



“Let your light shine before others”

Matthew 5 v 16

ASSESSMENT POLICY

The following policy is reflective of our deeply held Christian Vision and Values.

Vision

We are committed to creating a safe, happy and enriching environment where we all aspire to thrive, achieve and celebrate success together.

Our aim is to promote the dignity and well-being of every child and staff member and ensure they flourish in the course of their journey with us.

Values

Our core Christian values of Hope, Wisdom, Community and Joy underpin all that we strive to achieve to enable our ‘light to shine before others’ [Matthew 5 v 16](#)

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

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2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

This policy refers to the recommendations in the [Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#).

It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in [the Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Principles of assessment

This section divides neatly into two.

3.1. Assessment – The challenge

Following the government's move to a Life-without-levels, there were **several** problems to overcome;

Lack of a scale

As a result of the removal of national curriculum levels schools had to choose between two contrasting methodologies.

1. Replace the old scale of attainment (3a, 4c, 4b) with another scale to track improvement either numeric or wordy (e.g. Emerging, Expected, Exceeding). This would inevitably require the use of a flightpath to track students of differing raw abilities over time, against a criteria that is not clearly defined and with the knowledge that the accumulation of knowledge is in no way linear. As recognised by Dylan William in the introduction to the work by Daisy Christodoulou in 2016 who highlighted that 'Most school assessment systems rest on a profound fallacy – that the best way to monitor progress in learning is to judge progress by how far the student falls short of the level of performance that will be expected at the end of learning.'
2. Abandon the idea of using an attainment scale with the associated flightpath, and track students another way

Therefore we move away from using a scale for attainment and focus instead on improving building high quality curricula and bolster the attention we gave to formative assessment in the classroom. To track students we decided to compare students' relative performance and also track their ATL (attitudes to learning).

Lack of robust assessments

Assessments at KS1, KS2 and KS4 are designed to give a summary level of performance. It is essential that these assessments are robust. What makes them robust?

- They are carefully constructed by experienced assessment designers
- They test over a wide variety of content. Students' strengths in some areas may be offset by weaknesses in others so as to give an appropriate overall score
- They are predictably unpredictable. This is important – it means you can prepare for the assessment, but not so well that you know exactly what will come up and how
- Grade boundaries are decided after the fact, once student performance on the assessment is known. Because they are sat by tens of thousands and often hundreds of thousands of students, this means that we can compare results from one year to another, even though the assessment (the exam) was different

In an ideal world such assessments would exist for all subjects in all years – centrally designed, externally marked and moderated and available to all schools nationally. Crucially, the usefulness of these assessments hinges upon the *post hoc* setting of grade boundaries, which as we know

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vary quite widely from year to year. This variability comes from the fact that although we may pick questions from a well-defined set of content, we have to make the tests somewhat unpredictable. If we don't make the exams unpredictable it is too easy to prepare for them and the exam doesn't test what we want to test. Because the exams have to be unpredictable student performance will be unpredictable too. So setting grade boundaries after the results are in makes perfect sense.

Such assessments are not available, at least not outside English and maths, so we use high stakes formal assessment in these subjects 3 times a year and compared to the national data set that PiXL provide. This left us with two challenges

- how to track students' performance and report on it throughout the year for other subjects
- how to make judgements about the overall level of student progress if the data is chiefly comparative

The problem of banding

The use of bands is too crude a measure to be able to track closely enough. The consequence of this was that students might have more in common with their peers in neighbouring bands of attainment than with those in the same band.

Following the work of educational researchers Dylan Wiliam and Daisy Christodoulou who respectively suggest moving away from banding children by attainment and using more measures of relative performance we decided to embrace the idea that we would abandon tying judgements to a cardinal system where how students perform relative to one another was our primary focus.

3.2 The System

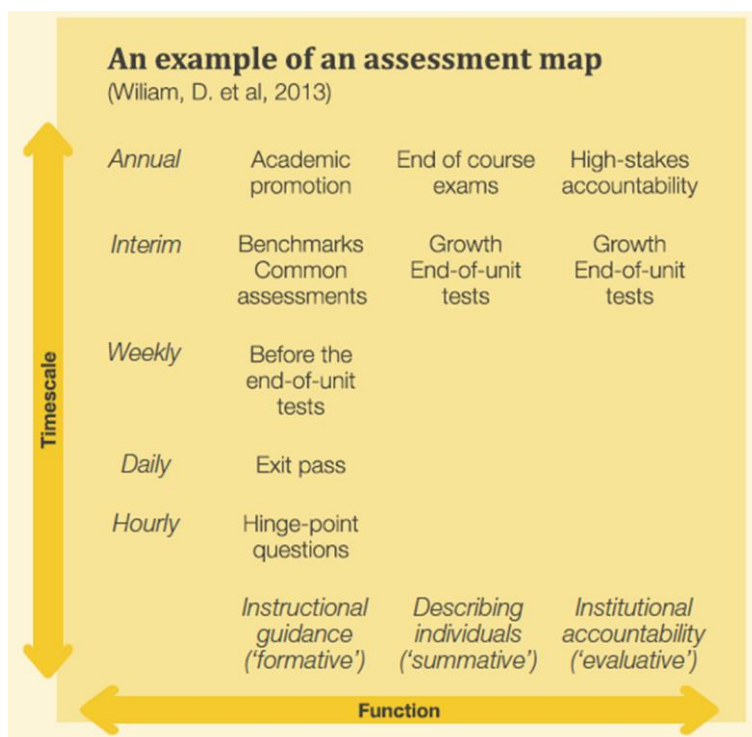
A variety of assessment methods are essential in order to answer the variety of question a school will wish to ask.

We cannot teach effectively without knowing what students already know and can do. This means that (maybe surprisingly) assessment is a critical component of engagement.

We also need to ascertain, during the teaching itself, how successful that teaching is ... i.e. how much children are learning, right now. So that we can change course if necessary. During and between lessons.

We also need to understand how successful lessons or collections of lessons have been via unit or topic tests and we need, later, to make judgments about long-term retention of material. This is why we end up with an assessment map much like the one here.

In summary we cannot hope to improve our practice or our outcomes without being sophisticated about assessment.



Data and Assessment, in brief

- No targets – instead comparison of performance versus potential
- Flexibility over what constitutes “potential” in different subjects
- Raw scores or fine decimalized steps – not levels or bands
- Use of PLCs to map the curriculum, collect qualitative attainment data and share with students and parents
- Increased emphasis on AFL in the classroom
- A serious programme of rationalization around written feedback so that all staff’ marking time is maximally useful for the learning that is to follow
- Use of various other technologies to make the collection data more efficient
- Formalised use of attitudinal data to put front and centre a key cause of progress
- Less frequent but more rigorous use of formal assessments to benchmark the progress we see and reinforce retention and revision
- A growing expertise in assessment design amongst our middle and senior leaders
- Use of an overall flightpath to help spot trends in the data, compare different populations of students, compare against expectations and with previous cohorts
- Overall, a triangulated approach to forming judgments in school that balances the progress data we collect alongside all the other information we have to hand, including the most recent published data, book looks and lesson drop-ins as well as student and parent voice information

4. Assessment approaches

We see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **All staff** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

We recognise that an integral part of teaching well is high quality formative assessment.

We expect all all staff to be carrying out a variety of formative assessment techniques frequently in the course of their teaching. Marking books and giving oral feedback are non-negotiable as would be using questioning to establish success of a teaching episode. Self and peer-assessment should also feature often in lessons. A whole variety of other techniques are available to all staff.

List of formative assessment techniques

ABCD Cards	Listening – evaluative and interpretive
ABCD Corners	Mini-whiteboards
Ask the audience	No hands up except to ask a question
Questions that promote discussion versus provide a diagnosis	Page protectors
Exit pass placemats	Phone a friend
Extended wait time	Lolly sticks
Go 50-50	Pose-pause-pounce-bounce
Hinge-point questions	Question shells
Hot-seat questioning	Real-time test
If you did know what would you say?	Statements rather than questions
If you don't know I'll come back to you	Think-pair-share

Use of PLC`s

A personal Learning checklist allows all staff to identify gaps in learning within the given curriculum and use this to inform teaching to fill the gaps as well as review the effectiveness of the curriculum and retention.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

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- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with all staff to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **All staff** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

Typically, students sit exams in Maths and all areas of English 3 times per year. Some aspects use more than one paper.

In addition, individual subjects may use a variety of end-of-topic or end of unit tests throughout the year in order to accurately map skills acquisition and retention.

Exams are intended to;

- Provide information about how much students are retaining in their long-term memory
- Give us more information where the most successful teaching has been
- Require the students to revise the work they have covered, and get better at the process of revising
- Provide much needed practice for the end of Key stage experience, and as such reduce anxiety
- Improve the amount students learn by testing them (the testing effect).

4.3 Marking and Feedback

To support teacher wellbeing our marking and feedback policy supports recommendations of reducing teacher workload. At Selwood Marking and Feedback will take place in five different forms: Live marking (verbal and written feedback in lessons), Peer feedback, Whole class feedback, Self Marking and High quality written feedback provided by all staff once every 10 hours of learning or every 6 weeks whichever is sooner.

Feedback could be provided using a variety of strategies such as: Tool kits and Success criteria, 'How am I doing?' tasks, DIRT task sheets, whole class feedback, coded feedback (Such as numbers or symbols) and written feedback.

All feedback will move pupils' learning forward; give positive and constructive feedback and provide all staff with information to aid future planning and assessment.

All pupils' work as a response to feedback will be completed in BLUE pen.

Expectations of staff

- Marking to be carried out in a green pen in a clear, legible hand or mistakes highlighted in green highlighter.
- As a minimum, constructive written feedback is provided for every 10 hours of learning time, or every 6 weeks whichever is sooner.*
- Provide regular modelling for pupils to exemplify high standard of work and how to improve their work.
- To use the common codes for errors in written work.
- Provide dedicated time in lessons for pupils to respond to feedback.

Monitoring

Marking and feedback will be monitored through:-

- Pupil voice
- Book scrutiny
- Learning walks and drop ins
- Moderation

* Note: Any departmental/ Faculty specific expectations for marking also apply.

4.4 Nationally standardised summative assessment

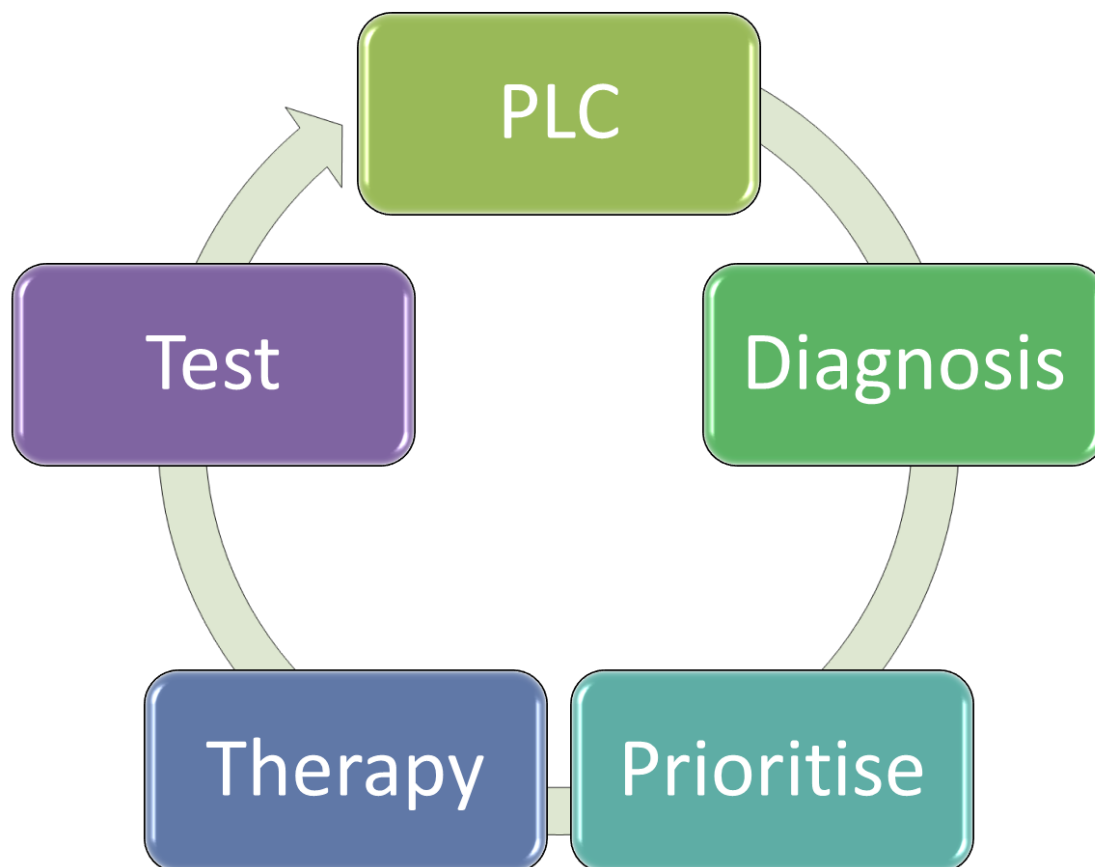
Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with all staff to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **All staff** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form SATs at KS1 and 2.

5. Collecting and using data

Data is used in line with PiXL DDT approach

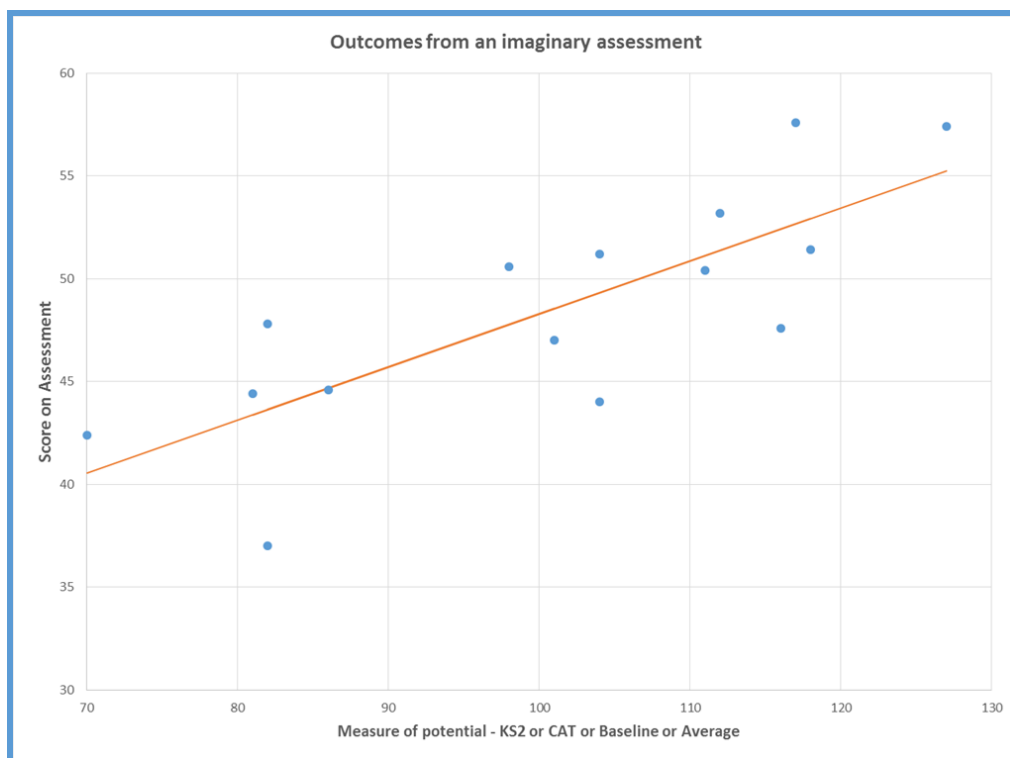


In addition to the analyses available, we generate parental reports and summaries for subject leaders three times per year.

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Performance versus “Potential”

One of the most important roles of the data and assessment aspect of our work is to highlight which students are performing in line with our expectations – and which aren't. A key aspect of our analysis is to chart a cohort's current performance versus potential in the form of a scatter graph. The resulting line of best fit and residuals (distance to the line) can indicate clearly where students are performing well or not.



The measures of current performance can come from PLCs or from more formal summative assessments.

Traditionally we have used the scores from the previous key stage (or the related estimates of attainment from FFT) as the basis for setting expectations of students in all subjects. Whilst there is a statistical correlation between success in these tests and say Art this correlation is not strong enough to be a reliable indicator of a likely grade. For subjects that lie outside the traditional academic core of English, maths, science, languages and humanities we ask that subjects produce simple baseline assessments that can highlight students' aptitudes for sport, music, drama or art that may not be in line with their academic attainment in English and maths. These baseline figures are more useful for identifying students who may be underperforming against their potential in that subject.

This analysis provides student-to-student comparison and so cannot provide verification for the overall achievement of a cohort, that will have to come from elsewhere, but assuming that overall progress is within normal limits for a subject the student level information is useful as it highlights a hitherto ignored group (the students with high prior attainment but who are underperforming).

Phase leads, subject leads and class all staff use this as the main focus of their intervention work in the autumn term.

Language of Assessment

Teacher Assessed Grades	Definition
M = Mastered	Based on current rate of progress, will secure Above Expected Standard
S = Secure	Based on current rate of progress, will secure Expected Standard.
D = Developing	Based on current rate of progress, will not achieve exp. but with the right support, has the potential to do reach expected standard.
E = Emerging	Based on current rate of progress, will not achieve Expected Standard.
<p>In some circumstances pupils may be unable to access the curriculum for their year group. If this is the case the number that starts the Teacher assessed Grade will reflect the year group the pupil is working in.</p>	

6. Reporting to parents

The standard report reports in attitudes to learning, as well as recent exam performance and an indicator of what this means both in term of progress (see performance versus potential above) and attainment in Teacher Assessed Grades (knowledge and skills). The report also shows the pupil's overall attendance figure as well as prior attainment information held. In the summer term a pastoral comment is also written by the pupil's tutor.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

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Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

8. Training

Staff at school will receive regular training in making accurate Teacher Assessed Grades. These will be supported through the use of exams as well as internal and external moderation.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Trustees

Trustees are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

9.2 Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The headteacher and or deputy headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to trustees on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years

9.3 All staff

All staff are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy

10. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. This will be monitored through