



# **ASSESSMENT POLICY 2025-2026**

### Applies to:

- the whole school, inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

### Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, carers, staff and pupils via the school website.

### Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmistress.
- The Proprietor undertakes a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require. The key priorities from the review are incorporated into the School Development Plan on an annual basis.

### Reviewed by:



**Michelle Jenkin (Headmistress)**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**



**Kane Andrews (Proprietor)**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**

### Related Documents:

- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy
- SMSC & PSHE Policy
- More Able, Gifted and Talented Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Marking & Feedback Guide

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### 1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St John's Priory, we educate and nurture the whole child, providing opportunities for each child to discover and develop their individual talents and abilities. Our children work hard and celebrate their successes. We create a culture of achievement within a supportive and stimulating learning environment that encourages children to "be bold, be brave, be you, enabling positive reinforcement through appropriately differentiated expectations. Our vision is for our children to stand on their own as lifelong learners, growing in confidence and independence and preparing to be effective contributors to modern society. The assessment policy is informed by these aims.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

#### 2.1. What is assessment?

From the Latin 'assidere', meaning to sit beside, we see assessment as a partnership between pupil and teacher, where aspect of the pupil's development and progress is measured in some form. This measurement could be by a teacher, an examiner, the child themselves, or through feedback from a peer. It is an integral part of teaching and is primarily used in an ongoing (formative) approach to promote learning and development. Assessment forms and intrinsic aspect of our curriculum planning and is inseparable from the teaching and learning process.

#### 2.2. What is the purpose of assessment?

At St John's Priory, we believe the key purpose of assessment is to support pupils as they develop and progress in their learning. Continued monitoring of pupils' progress gives a clear picture of the development journey of each child. It indicates what has been remembered, what skills have been acquired, and what concepts have been understood. This enables teachers to reflect on how a child is progressing and informs future planning. By engaging pupils to play an active part in assessment processes, we support children to understand their development and to become involved in extending their own expectations.

Our policy on assessment guides practice in several areas:

- **Personalisation** - enabling us to build a unique picture of each pupil's strengths and development areas, helping us to offer appropriate differentiation and for pupils to make well informed choices.
- **Classroom practice** - ensuring that lessons, and the staff/pupil interaction, are underpinned by a shared understanding of progression.
- **Curriculum planning** - awareness of what pupils have achieved and/or are finding difficult informs short- and medium-term planning and inputs to the monitoring of strategic curriculum planning.
- **Pupil tracking** – enabling staff to review both the general progress of individual pupils, and their progress in relation to specific targets (for example in IEPs), or their response to particular focused learning opportunities. This informs future planning for the pupil and enables clear and accurate reporting to parents, carers, other professionals and external parties.

- **School improvement** - pupil progress, in its widest sense, confirms the effectiveness of the curriculum, the impact of school improvement priorities, the contribution of individual staff members.

### 2.3. Principles for good practice

Good assessment practice:

- is based upon clear curriculum intentions;
- plays an integral part in classroom activities;
- is appropriate to the task;
- focuses on learning processes as well as learning outcomes;
- draws on a wide range of evidence;
- involves pupils in reflection and review;
- indicates strengths and identifies weaknesses;
- informs about individual's progress.

We use good assessment practice to:

- enable pupils to understand their own strengths, development areas, targets and achievements; encouraging them to be actively engaged in their learning.
- enable staff to understand their pupils well as learners, and to monitor progress and forward plan for both individual pupils and groups.
- create and maintain consistent language usage to describe achievement and progress; enabling constructive and consistent dialogue with staff, pupils, and parents and carers.
- provide a framework within schemes of work, the effectiveness of teaching and the progress made can be monitored and evaluated.
- Provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of achievement and progress across the school, which can inform curriculum planning, self-evaluation and performance management.

We also intend our approach to assessment to:

- provide a transparent and evidence-based picture of pupil progress in relation to behaviour and personal development.
- Help teachers evaluate the progress of pupils with their peer group, both within the school and across schools.
- collate a varied portfolio of evidence of pupil development through formal assessment, in-class observations, attendance data and pupil's own reflections.
- inform the process and show progress against IEPs.
- create coherence by collating pupil progress across both the academic curriculum and extra-curricular activities, enabling staff to reference the holistic development of each child.
- enable all staff who engage with pupils to contribute to the learning and assessment process; recognising the influential role of specialist support agencies alongside our own teachers.

## 3. RATIONALE

Assessment is an important element of our curricular experiences. In addition to providing information to improve teaching and learning, recording achievement means to building within each child the motivation and desire to continue making progress. We give our children regular feedback on their learning, so that they understand what it is that they need to do to develop. This allows us to base our lesson plans on a detailed knowledge of each child. By

concentrating on the individual, we aim to ensure that children experience success and can thereby build on their own self-esteem and motivation. We also provide feedback to parents, so that teachers, children and parents are all working together collaboratively to facilitate the development of the children.

By maintaining a robust, coherent and practical framework, we will ensure that all assessment activities have a direct impact on the foci of tracking progress, planning for improvement and raising attainment.

#### **4. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT**

This Assessment Policy is based on research-based guidelines for effective assessment.

- formal, summative assessment that is planned and conducted on a frequent and consistent basis as a reflective process after completion of a task;
- a shared understanding between children and teachers of the criteria which will be used in the assessment of learning;
- engaging children to take responsibility for their own learning, e.g. developing their ability to be self-reflective, or setting their own realistic targets for subsequent work;
- teachers using assessment outcomes to set work which challenges and stretches the children;
- effective planning for teaching and learning which recognises the full range of achievements of all children by focusing on how children learn;
- recognising assessment as central to classroom practice;
- sensitive and constructive practices that minimise emotional impact;
- taking account of the importance of pupil motivation;
- promoting a shared understanding of the criteria by which children will be assessed;
- providing constructive guidance for children about how to improve;
- developing the children's capacity for self-assessment, reflecting on their next steps and how these can be achieved
- formative assessment activities forming part of school routine;
- summative activities being undertaken termly, in order to track progress.

#### **5. PROCESSES – WHAT DO WE DO AND WHEN?**

Assessment is conducted stage by stage, in relation to a pupil's learning journey.

##### **5.1. On entry**

We offer all prospective pupils "taster days", during which we can assess not only current attainment but also look more holistically at the child to determine their potential to thrive in our School. We aim to conduct an informal review which considers educational, social, medical and special educational needs.

##### **5.2. Targets and planning**

Through effective understanding of the strengths and development areas of each child, we aim to:

- Set achievable but challenging targets for progress.

- Where indicated, establish and implement plans (such as IEPs and risk assessments) that identify priority development issues, set targets and indicate how these will be monitored. These plans are produced in consultation with the child's parents/carers and any external agency, as appropriate. All staff involved in the teaching or support for a child with an IEP will be made aware of the plans associated with the child, and the targets set for them.

### 5.3. Ongoing

Formative assessment forms part of our regular teaching and learning activities and is extended through assemblies and circle times, where targets for both learning and personal development can be assessed. In addition, we conduct more formalised assessment in core subjects via timetabled assessment times each full term. Such activities inform the routine reviews of plans and targets and, where necessary, indicate where further assessments and focused learning may be beneficial

Key to the ongoing assessment process is the involvement of the child and communication with parents and carers discuss record both progress and barriers to learning.

### 5.4. Transition points

At key moments of transition (e.g. end of key stage, end of year, annual review, etc), a pupil's progress against targets set and achievements attained is assessed. These reviews encompass both learning and personal development and input from key staff is considered.

## 6. ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

The type of assessment we choose to use depends very much on what we want to assess. Assessment is most accurate where we use a range of approaches that allow us to "triangulate". Some of the forms of assessment used include:

- Observation of pupils engaged in a task.
- Pupil self-assessment or peer-assessment: based against given success criteria.
- Questioning opportunities either during the course of an activity or at the end of a period of learning (e.g. end of a module).
- Review of learning with a class or group, e.g. in a plenary session at the end of a lesson.
- Marking of pupils' ongoing work.
- Periodic tests or formal assessment.

For assessment to be successful and worthwhile, certain other features need to be in play, including:

- Effective tracking of progress within and across subjects, taking account of personal development, classroom behaviour, response, attendance and punctuality.
- Planned opportunities for moderation within and across subjects and in comparison to national standardised scoring.
- Long-term subject planning should be clear about what we are assessing against: the strands of progression or assessment foci and the relevant steps of progression in relation to these.

- Short- and medium-term planning will identify what aspects of learning are to be assessed in a particular lesson or group of lessons.
- Personal development will be a key focus, with a shared understanding of what this means.

### 6.1. Teacher and pupil formative in-class assessment

As part of our on-going assessment in class, teachers assess children's own learning against given success criteria. Children also assess their work by using a traffic light system, which develops as children progress through the Prep School, to incorporate written reflections and self-assessment against the given success criteria. Children are encouraged and supported to peer assess the work of other children in their class and comment reflectively on this.

### 6.2. Summative assessment

Summative assessments will be undertaken and use the following tests:

- **Little Prep** – Recording of achievement against the recognised Early Learning Goals (ELGs)
- **Reception** – Continues recording of achievement against the recognised Early Learning Goals (ELGs) with the addition of the conducting of regular Phonics checks. During the Summer term, children produce their first piece of APP writing.
- **Years 1 to 6** – Towards the end of each full term, assessments are completed in English (spelling, punctuation and grammar), Reading and Mathematics. At the end of Year 1, and again at the end of Year 2 if required, children will complete the Phonics Screen Check. Children continue to complete a piece of APP writing each half term.

### 6.3. Assessing pupil progress

In Years 1-6 we use standardised scoring systems set within PUMA, PIRA and GaPS assessments to provide summative reporting to parents. Teacher assessments are made on a lesson-by-lesson basis and also half-termly. This is recorded and monitored through our curriculum software, which allows teachers to mark when a particular learning objective has been taught, achieved and then met. Achievement outcomes are used in informing future planning, individual target setting and for tracking and monitoring purposes. Teachers meet with the Headmistress and/or Deputy Headmistress to discuss pupil progress to ensure that each child is making progress. In the event that a child has not achieved the expected level of progress, plans may be put in place to support the child through an IEP.

## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 7.1. The Headmistress and senior leadership will:

- have overall responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress and achievement;
- regularly monitor the school processes for assessing pupil performance;
- ensure that judgements about assessment are regularly made, moderated and recorded, and that achievement (both pupil and at subject level) is evidenced and retained in accordance with GDPR;
- ensure that parents and carers receive timely reports on their child's achievement; and

- be responsible for overseeing the collection and interpretation of assessment data.

### **7.2. The Deputy Headmistress will:**

- ensure a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils' achievement, using data to monitor progress in pupils' learning;
- be able to determine, organise and implement a diverse, flexible curriculum and implement an effective assessment framework;
- implement the school's policy for the recording and reporting of pupil progress, based on regular assessments and reports; and
- report to the Headmistress the outcomes of assessment activities.

### **7.3. The SENCO will:**

- as appropriate, arrange assessment of pupils joining from other settings;
- based on the initial assessment and on subsequent reviews, work with teachers to develop IEPs and other plans that inform classroom teaching and focused learning initiatives;
- for pupils who require additional support, produce, disseminate and monitor the impact of an IEP;
- enable regular reviews against targets set in IEPs and other plans; taking into account evidence of academic progress and personal development, seeking input from key teachers / support staff and; and
- manage the regular reporting on pupil progress for children with special educational needs, ensuring the inclusion of a pupil voice contribution.

### **7.4. Subject leads will:**

- build assessment into schemes of work;
- where more than one member of staff teaches a subject, supervise and moderate teacher assessments;
- use subject assessments to inform short-, medium- and long-term planning;
- contribute to IEP reviews; and
- prepare an annual report on pupil progress across the subject.

### **7.5. Class teachers will:**

- ensure assessment underpins all lessons, with transparent objectives, feedback to pupils, and effective plenary review;
- give pupils opportunities to reflect on their learning and understand what progression means in that subject;
- in line with our Marking and Feedback Guide, offer regular feedback that is positive, explicit about what has been achieved and gives guidance on next steps;
- monitor and evaluate pupil progress in their subject/class, using this as the basis for planning of future learning;
- monitor and evaluate pupil progress in the classes they are responsible for, working with Subject Leads to use the findings to inform planning;

- be aware of, and assess, both academic and personal development(including progress in relation to behavioural targets);
- where appropriate, report on pupil progress in IEP reviews or reports; and
- follow the Marking and Feedback Guide.

### **7.6. Support staff will:**

- be aware of the learning plan for the lesson and their specific role within the lesson, e.g. working with a target group or specific individuals;
- be aware of the assessment objectives for the group or individual that they are working with;
- record pupil performance in the lessons, as directed by the teacher, for later discussion and planning for learning;
- be aware of, and assess, both academic progress and personal development (including progress in relation to behavioural targets); and
- contribute actively to periodic reviews of progress for pupils.

### **7.7. Pupils will:**

- be able to offer their views of their own progress when they join school and at reviews;
- know what their own targets for development are and understand how they are going to work towards them through careful target setting;
- play an active part in assessing themselves and their peers during lessons and at the end of modules of work; and
- be ready to discuss with staff their achievements, barriers to and attitudes towards learning; and

### **7.8. Parents and carers will:**

- respond to reports provided by the School, sharing their perceptions of progress made and identified areas for development.
- be aware of key targets for development set through the annual review process and contribute as actively as possible.

### **7.9. Local Authorities should:**

- provide as much relevant information as possible of the pupil's prior attainment, background, learning and behavioural difficulties, as new pupils join the School.
- Where appropriate, be ready to facilitate additional support (e.g. EHCP applications, CAMHS) where this is called for by the review process.

## **8. RECORDING**

We keep records of our current pupils' achievement and attainment, the primary purposes being to offer formative assessment that informs planning, provides the basis for report writing and stimulates discussion points in parent consultation sessions.

Data that tracks teacher assessments, summative reports and tests for each pupil are recorded and shared as appropriate with the Headmistress, Deputy Headmistress and

relevant staff and parents. All assessments should give a clear illustration of a teacher's decisions about the overall attainment.

We aim to support assessment decision through triangulation and teachers will review work completed in a variety of contexts. It is unlikely that a statement of attainment will be reached during one piece of work. Where pupils' achievements have been demonstrated through discussion and other forms of oral work, and other less tangible activities, teachers' notes will be evidence of attainment.

## 9. FEEDBACK

### 9.1. Feedback to pupils

Our feedback to pupils tells them what they have achieved and what they need to do next in order to improve their work. We give pupils verbal feedback on their work whenever possible, either when the children are working during the lesson or at the beginning of the next one. In the Prep School, teachers provide written commentary as part of the marking process. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and discuss comments with their teacher through a written or verbal dialogue.

When written feedback is given to a child, it should relate this to the learning objective for the lesson. By so doing, it is made clear whether the objective has been met and evidence is used to support the judgement. Where an objective has not been met, it is made clear why this was the case and advice is offered. In either case we identify what the child needs to do next in order to improve future work, by setting targets for children which we then look for in future pieces of work. Children are expected to reflect upon their learning by ticking off the success criteria they think they have met on the Unit Target Grid and/or on individual pieces of work. Teachers use the same criteria in order to provide commentary and to set targets.

### 9.2. Feedback reporting to parents/carers

It is our intention that parents/carers should feel involved and informed about their child's progress and to feel confident about the procedures established by the School. We have a range of strategies that keep parents/guardians fully informed of their child's progress in school which include:

- Throughout Little Prep to Year 2, teachers and parents use the Home School Link Book (Little Prep to Year 2) to communicate achievements.
- For Years 3 to 6, a Prep Diary is issued as a medium for pupils to recording homework, enabling parents to monitor work set. This can also be used for parents to comment on any areas of difficulty with homework set.
- In Little Prep and Reception, an annual report is provided to parents/carers that details their child's progress against the relevant Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Tapestry is also used as a means of sharing success and activities in School.
- In the Years 1 to 6, parents/carers receive termly progress reports for English (spelling, punctuation and grammar), Reading and Mathematics. End of year reports are also produced, which inform on progress across the subject range and also focus on personal development.
- Twice yearly parents' evenings.

- Opportunity for short discussions with parents at the end of the school day.
- Weekly merits are awarded during assemblies and published in the Newsletter.
- We have an open-door policy and encourage parents/carers to contact, in the first instance, the Form Tutor if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's work.

### **10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES**

Pupils who experience challenges in accessing the taught curriculum may have the assessment tools modified to accommodate their needs. This will not affect the outcome or marking procedure. Accommodations will vary and be at the discretion of the class teacher and after input from the SENCO. Where the pupil has an educational psychologist's evaluation, the recommendations may, be followed in whole or in part.