ensuring children's progress is in line with national expectations and progressing in line to meet the Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) of the new National Curriculum 2014.

Key Features of **Summative Assessment:**

- Teachers may use diagnostic tests, particularly in mathematics to establish what children already know, which in turn will inform and focus planning around the topic / idea / concept about to be taught.
- End-of-unit tests are regularly used in the core subjects to provide context-free assessments; these are a fundamental part of Teacher's end of term summative assessment judgements. Outcomes are consistently recorded, in order to provide a gap-analysis overview of a child's individual knowledge.
- In Writing, children are given regular opportunities to produce work which is assessed against the expected standards for each age range. (See the St John's English Policy for further information on this.)
- Teachers set weekly spelling and regular mental maths tests.
- In KS1 (Key Stage 1) and LKS2 regular Guided Reading sessions and whole class Comprehension in UKS2 provide clear diagnostic information for Teachers to focus questioning to enhance a pupil's reading skill.
- At the end of each term, Progress Tests are used in core-subjects: these provide Teachers with a standardised score which is used in tandem with formative Teacher assessment.
- At the end of each term all pupil Assessment information is fed into the school Assessment system, tabulated in line with whole school standards and tracked to monitor progression.

### **5.2.1 Tracking Progress and Assessment using INSIGHT:**

*'Assessment is a good servant, but a terrible master. Too often, we start out with the idea of making the important measurable, and end up making the measurable important. By sticking clearly to a set of principles for the design of an assessment system, schools can ensure that the assessment system supports learning, rather than gets in its way.'*

***Dylan Wiliam - Principled Assessment Design***

INSIGHT is a web-based tracking Assessment system that allows us to record bespoke teacher assessments – flexible and visual to allow for quick visual appraisals of whole school /cohort or pupil. Reports offer ways to talk about pupils' attainments and progress without having to re-create levels.

The system has ensured we have avoided the pitfalls of Levelled Assessment identified in the [Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#) (September 2015).

A child's knowledge is a measurement of depth and potential; creating bridges to opportunities and hopefully facilitating the growth and fulfilment of realistic expectation.

It is important to us that progress is not understood as solely a linear concept; progress holds within it the fundamental principal of consolidation – learning for breadth and depth. Forming meaningful connections between different strands of learning and knowledge.

At the end of each term a child's knowledge and understanding will be assigned an indicator according to the following core tenets:

**Approaching:** When an objective has been taught, but the child has not yet demonstrated any confidence or independence with it. Child is still heavily reliant on direct teaching – action based. **Enquiry.**

**Meeting:** When a child has demonstrated some independence with the objective; can recognise it in various contexts after a period following direct teaching and is beginning to make connections between new and prior learning with an element of invention. Asking where can I, should I, could I go with this? **Diversity.**

**Exceeding:** When a child shows independent understanding of an objective prior to teaching; functions strongly across various contexts sometime after teaching; confidently makes connections between concepts and across the curriculum. There is no finality to this style of learning; possibility opens up. **Possibility.**

To this end, this information fosters a learning culture driven by the living breathing heart of the curriculum, rather than cold, faceless data.

### 5.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment:

Nationally standardised summative assessment provides information on how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils Nationally. It enables school leaders and school governors to benchmark their school's performance against other schools locally and nationally, and make judgements about the school's effectiveness. It also allows the Government to hold schools to account and to measure the impact of educational policymaking.

Key examples of statutory assessment at St John's CEVA Primary School:

**NB:** The use of these Nationally Standardised Summative Assessments has been severely curtailed in 2019 – 2021 due to COVID-19.

It is unclear, yet, when these Assessments will resume.

Until such time that they do, St John's will continue to use Teacher Assessments and in-school Summative data to provide an overall judgement relating to the following Key Measures outline below.

- **Early Years Foundation Stage Assessment** throughout Reception, using Tapestry.

We assess children's progress within seven areas of learning, which are outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Evidence is obtained in a variety of ways however; observations are taken when children are immersed in self-initiated activities. This enables the staff to know what children can do independently and how they interact with others, and their learning environment. Individual next Steps and planned activities are developed subsequently.

At the end of the Foundation Stage, children are assessed according to whether they have achieved the Early Learning Goals in each of the seven areas. The terms: Emerging, Expected and Exceeding are used to indicate the level of development. In addition, staff monitor the children's 'characteristics of Learning'. Characteristics of learning describe factors which play a significant role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner.

The statutory rollout of the Reception Baseline Assessment has been postponed until September 2021.

- **Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1**

For 2020 – Pupils in Year 2 were tested using the 2019 Phonics Screening Test as per National Guidelines

- **National Curriculum KS1 SATs at the end of Year 2**

We draw on internally marked, national tests in reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation & spelling to inform Teacher Assessment judgements and help us to assess whether pupils are making progress and are achieving national expectations. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) currently set out these expectations in the 'Interim Assessment Frameworks at the end of Key Stage 1' document. Teacher Assessments are also made as to whether pupils are meeting expectations in Science.

These Tests are due to be phased out in 2022.

- **National Curriculum KS2 (Key Stage 2) SATs at the end of Year 6**

Pupils take externally marked tests in reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation & spelling, (SPaG) the outcomes of which are reported by scaled scores, along with confirmation of whether they have attained the national standard. Teacher Assessments in reading, writing, maths and science are reported separately - these expectations are currently set out by the STA in the 'Interim Assessment Frameworks at the end of Key Stage 2' document.

In 2019 & 2020 – SATS were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teacher Assessment was used.

## **6 Reporting to Parents:**

We believe that parent consultations and reports should have a positive effect on children's attitudes, motivation and self-esteem and provide guidance for parents to support their child's learning at home. We value the input we receive from parents and see reporting as a way of further fostering effective home-school links and promoting home learning. Parents are welcome to speak to their child's teacher: meetings can be arranged via. the school office.

Restrictions on face-to-face meetings were in place throughout 2020 – 2021 due to the COVID 19 pandemic – contact was maintained through ClassDojo.

### **6.1 Parent Consultations:**

- Take place twice a year: in the Autumn, as the IWM (Individual Welcome Meetings) and at the beginning of the Spring term.
- Highlight positive achievements.
- Set challenges and give advice to help parents support their child's learning.
- Highlight any attendance/punctuality issues.
- Additional meetings for parents of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) children take place with the class teacher every half-term.

### **6.2 Annual reports to Parents include:**

- Highlights of positive achievements and progress made.
- General comments about the child's attitude to learning and social skills.
- A summary of the child's attendance and punctuality.
- Challenges to support further development.

**Year R** end of year reports, show the level of development in relation to the Early Learning Goals. A summary is also given for each aspect of the 'Characteristics of Learning': playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically.

**Year 1** end of year reports also state whether they have passed the Phonics Screening Test.

**Year 2** will not provide a scaled score outcome; though will indicate if their child has attained the National Standard.

At the end of **Year 6**, Teacher Assessment is reported alongside test outcomes; this will include:

- A Scaled Score – for information on these scores please refer to the [DFE \(Department for Education\) website](#).
- Confirmation of whether they attained the National Standard

During the 2020 – 2021 period reporting will be based on Teacher Judgements - no Scaled Scores will be received.

## **7 Procedures in place to ensure that assessment is rigorous:**

We moderate work drawing on expertise from within the school, as well as through our partnerships across the Teaching Schools Alliance and our Network cluster. We implement monitoring and evaluation procedures and maintain a continuing overview of the whole in-school assessment through:

### **Monitoring of pupils' work:**

- Subject Leaders lead an annual **scrutiny of work with the whole teaching body** to monitor and discuss pitch and expectations, coverage, marking and feedback in books and to review pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders carry out **learning walks with lesson drop-ins** and **learning talks with pupils** about their understanding and steps to improve; this ensures quality assurance at every level.

### **Whole Staff Moderation:**

- Staff carry out regular moderation of assessment and standards within and across key stages.



- All teachers follow the Feedback Policy, monitored at phase meetings through book moderation.
- We collect examples of pupils' work that highlight standards, common mistakes and effective assessment and feedback that staff can refer to when undertaking moderation exercises.
- Staff can take part in moderation with other schools across the Pyramid to ensure a consistent approach and accurate judgements.

#### **Pupil progress meetings:**

- Annually, there are two Pupil Progress meetings conducted between the Headteacher and all teachers: once in the Autumn term and subsequently following data input in the Spring Term. Discussion focusses specifically on progress and identifying the extent to which pupils are meeting expectations.
- We evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programmes and assessment strategies
- We use the outcomes of the meeting to target interventions as required.

#### **Professional development and support:**

- The Assessment Lead and Key Staff attend local and national conferences and training to learn more about assessment and reporting arrangements.
- Staff take part in in-school CPD on assessment through peer observations, joint planning, team teaching, appraisal and INSET.
- Our SENCO (SEN coordinators) supports staff with assessment of SEND.
- Pyramid moderation events provide an opportunity to ensure expectations are set at the right level and pitch.

#### **Parents' Evenings and Curriculum Events & Meetings:**

- We provide opportunities for parents/carers to discuss their child's progress and to highlight any key issues that are affecting the child's learning
- Update parents on changes to the curriculum and assessment arrangements, and identify ways in which they can support their child's learning (through parent workshops and 1:1 meetings)

As further guidance is issued by the DfE (Department for Education), we will amend our practices if required and keep parents informed of any changes that involve their children.

## **8. Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn;
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- the religious ethos of the school is maintained and developed.

## **9. Linked Policies**

Due to the focus and purpose of this policy, there are also direct and intrinsic links to the following:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- SMSC Policy
- SRE (Sex & Relationship Education) Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Science Policy
- RE Policy
- PE Policy
- SEN Policy

Please also refer to those named policies for more comprehensive information.

## 10. Monitoring and Review:

We are aware of the need to review this policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

### Signed:

		Date
Version	1.2	
Drafted by	Mrs Siobhan Eastwood	Jan 2021
Reviewed by	All Staff	Feb 2021
Approved by	Curriculum Cttee	March 2021
Ratified by	Governing Body	March 2021
Review period	(1 year - until such time that Statutory National Testing resumes) Normally 2 years	
Set by		
Date of Review	Jan 2022	