

St Mary's RC Primary School

Assessment Policy

Approved:

Review date:

Assessment without levels

Following the introduction of a new National Curriculum framework from September 2014, the government has decided to remove level descriptors.
With levels removed and the focus now on raising the achievement of every pupil, St. Mary's governors, leaders and teachers have chosen a new way to measure pupil attainment and progress. During the academic year 2015-16, the school will adopt new assessment descriptors, except in nursery and reception where assessments are not changing in school or nationally.

Our new assessment system

The old and new curriculum have different content. Many of the objectives in the old curriculum have shifted to lower year groups in the new, more challenging curriculum, this means it is not possible to compare the new curriculum to the old levels system. It requires a new levelling system and a new assessment system to be used from years 1 to 6.

The principles that underpin our new assessment system are:

- Every child can achieve: teachers and staff at St. Mary's have the mind-set; 'What do I need to do next to enable a child in my class to achieve?'
- The new National Curriculum objectives will be used as the expectations for all children.
- Children will be expected to make age appropriate progress – 12 months in 12 months. More than this will be seen as outstanding progress and less will be below expected.
- A move away from formal tests and a reliance instead on seeing progress 'in books' across an academic year.

Our assessment and reporting system includes:

- Ongoing assessment by the class teacher throughout each lesson, through questioning, observation and dialogue.
- Children knowing what they are being asked to learn and more importantly, why.
- Success Criteria that are discussed and agreed with or formulated by the children during each lesson, work is then assessed against the success criteria.
- Three-way feedback, pupil, peer, teacher with clearly identified next steps – this could be written or verbal feedback.
- Regular scrutiny of the pupils' work by senior leaders.

All of the above will feed into our termly assessments of the children in our school. A judgement will be made to decide which of the objectives for reading, writing and maths each child is secure in. From here we will decide on a pupil's individual level and set them challenging targets for the following term.

Tracking progress over time

St.Mary's is moving away from a summative assessment process based on tests. Progress will now be shown in books and our new assessment protocols reflects this. From 2016, St. Mary's will be adopting a new way of reporting children's levels and not be using the old levels, 3b, 4b etc.

The stages are further broken down into five discrete sections, **below**, **towards**, **expected**, **above** and **mastery**. Levels given will reflect these five sections, so that a child may be a level **1B** in reading showing that they are currently accessing the year one curriculum but at a very early level. A **1T** child is also working within the year one curriculum but they have gained more skills and are close to the **1E** level which is the standard level we would like all year one children to be working at by the end of the year. A child on a **1A** is working well within the year one stage and is above the national average. Finally, we have a **1M** which shows that a particular child is working at an outstanding level and is very confident in all aspects of the year one curriculum.

To keep expectations high, it has been decided that no pupil can achieve the standard level within their year group unless they are secure in at least **65%** of the objectives.

Some children will be working below their age related expectation; this is only to be expected as children develop at different times. These children may be accessing the year below, so a year 5 pupil may be accessing learning from the year four curriculum showing that they are working a year behind age related expectations.

Key Objectives

Each year group has its own set of objectives, which we have grouped into corresponding assessment grids. The grids are an indication to both staff and pupils of how children are performing and what the next steps in their learning need to be. Key objectives have been identified for each year, these are the skills we feel are the most important. To achieve the expected level in a year group a child must have met all of the key objectives. For children working within a year group that is below their age related expectation (e.g. if a year 4 pupil is accessing year two work) they must be rapidly taught the key objectives and then advanced to the next year group's. By doing so St. Mary's are promoting rapid progress and setting high expectations for all its pupils.

The majority of children from each year group will be working with their appropriate year group; children with special educational needs will vary. Parents will be informed of this after assessments.

More able children

For children who have securely met the end of year objectives they will be assessed as exceeding or mastering objectives for their age group. Rather than moving onto the next year's curriculum these children will work on 'mastering' their knowledge through the application of skills in different contexts – they will be deepening their learning. In exceptional circumstances a pupil may access learning from the next year group's objectives.

Early Years - Nursery & Reception

Children in Nursery and Reception will continue to be assessed against the Prime and Specific areas of Learning in the EYFS profile.

Assessments will be based on observation of daily activities and events. At the end of Reception for each Early Learning Goal, teachers will judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception year:

- Emerging, not yet reached the expected level of development
- Expected
- Exceeding, beyond the expected level of development for their age

Reporting to Parents

We will report to parents during autumn and spring terms via parent/teacher consultations. This will tell parents whether their child is working at a below, towards, expected, above or mastery level within a particular year group.

Annual reports will be sent to parents during the summer term.