Assessment policy

Elm Tree Primary Academy

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Contents

1> Aims
2> Legislation and Guidance
3> Principles of Assessment
4> Assessment Aporaches
5> Reporting to Parnest and Carers
6> Roles and Responsibilities
7> Monitoring
8> Links with other Policies

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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/carers

Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

2. Legislation and guidance

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1
- 2024 assessment and reporting arrangements (phonics screening check)
- 2024 key stage 2 assessment and reporting arrangements

3. Principles of assessment

Assessment is at the heart of the process which promotes pupil learning and individual progress as well as leading to the recording of achievement throughout his/her school career.

It can:

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- Provide a framework in which educational objectives may be set and pupil's progress charted.
- Yield the basis for planning the next educational steps in response to pupil's needs
- Facilitate a dialogue between teachers, other professionals, parents, carers and the pupils themselves.
- Enhance professional skills and help the school as a whole to strengthen learning across the curriculum and throughout the age range.
- Strengthen continuity and progression.

An assessment system aims to be:

- Formative - The positive achievements of a pupil may be recognised and discussed and the appropriate next steps may be planned.
- Diagnostic - Any difficulties may be identified and appropriate help and guidance may be provided.
- Summative - The recording of overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way.
- Informative - All interested parties including other professionals, parents, carers and the pupil him/herself is kept up-to-date of overall progress.

Assessment should:

a) Be an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

b) Provide positive comments about a pupil's achievements and experience in the stated curriculum.

c) Provide a basis for planning the next steps in a pupil's learning that are matched to the pupil's ability and previous experience.

d) Include opportunities for pupil reflection and review.

e) Be based upon clearly defined and stated objectives which are accessible and relevant to each student

f) Provide all pupils with the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, but also allow pupils to demonstrate what they cannot yet do.

Assessment should focus on the needs of the pupil, of teachers, of the school and the statutory legal requirements.

Pupils will need to:

- know what is expected of them;
- have short-term, achievable targets;

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- be offered strategies to help them learn effectively;
- have regular opportunities to review their learning;

Teachers will need to:

- identify clear learning objectives;
- identify the criteria for assessment;
- employ an appropriate range of assessment techniques.
- emphasise positive achievement;
- provide information for other teachers;
- work collaboratively with the whole school curriculum framework.
- use assessment information to evaluate teaching and learning within the classroom. The

School should use assessment information to:

- evaluate the curriculum
- inform other professionals, as appropriate;
- ensure that full reports are made available to parents, employers and other agencies;
- provide accurate information for academy councillors, the Trust and other appropriate bodies about curricular achievements.

4. Assessment approaches

Elm Tree Academy curriculum provides for the special educational needs of our pupils. The processes by which good assessment practice is established are common to all subjects although there is a need to accommodate the individual characteristics of each subject. Good assessment practice involves effective, long, medium and short term planning on the part of co-ordinators and teachers, to identify clear learning objectives and outcomes.

Good planning will ensure that skills will be developed, positive attitudes encouraged, knowledge and understanding increased and that a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum will be delivered.

At Elm Tree Primary Academy we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use 3 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:

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Teachers 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/carers to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Methods of Assessment

These should be flexible to match the teaching situation and may include the following:

- Pupils work (written, drawn, typed, captured on video/photo or demonstrated and observed) which is evaluated in relation to an assessment criterion - Written or verbal feedback is given to the students (Refer to marking policy).
- Formal/diagnostic testing - e.g. reading, comprehension or maths tests, Educational Psychologist or other professional assessment
- Assessment activities designed by the teacher – to support teacher assessment in curriculum areas
- Self-assessment and peer assessment – e.g. Assessment for Learning Policy
- Recording - Record keeping is part of the assessment process and not an end in itself. Assessment data is collected and recorded so that an analysis of student progression can be completed and it can also be used to support strategic decision-making.

Assessment at Elm Tree Primary Academy will incorporate a range of tools to meet the needs of learners.

Entry Profile/Baseline Assessment

The information in the pupil's Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) together with any contributing reports including education psychologist and previous school report will contribute towards baseline for new pupils. This will be supported by an in-school baseline assessment within the first 6 weeks of entry, using the most appropriate assessment system.

Early Years

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used for statutory baseline assessment on all reception pupils. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage they will be assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, against Early Learning Goals and next steps criteria and Characteristics of

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Effective Learning. This is completed with teacher assessments and observations. In school assessment will be used alongside this to identify small steps in progress.

Equal Opportunities Curricular provision will ensure that pupils are offered a variety of learning experiences that enable them to develop a wide range of skills regardless of degree of disability.

Communication and Interaction

Assessment of communication and interaction will center around the SCERTS approach.

SCERTS – Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports

SCERTS provides guidelines for supporting individuals to become a confident communicators who are able to advocate for their needs and actively engage in their environment in meaningful ways.

It is designed to help autistic individuals, families, educators, and clinicians collaborate in a carefully coordinated manner to select objectives that are research-based and are designed to match the preferences of an individual, developmental needs and the environment.

All pupils will be assessed to ascertain their communication stage and outcomes will be selected to support social communication- Joint attention and Symbol Use, and Regulation- Mutual Regulation and Self-Regulation. These targets will create their SCERTS profile be reviewed at least termly.

Adults in school will also plan progress towards communication and interaction long-term outcomes within the child EHCP, this may be supported by Speech and Language Therapists where appropriate.

Engagement

Pupils who are working below subject specific learning and/or have significant differences in engagement and joint attention will access engagement scales.

The engagement model assesses how a pupil engages with a stimuli across 5 different areas

- exploration
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

These areas allow teachers to assess pupils' engagement in developing new skills, knowledge and concepts in the school's curriculum by demonstrating how pupils are achieving specific outcomes. They represent what is necessary for pupils to fully engage in their learning and reach their full potential.

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5 areas allow teachers to assess:

- How well pupils are engaged
- How effective the curriculum is
- Achievements across the 4 areas of need

Where appropriate, pupils will have an engagement profile that will be used to develop and increase engagement across the curriculum. Engagement profiles will be reviewed at least termly.

Cognition and Learning

Pupils who are working below National curriculum in academic areas will be assessed through Cherry Garden branch maps. This is a flexible frames work for children with learning differences. Depending on need pupils may access Branch Maps in:

- Communication Language and Literacy
- Mathematical Development
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Understanding the world

Pupils Working at the higher Branches of Reading, writing and Maths with move to Sandwell Skills Ladders. Sandwell Skills Ladders bridges the gap between pre subject specific learning and National Curriculum and has 4 Stages

- Building concepts
- Early Reading/Writing/Maths 1
- Early Reading/Writing/Maths 2
- Early Reading/Writing/Maths 3

Once pupils have achieved 80% of Sandwell Skills ladders they will be working towards Y1 national curriculum.

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 teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- Teachers 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/carers to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

Whether pupils are working within Branch Maps, Skills Ladders or National curriculum they will have short term outcome identified that will be planned for within lessons. Weekly observations will assess progress towards these outcomes. End of term assessment data will be used to analyse progress and inform provision and next steps for pupils.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage (KS) 2 (year 6)

It will not be appropriate for the majority of pupils at Elm Tree Primary Academy to access National Testing however. pupils will be given the opportunity to access Nationally Standardised Summative Assessments where appropriate.

5. Reporting to parents/carers

Annual Reviews of Education Health and Care Plans and Transition Reviews are carried out for all pupils as required by the SEND Code of practice (2017). These will outline progress towards Long Term Outcomes within the pupil's EHCP and discuss short term outcomes. Annual reports are sent to parents (in line with School reports on pupil performance, 2015).

In addition to these legal requirements the school provides opportunities for parents/carers to discuss their son/daughter's progress throughout the year.

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6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Academy Councillors

Academy Councilors 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
- Monitoring that school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school

6.2 All School Staff, Teachers and Class Leads

- All new staff are given training on our assessment systems and are mentored through by another colleague to ensure consistency of tracking.
- All staff in classrooms have a working knowledge of the pupil's individual targets
- All staff are expected to contribute to evidence gathering, capture progress when appropriate and record this
- All Teachers and Class Leads will have an overview and understanding of how their pupils are progressing and be able to talk confidently at the Individual Class/Pupil Progress meetings of their achievements
- All Teachers and Class Leads must justify judgements made and supply evidence to show reasoning behind decisions for moderation and tracking purposes.
- All Teachers and Class Leads (with input from other professionals), are able to review achievements made at a pupil's EHCP annual review, suggest appropriate new targets if required in line with their next steps and future aspirations.

6.3 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for

- Ensuring this 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 Academy Councillors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessment competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities

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- Continuing professional development (CPD) for middle leaders/subject specialists on how assessment points should be planned and delivered and, for teachers, how to get pupils to the assessment points
- Tracking completed assessments and making sure they are moderated, data is collected and teachers respond to the results appropriately

7. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed [frequency] by Senior Leaders. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Senior Leaders responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

Senior Leaders will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Moderation sessions
- Learning walks and drop ins
- Coaching
- Pupil Progress Meetings
- Observation scrutinies

8. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to our:

- Curriculum policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures

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