



Baselining Procedures at Zouch



Zouch Academy serves a highly mobile military community, and this will always be the case with the Military community we serve. Typically, we have an overall cohort stability factor of approximately 50%. This means that a significant proportion of pupils join the school outside of normal admission points and at different stages of the academic year. As a result, pupils often arrive with varied educational experiences, curricular coverage, and assessment histories.

We have developed our baselining assessment procedures to ensure that all pupils who join the school mid-year are accurately, consistently, and promptly assessed so that their needs are swiftly identified and effectively met.

Ensuring continuity and equity

The baselining document provides a standardised and age-appropriate framework for assessing pupils across all year groups from Reception to Year 6. This ensures that pupils who join mid-year are not disadvantaged by gaps in prior data and are supported equitably alongside their peers. Given the frequent transitions experienced by military children, this consistency is essential in maintaining high expectations and continuity of learning.

Rapid identification of academic needs

Completion of the baseline assessments within the first week of arrival enables teachers to quickly identify:

- starting points in **reading, writing, maths, spelling and phonics**
- gaps in learning due to curriculum differences between schools
- children working below age-related expectations who may require rapid intervention and/or catch-up support

This is particularly important in a school with lower stability, where delayed or incomplete assessment could result in missed support and slower academic progress. This is something leaders have intentionally developed and implemented as we identified a rapid need to improve outcomes.

Supporting informed teaching and intervention

The document ensures that teachers gather both quantitative data (e.g. phonics checks, maths assessments, times tables) and qualitative evidence (e.g. moderated writing, reading behaviours, fine motor skills). This supports:

- accurate grouping
- appropriate pitch of lessons and adaptive teaching
- targeted interventions (both keep up and catch up) aligned to the school's curriculum and "ready to progress" milestones

For pupils with disrupted schooling journeys, this approach enables teaching to be responsive from the outset.

Safeguarding and pastoral awareness

The baselining process also contributes to safeguarding and pastoral understanding. High pupil mobility can sometimes mask unmet needs or previous underachievement. The structured assessment of basic skills, presentation, engagement with learning, and communication supports staff in building a holistic picture of the child and identifying any concerns early.

Accountability and tracking over time

By establishing a clear and recorded baseline, the school can:

- track the progress of pupils accurately whenever they join the school
- demonstrate progress from starting points rather than time spent in school
- provide contextual evidence for internal evaluation, governors, and Ofsted, particularly when analysing attainment outcomes in a school with low cohort stability

Conclusion

In a school serving a military community with significant pupil mobility, robust baselining is essential. The baselining assessment procedure ensures that assessment is:

- timely
- consistent
- purposeful
- responsive to individual need

It enables the school to maintain high standards, support all pupils effectively, and ensure that mobility does not become a barrier to progress or wellbeing.