

GRAND AVENUE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL
ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES, PURPOSE, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Introduction

At Grand Avenue we believe that ongoing Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning. We are dedicated to creating a positive learning environment where staff, pupils, parents and Governors are involved in the assessment process.

As well as meeting all Dfe statutory requirements in terms of summative assessment we use the outcomes of our own assessment to support next step learning and to closely monitor pupil progress. We also use the outcomes of our assessments to check and support our teaching standards and help us improve.

We provide regular training for all our staff in our approach and practice, and have a senior leader who oversees assessment throughout the school.

The term 'Assessment for learning' is used and understood by all staff. Our assessment procedures help us to ensure that our teaching is appropriate and that learners are making at least expected progress with the majority of our pupils making above expected progress.

Our principles, purpose, policy and practice apply to all pupils including SEND. We also aim to acknowledge all aspects of progress including communication skills, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We celebrate all achievements across a broad and balanced curriculum, including sport, art, music and performance, behaviour, and social and emotional development.

Part 1 - Principles

Our underpinning principles for assessment

We believe that appropriate assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

Our assessment is;

| Statement | Meaning that |
|--|--|
| At the heart of learning and teaching | Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning It provides opportunities for reviewing progress and demonstrating achievement |
| Always fair | Assessment is free from bias and inclusive of all abilities |
| Honest | Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way Judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure accuracy |
| Ambitious | Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners It embodies a pathway of progress and development It places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and standards |
| Appropriate | The purpose of any assessment is always clearly stated Any conclusions drawn from assessment regarding attainment are valid It draws on a wide range of evidence |
| Consistent | Assessment results are readily understood by third parties Results can be compared with other schools, locally and nationally Judgements are formed using common principles |
| Able to provide meaningful information | Assessment is used to support pupils as they develop their learning; providing next steps and enabling celebration of achievement It can help parents support their child's learning It helps planning and teaching It supports the allocation of resources For the Government |

Part 2 - Purpose

We believe that the main purpose of assessment is to help teachers, parents, governors, pupils and stakeholders plan the next steps for learning, ensuring rapid rates of progress and to celebrate success. It is also used to benchmark our school locally and nationally in terms of pupil attainment.

We focus on three main aspects of assessment

- 1- The day to day feedback to pupils during lessons and through developmental marking
- 2- Our school summative assessments
- 3- National summative assessments

The following table shows an overview of our assessment purposes

| | For our pupils | For our parents | For our teachers | For our School leaders (including Governors) | For the Government | For Ofsted |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| Day to day | Identify next steps Know when achieved | Support children in areas for improvement | Planning evaluation | Assurance | Government should not intervene | Assurance that it is used to support teaching and learning |
| In school summative | Information regarding how well they have learned | Information regarding achievement, progress and wider outcomes | Planning Evaluation of learning and impact of teaching | Monitor performance of cohorts and groups Identify interventions Ensure accountability | No role | Assured that schools are operating effective systems for monitoring and supporting pupil performance |
| National summative | Information on how pupils performing in comparison to national | Able to compare schools Hold schools to account | Understand national expectation Assess own performance in national context | Benchmark school performance locally and nationally Ensure accountability | Hold school to account Measure impact of policy making | Starting point for discussions with schools about performance |

Part 3 - Policy

In terms of our school policy regarding assessment procedures , we ask three main questions

1. Why are the pupils being assessed?
2. What does the assessment intend to achieve?
3. How will the information be used?

Our policy is that teachers will make good use of their time, knowledge and skills in working with pupils giving high quality feedback and planning next steps in learning. We embrace the 'Life without levels' initiative introduced by the DfE in September 2014.

Our policy is that 'Assessment for Learning' is an integral part of our daily practice, with lessons being adapted and refined during the session to ensure progress and 'next step' learning.

Our policy is to assess pupils against set criteria which are concrete descriptions of what pupils can do. The achievement and progress of pupils is assessed against all relevant criteria on a day to day basis and at appropriate times during the year.

Our Policy is to use the outcomes of summative assessment to summarise and analyse attainment and progress of our pupils, groups, classes and cohorts. Data will be used to plan further learning to ensure all pupils meet or exceed expectations. Data analysis will include identification of vulnerable pupils or those at particular risk of underachieving. It will also be used to ensure challenge for pupils who are quick to grasp new concepts.

Our policy is to communicate information on assessment and progress to parents through parents meetings and Records of Achievement. These will include indications of next step learning.

Our policy is to ensure summative assessment judgements are moderated by colleagues in school and, where appropriate, by colleagues in other schools to ensure our assessments are fair, reliable and valid. Assessment criteria are derived from the Grand Avenue Curriculum, which is composed of the National Curriculum, the Foundation Stage Curriculum and our own School Curriculum.

Our policy is to identify pupils not making expected progress and complete a 'Making Good Progress' sheet. This document records the context, any barriers to learning and interventions undertaken to support progress. Teachers are not expected to complete more than 6 of these forms during one term. These sheets are regarded as working documents and are updated regularly.

Our policy is that all children in the Foundation Stage will undertake a baseline assessment using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as criteria. Baseline is undertaken on entry to Nursery and Reception.

Our policy is to use Raiseonline and FFT information to scrutinise the attainment of our pupils regarding National Screening and testing, in comparison to other schools.

Part 4 - Practice

Day to day assessment

Teachers are required to focus on high quality formative assessment as part of teaching. Verbal and written feedback, as well as the use of higher order questioning is to be used constantly to ensure that at least expected progress is made in every lesson. A variety of Assessment for Learning strategies are expected to be used during each lesson, ensuring lessons are adapted to meet the needs of the children. Teachers are required to plan questioning to be used during lessons.

Teachers will provide developmental marking to support the learning journey (See feedback and marking policy)

Pupils are required to reflect on their own learning and respond to teacher feedback, enabling next steps to be clearly identified and planned for; allowing for success and achievement to be recognised and celebrated. (See school 'Response and Reflect' document)

For Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils individual progress in Reading, Writing and Numeracy will be tracked through highlighting the year group statements on the Symphony system. These will be kept on the school system and updated regularly.

For Key stage 1 and 2 pupils the outcomes of our formative assessments are used to set personalised targets for each child. In Literacy and Numeracy a 'non-negotiables' system is used. Pupils needing to meet the requirements set for each year group. The non-negotiables for one year group being the targets for the previous year. eg Non-negotiables for year 2 would be the targets for year 1.

In Foundation stage post-it notes/stickers are used to record personalised assessment comments linked to the appropriate Development Matters statements. These comments are then collated within each child's Learning Journal, alongside photographs and examples of work.

A range of tools and assessments are used to monitor children's academic progress and well-being to support planning provision and next steps. These include well known standardised commercial products such as NFER/GL assessments, screens and school created tests as well as statutory assessments.

In school summative – termly assessment

Key stage 1 and 2

For Reading , Writing and Numeracy assessment judgements are recorded in October, February and June, and are backed by a body of evidence using observations, records of children's work and brief end of unit testing. Judgements for Reading, Writing and Numeracy are entered into the school SIMs data base, using the Symphony numerical system, thus allowing statistical analysis to take place.

Judgements for Science, Computing and the Foundation subjects are recorded on Grand Avenue designed proformas and held within the school computer system. These are completed at the end of each unit of learning and passed to the receiving teacher at the end of each academic year. Co-ordinators use these assessments to inform the subject action plan.

For Reading , Writing and Maths, pupils are expected to make to least 6 points progress per year using the Symphony recording and monitoring system. Assessment criteria for children in years 1 to 6 are arranged into a hierarchy which sets out what pupils are expected to have achieved by the end of the academic year. (Age Related Expectations)

Each pupil will be assessed each term as either;

‘Emerging’ - Not quite meeting the age related expectations

‘Expected’ – Meeting age related expectations

‘Mastery with greater depth’ – Showing deeper understanding and application of age related expectations

Foundation Stage

A school baseline is undertaken on entry to Nursery and Reception , using the Development Matters statements with judgements being made against the 17 areas of learning.

Each term the child's progress is recorded on the SIMs database indicating whether they are Entering/Developing/Secure in all 17 areas of learning. Each child is expected to make 1 sub level progress each term. Any child at 30/50 developing or below on entry is expected to make accelerated progress to ensure the Age Related Expectations are met at end of FS.

National Summative

Our practice follows all DfE guidance and mandatory procedures. This includes Baseline testing for Reception pupils, Phonics screening for pupils in year 1 and National Curriculum testing in year 2 and 6. The assessment co-ordinator is responsible for, and oversees, all procedures.

SEN pupils

For pupils working below test standards in Key Stage 1 and 2 the school will follow guidelines published by DfE . Within the interim guidance for 2015/16 additional categories of judgement are noted, namely

KS1 – Foundations for the expected standard

KS2 – Growing development of the expected standard

Early development of the expected standard

Foundations for the expected standard

We use data from National Summative Assessments to improve our practice. Areas identified as needing further development are put onto the School Development Plan and Subject Co-ordinator's Action plans.

Our practice is to scrutinise local data; identify and action any school to school support.