

Assessment Policy

What is Assessment?

“Assessment is about the progress of the whole pupil throughout their educational journey and is the means used by teachers to evaluate that progress and diagnose the needs of the pupil. True assessment is neither wholly formative, nor wholly summative; it is embedded in the classroom rather than an activity of reflection outside it.”

Why Assess?

“Assessment helps pupils engage more fully in their own development and learning. A pupil responds better to new challenges if they grasp what is necessary for progress and why. Assessment helps parents to understand and, as relevant, participate in their children’s educational journey. Assessment helps head teachers and governors to plan strategically the use of the resources of the school... and ensures schools are accountable to all.”

Extracts above taken from NAHT Commission on Assessment Forward by Lord Sutherland 2014

Aims of Assessment at Forncett

- To identify a child’s current knowledge, skills and understanding and what they need to learn next in order to progress
- To measure pupil achievement (progress and attainment)
- To inform target setting
- To inform curriculum, unit and lesson planning (at school, class, group and individual levels),
- To inform the school’s self-evaluation and judgements about the effectiveness of teaching methods, policies, interventions and resourcing
- To provide useful information to parents, governors and external partners about the school’s performance at individual and/or school levels
- To give ownership, control, understanding and challenge to pupils over their learning
- To comply with statutory requirements and ensure national standards are met

The school supports the findings of The Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels (Sept 2015) which stated that “...curriculum & assessment are inextricably linked...and that a school’s chosen assessment system “...should be one that works for its pupils with the sole aim of supporting their achievement.” (p.7) As a result, we ensure our in-school assessments are tied into our school curriculum planning and are therefore relevant and meaningful.

In keeping with the Commission’s approach, we use three main forms of assessment.

1. In-school formative assessments (day to day) using an approach known as Assessment for Learning (AfL – see below for more information).
2. In-school summative assessments (a range of tests and tasks to assess such as a maths ‘end of unit’ test, spelling or reading test).
3. Nationally standardised summative assessments (e.g. SATs and the Y1 Phonics Check).

All three differ, but all have a role in helping us to determine how well our children are attaining and progressing through the national curriculum.

Our Assessment Scheme

The school has devised the following scheme of assessment.

In order to manage the data collected by teachers efficiently, we make use of an assessment data tracking system called Pupil Asset. Data collected by teachers from their assessments (both formative and summative) is put onto the tracker half termly in line with the Commission's best practice findings. This enables the staff and leadership to analyse attainment and progress across the year groups (including the use of tracking matrices), to identify any patterns or trends and to plan actions accordingly. The school has adopted a 'Point in Time' approach to tracking children (PITA). This means that half termly, the teacher uses all their formative and summative assessment knowledge of a child to make a professional judgement as to whether the child is, at that point in time, secure and on track to achieve age-related expectations by the end of the academic year or whether they are performing below or above those age-related expectations (see PITA chart in appendix below). This judgment is put on to Pupil Asset for every child.

In the EYFS, a baseline assessment is made of each child during their first three school weeks and is entered onto our tracking system. Children then continue to be assessed and tracked on Pupil Asset using the EYFS profile. We also use a program called Tapestry to record the children's learning journeys which are shared electronically with parents and carers at regular intervals and give parents another way to contribute to their child's record of development.

Pupil Progress Meetings

In addition to this data tracking, the headteacher holds a half-termly pupil progress meeting with each teacher to discuss every child's attainment, progress, learning behaviours and general wellbeing in detail in order to establish what is going well and what needs to improve for that child. It may be that a child who is attaining highly for their age is currently not making much progress or a child who is disadvantaged is making a lot of progress but is still a way off attaining age-related expectations. From this meeting, a pupil provision plan (action plan for support or intervention) may be drawn up to ensure that the child's needs are met and they continue to thrive and succeed. Children already on plans such as Individual Education plans (IEPs) or Personal Education Plans (PEPs) will also have their plans regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with parents and carers.

Involving Parents, Carers and Children

The school follows an assessment timetable which outlines when key assessments and associated events need to take place during the school year. Parent/carer consultations are planned to complement this so that families can be informed of their child's most recent attainment and progress and take an active part in supporting learning at home through provision planning. In the summer term, all families also receive a written report including the results of any national tests their children have taken or their Foundation Stage Profile if they are in the EYFS.

We operate an 'open door' policy so if parents or carers have any concerns about their child between consultations, they know through consultations, newsletters and induction that they are always welcome to come and discuss them with us. Equally, staff are proactive in approaching parents and carers if they are concerned as we believe that rapid early intervention is the key to resolving most issues.

In addition to the daily assessments and feedback sessions, teachers also build in opportunities for 1:1 learning conferences with their children over the year. This ensures that each child has a dedicated time where they are listened to about their bigger-picture learning and have time to give a valuable input into what they think is going well or not so

well and what their next steps need to be. Again, if there are issues between times staff will always speak with children to address them. The children are taught that in-school and national summative assessments are one way of showing us what they know, understand and can do. It is also a way of showing them what the national standard looks and feels like and, when they have seen their results, enabling them to see what they will need to learn next in order to reach it.

Using Summative Test Results

To ensure we continue to improve and make the most of summative information (both in-school and national), the results of any tests the children take are analysed at the question level. From this we can then identify if there are any issues with a particular area of the curriculum e.g. if all the fraction questions in a maths paper were poorly answered, it may suggest that there is an issue with the teaching of fractions. We then take the findings from question level analysis and feed them back into our planning and self-evaluation to ensure we learn from them and move our practice and the children on. It may be that advice and support is sought from other schools or external partners as to how the school can improve its provision and therefore improve achievement.

Moderation and Standardisation

To be sure that we assess confidently and accurately, we need to know what the standards are and what they look like for each year group. We use a combination of agreed criteria such as the Pupil Asset's objective statements, Focus Education's 'I can' assessment criteria statements and the DFE's interim assessment frameworks to assess against. To assess and agree standards we use half-termly in-school moderation staff meetings where we all compare and assess work samples together from a subject such as writing. We then compare ourselves against our peers through moderation sessions with our Cluster of schools or our Hub. Key agreed moderated pieces are filed so that we have a set of standards to refer back to. The school also participates in the annual Local Authority statutory moderation process which provides useful support, advice and validation of our judgements.

Formative Assessment or Assessment for Learning (AfL) at Forncett

The school has embraced Shirley Clarke and John Hattie's Assessment for Learning (A4L) work which is evidenced-based and has a proven track record for improving children's achievement. It is based on the idea that children will improve most if they understand the learning goal, where they are in relation to this goal and how they can achieve it. It involves several elements including...

- Establishing and embedding a positive Growth Mindset 'all can succeed' learning culture
- Promoting ownership of learning by involving children in planning stages
- Using 'Talk Partners' and a 'no hands up' culture where children are resources for each other and all can be included in and contribute to discussion
- Using mixed ability learning with differentiated choices with high expectations which preserve and promote self-esteem
- Using clear learning objectives
- Using clear success criteria (co-constructed wherever possible to aid ownership)
- Using effective questioning
- Continually assessing children's understanding as they learn so that individual and class feedback and the direction of the lesson can be adjusted appropriately

- Showing children what excellence looks like by sharing and analysing an example before they produce their own 'product'
- Quality feedback from peers and teachers which focuses on successes, where excellence is and where improvements are needed
- Using 'mid-learning' stops where examples of improvement are modelled and shared so that feedback and improvement making is immediate and part of the lesson
- Ensuring effective ends to lessons which summarise learning and reflect on it

Monitoring and Review including the Governor's Role

The headteacher monitors the day to day whole-school assessment process. Subject leaders monitor the assessment process for their subjects. Results from monitoring and any required actions are fed back to and discussed with governors through the Curriculum and Standards Committee and Full governing Body meetings. Governors also monitor assessment through headteacher reports and through visits to school such as learning walks, talking to children, looking at data and meeting with staff as well as through any other role assigned to them in the SIDP (school improvement and development plan). The assessment policy is reviewed annually to ensure it reflects practice and is effective.

Inclusion

The school promotes and supports inclusion and recognizes that some children may need to make use of additional and/or different kinds of assessment specific to their individual needs, for example, children with SEND may follow national curriculum objectives from a younger year group's curriculum or have P-scale objectives, depending on their need and cognitive ability. They will then be assessed using the associated criteria. Children who have English as an additional language (EAL), who are at the initial stages of learning English, will be assessed using an assessment appropriate to their needs.

Staff Training

We recognise that early intervention can improve both achievement and self-worth. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying children who are at risk of not making appropriate progress and/or meeting their targets. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Assessment Policy as part of their induction. They will also receive other assessment training at least annually as part of their ongoing professional development.

Links to other policies

This policy has particular links to our feedback and marking policy and our teaching and learning policy.

Adopted by staff & governors in February 2017

Review date: Summer Term 2018

Signed:

Date:



Appendix 1 - PITA Assessment Bands to be informed by formative and summative assessment for pupil tracking purposes

| Comparison with age expectation | Teacher Assessment of learning characteristics | FFT band | Predicted scaled score | Interim End of Key Stage Performance Descriptor |
|---|---|----------|------------------------|---|
| Well above age expectations 7 | As below, but is demonstrating significant skills and knowledge beyond the curriculum. They can consistently apply their skills in a range of contexts and can synthesise and evaluate their own and other's ideas. | M | | |
| Above age expectations 6 | Is on track to exceed end of year expectations. They are almost always successful in understanding the key learning and are able to apply their skills, in a range of contexts making few errors. Can often explain or justify their ideas freely. | A | >115 | Working at greater depth within the expected standard |
| Just above age expectations (securely) 5 | Is on track to meet end of year expectations. They are usually successful learners at that year group level, showing good understanding of over 80% of objectives taught. They are usually able to learn new skills and use them accurately and independently though they may make occasional errors in applying their learning in other contexts. Can often explain or justify their ideas | | | |
| At age expectations 4 | Is on track to meet most (60%-80%) but not all end of year expectations. Is more often than not successful at learning new concepts & is starting to apply their skills independently but not consistently. May make errors but is usually able to make improvements following feedback and support. May have some smaller gaps in learning. Can explain or justify their ideas with support. | N | 100 | Working at national expected standard |
| Just below age expectations 3 | Is working towards meeting year group expectations. Is able to access the age-related curriculum, but has significant gaps in their learning. They struggle to embed concepts and nearly always need some scaffolding or support. Often cannot apply their learning independently. | | | |
| Below age expectations 2 | Is not accessing the curriculum without heavily personalised support and scaffolding, which may be due to EAL or barriers to learning. The child may be doing different tasks to the rest of the class and/or receiving focused intervention. | W | <85 | |
| Well below age expectations 1 | Is working significantly below the age-related curriculum & may be following a different curriculum to peers, likely to be on P scales. | | | |