



**St John's Priory School
Banbury**

ASSESSMENT POLICY

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 Headteacher.
- 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.



Michelle Jenkin Headmistress

Date: January 2024



Giorgio Mystkowski Proprietor

Date: January 2024

Related Documents:

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

Contents

Aims and Objectives.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
What is assessment?.....	4
What is the purpose of assessment?	4
Principles for good practice	5
RATIONALE.....	5
Principles of Assessment.....	6
PROCESSES – WHAT DO WE DO AND WHEN?	6
ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES.....	7
Teacher and Pupil Formative in-class assessment.....	8
Summative Assessment	8
Assessing pupil progress	8
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	8
The Headmistress and senior leadership will:	8
The Deputy Headmistress will:	8
The SENDCo will:	9
Subject Leaders will:	9
Class teachers will:	9
Support staff will:.....	9
Pupils will:	9
Parents and Carers will:	10
Local Authorities should:	10
RECORDING.....	10
FEEDBACK TO PUPILS	10
Feedback reporting to pupils	10
Feedback reporting to parents/carers.....	11
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES	11
Appendix A – End of Term Academic Pupil Self-Evaluation.....	12

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 talents and abilities. Our children work hard and celebrate their successes. We create a culture of achievement within a vibrant and stimulating learning environment ensuring 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 the aims and bears out the mission of the school

INTRODUCTION

What is assessment?

The word assessment comes from the Latin 'assidere', to sit beside. This gives a valuable guide to the concept of assessment as a partnership between child and teacher. Assessment refers to any situation in which some aspect of the child's education is in some way measured. This measurement could be by the teacher, an examiner or by the child him or herself. Assessment occurs when judgements are made about achievement. It is an integral part of teaching and is primarily used in an on-going (formative way) to promote better learning. Assessment is an integral part of our curriculum planning and is inseparable from the teaching and learning process. It has a major role to play in increasing levels of achievement within our school.

What is the purpose of assessment?

At St John's Priory, we believe the key purpose of assessment is to aid children develop and progress in their learning. Continued monitoring of each child's progress gives a clear picture of what each child is doing. It is important that the teacher knows what information has been remembered, what skills have been acquired, and what concepts have been understood. This enables teachers to reflect on what children are doing and informs future planning. The outcomes of our assessments will help children become involved in raising their own expectations.

Our policy on assessment guides practice in several areas:

- It leads to successful **personalisation**, enabling us to build up a unique picture of each pupil's strengths and areas for development, helping us to offer the right curriculum and the pupil to make well informed choices.
- It enriches **classroom practice** by ensuring that lessons, and the staff/pupil interaction, are underpinned by a shared understanding of progression.
- It supports **curriculum planning**: in that awareness of what pupils have achieved and are finding difficult should be the starting point for short- and medium-term plans; a broader sense of how pupils are responding to what they are being taught should inform the way in which subject and curriculum leaders modify their longer-term plans.
- It leads to sound **pupil tracking**, through which staff can form a view of both the general progress of individual pupils, and their progress in relation to particular targets (for example in IEPs), or their response to particular focused learning opportunities. This can in turn inform future planning for the individual, as well as reporting to parents, carers, other professionals and external parties.
- It will provide an evidence base for **school improvement**, in that pupil progress in its widest sense should confirm the effectiveness of the curriculum, the impact of school improvement priorities, the contribution of a member of staff.

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 will use good assessment practice to:

- enable pupils to understand their own strengths and areas of development and their 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 used to describe achievement and progress; enabling them to engage in a constructive dialogue with each other, with pupils, and with parents and carers.
- provide subject leaders a framework within which they can monitor and evaluate the impact of schemes of work, the effectiveness of teaching and the progress made in their subject.
- gives the Senior Leadership Team a comprehensive and accurate picture of achievement and progress across the school, which can inform curriculum planning, self-evaluation and performance management.

Additionally, as an independent school, we will also and particularly want our approach to assessment to:

- provide a transparent and evidence-based picture of pupil progress in relation to behaviour and personal development, which is often if not always the starting point for wider progress.
- Help teachers compare the progress of pupils with their peers both within the school and across schools, and thus form a view on what represents good progress.
- collate a varied portfolio of evidence of pupil development; ranging from external examinations to in-class observations; from attendance data to pupil reflections about attitudes to learning and achievement.
- inform the process and show progress in relation to the statement of special educational need.
- create coherence by drawing together the threads of pupil progress across the "academic" curriculum and extra-curricular activities and by enabling all staff to see academic and personal progress in relation to each other.
- enable all staff who engage with pupils to contribute to the learning and assessment process; recognising the influential role of care workers, education support staff and therapy staff alongside teachers.

RATIONALE

Assessment is an important link in the cycle of planned curricular experiences. Recording achievement is a positive way of identifying children's particular strengths and weaknesses through sensitive assessment. Sensitive assessment contributes towards a positive attitude, motivation and a desire to continue making progress. We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. 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 give parents regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, children and parents are all working together collaboratively to facilitate the development of the children.

The purpose of this policy is to collate those areas of good assessment practice employed with St John's Priory School. 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.

Principles of Assessment

In order to satisfy the above aims, the 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;
- children being involved in this process as part of taking responsibility for their own learning, e.g. in developing their ability to be properly self-reflective or in setting realistic targets for their subsequent work;
- teachers using the results of their assessment to set work which challenges and stretches their 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;
- assessment being regarded as a key professional skill for teachers;
- sensitive and constructive practices, because any assessment has an emotional impact;
- taking account of the importance of pupil motivation;
- promoting commitment to learning goals and 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 and recognising their next steps and how to take them;
- formative assessment activities will be emphasised as part of school routine; summative activities will be undertaken termly in order to track progress.

PROCESSES – WHAT DO WE DO AND WHEN?

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

On entry – we will conduct a baseline review, which aims to:

- Consider educational, social, medical needs – including prior learning (test/examination results, etc), attendance, exclusions, emotional and social background, safeguarding issues and an external agency involvement, as appropriate.
- Where appropriate. review any statement of special educational needs.
- Assess current level of attainment in the core subjects of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening), and Maths, and Science.
- Understand the pupil's own perceptions of their strengths and the barriers they feel they need to overcome.
- Any specialist testing indicated in the areas above.

Targets and planning - once the baseline review has been completed, we aim to:

- Set achievable but challenging targets for progress.
- Where indicated, plans (such as IEPs and risk assessments) are established which identify priority development issues, sets 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.
- In addition, 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.

On an **ongoing** basis:

- There is planning for progress and regular reviews of progress through timetabled assessment times, assemblies, circle time in relation to targets set in terms of both behaviour and learning.
- These reviews will lead to the routine updating of plans and targets and, where necessary, to further assessments and interventions
- A key principle for the ongoing assessment process will be the involvement of the child and there is regular communication to parents and carers that record both attainment and barriers to learning.

At key moments of **transition** (end of year/ annual review, key stage)

- There is a review of progress against targets set and in relation to pupils' ability.
- The review will be comprehensive, covering both learning and behaviour and involving all key staff.
- There is reporting to parents/carers in terms of achievement, attitude to learning, and what has contributed to or impeded these; together with discussion and suggestions for next steps.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

The type of assessment we choose to use depends very much on what we want to assess. Assessment will be most accurate where we use a range of approaches that allow us to "triangulate". Amongst the range at our disposal are:

- Observation of pupils engaged in a task
- Pupil self-assessment or peer-assessment: perhaps based on an assessment checklist or a "ladder" of progression.
- One-to-one questioning of individual pupils either during the course of an activity or at the end of a period of learning (e.g. end of a module).
- Questioning of the class during an activity
- Review of learning with a class or group – for example in a plenary session at the end of a lesson
- Marking of pupils' ongoing work.
- Periodic tests or examinations.
- Peer assessment of tasks against the success criteria

For assessment as outlined above to be successful and worthwhile, certain other features need to be in play. These include:

- Effective tracking of progress through subjects and personal development (taking account of classroom behaviour, response, attendance and punctuality).
- Planned opportunities for moderation within and across subjects and in comparison, to national standardised scoring
- Long-term planning for the subject or aspect of learning will be clear about what we are assessing against: what strands of progression or assessment focuses are there; what are the steps of progression in relation to those strands of focuses.
- Short- and medium-term planning will identify what aspects of learning are to be assessed in a particular lesson or group of lessons.
- Emotional, social and behavioural development will be a key focus, with a shared understanding of what this means.

Teacher and Pupil Formative in-class assessment

As part of our on-going assessment in class, teachers and pupils in the Prep School self-assess their own learning against a success criterion for each lesson. Children begin by assessing their work using traffic light colours and this develops into children writing reflections and marking their work against the success criteria. Children are encouraged to peer assess the work of other children in their class and comment reflectively on this.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessments will be undertaken and use the following tests:

- **Reception** – Phonics checks are conducted regularly and at the end of Reception, children produce their first piece of APP writing.
- **Years 1 to 6** – In the Spring and Summer terms, assessments are completed in English and Mathematics. From Year 4 onwards, assessments are also taken in Science. In Year 1, and Year 2 if required, children will complete the Phonics Screen Check. Children continue to complete a piece of APP writing each half term.

Assessing pupil progress

In Years 1-6 we use standardised scoring systems set within PUMS, 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 inputted and monitored through Classroom Monitor and is updated half termly to record children's achievements. Classroom Monitor 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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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 evidence of pupil achievement is kept both at the individual pupil and the subject level;
- 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.

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.

The SENDCo will:

- as appropriate, carry out / arrange initial baseline assessment of pupils joining from other settings;
- based on the baseline 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 and personal progress, and engaging contribution from teachers and, support staff; and
- arrange for regular reports on pupil progress, feeding into the review process. This will include a pupil contribution.

Subject Leaders will:

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

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;
- offer regular feedback in line with our Marking and Feedback Guide and which 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 leaders to use the findings to inform planning;
- be aware of and assess both academic and personal progress;
- where appropriate, report on pupil progress in IEP reviews or reports; and
- follow the school Marking and Feedback Guide.

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 progress (including progress in relation to behavioural targets); and
- contribute actively to periodic reviews of progress for pupils.

Pupils will:

- be able to offer their own views of 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 each other during lessons and at the end of modules of work;
- be ready to discuss with identified staff their achievements, difficulties and attitudes to learning; and
- make their own contribution to the annual review process.

Parents and Carers will:

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

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.

RECORDING

At our school we recognise that we are required to keep updated records of pupils' achievements. The primary purpose of record keeping is formative, but it also provides the basis for report writing and parent consultation sessions.

- Data that tracks teacher assessments and summative reports for each pupil are recorded and shared as appropriate with the Headmistress, Deputy Head and relevant staff and parents.
- Class teachers in the Prep school will log and keep test results in relation to spelling tests, times tables tests, end of unit tests etc.
- Teachers and parents use the Home School Communication Book (Nursery to Year 2) or Prep Diary (Years 3 to 6) that is issued to every child at our school to liaise with each other concerning areas of difficulty. This is also a medium that pupils will use for recording homework, enabling parents to monitor work set.
- All assessments should give a clear illustration of a teacher's decisions about the overall attainment. Teachers will review work done 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 activity, teachers' notes will be evidence of attainment.

FEEDBACK TO PUPILS

Feedback reporting to pupils

Our feedback to pupils tells them how well they have done 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, when lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, we write comments on the pupils' work during marking. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and discuss comments with their teacher through a written or verbal dialogue.

When we give written feedback to a child, we relate this to the learning objective for the lesson. By so doing we make clear whether the objective has been met and we produce evidence to support the judgement. If we consider that the objective has not been met, we make clear why this was the case. In both cases we identify what the child needs to do next in order to improve future work. We set targets for children in their books 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 then use the same criteria in order to comment and target set.

Feedback reporting to parents/carers

We have a range of strategies that keep parents/guardians fully informed of their child's progress in school which include:

- In the Prep School, parents receive termly progress reports, giving details of achievement and attitude to learning across English, Mathematics and, from Year 4, Science.
- Assessment reports are provided twice per year, after our assessment periods and which detail results of internal examinations.
- Twice yearly parents' evenings,
- Verbal comments to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Weekly merits awarded during assemblies on Thursday mornings. Children's names are published on the school notice board.
- At the end of the Summer term, formal written report from each subject teacher informs parents/carers of their child's progress based on continuous formative assessment. The report will comprise constructive feedback indicating strengths and the way forward for any recognised weaknesses. Written Reports are written and sent out in the summer term.

We encourage parents/carers to contact the school if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's work. Parents/carers should feel involved and informed about their pupils' progress and to feel confident about the procedures established by the school.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Pupils who experience challenges in accessing the taught curriculum may have the assessment 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. Where the pupil has an educational psychologist's evaluation, the recommendations may be followed in whole or in part with the full agreement of parents.

Appendix A – Academic Pupil Self-Evaluation

NAME:	
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YEAR:	
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DATE:	
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Please answer these questions and tick the answer you prefer each time.

	Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1. Are you enjoying school?				
2. If you are stuck, have you been helped to understand?				
3. Do teachers show you how to make your work better?				
4. Are your teachers fair to you?				

5. Have your lessons and targets been interesting and enjoyable?				
	Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
English				
Drama				
Mathematics				
Science				
Humanities / Topic				
French & Spanish				
Art & DT				
RE				
ICT				
Music				
PE & Games				

Have you worked hard and tried your best in this subject?	
Yes	No

	Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
6. Do other children behave well in class?				
7. Have you behaved well?				
8. Are other children friendly?				
9. Do you know who you can go to if you are worried at school?				

Pupil Comments:

a. How are you getting on in English? Write down the things you do well and things you find hard.

b. How are you getting on in Maths? Write down areas you do well and areas you find hard.

c. Are there any subjects you are finding hard and need help with? Explain the parts you find hard and need help with.

d. Is there anything else you would like to say about your work at school?
