



## Woolsery Primary School Assessment Policy

### Rationale

*"In school formative assessment helps pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives and wider outcomes and to identify where they need to target their efforts to improve.*

*In-school formative assessment should be an integral part of teaching and learning. It allows teachers to understand pupil performance on a continuing basis. It enables teachers to identify when pupils are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress." Final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels, September 2015*

### 1. The Principles and aims of assessment

The school uses a range of assessment processes for different purposes. We use these processes to build an accurate, timely and informative picture of each child's progress and attainment and to identify trends in cohorts and groups as they move through the school.

The whole school community is involved in the assessment process.

**Children:** It is vital that children understand the process of their own learning as early as possible so that they can be aware of the progress they are making and the expectations placed upon them.

**Teachers:** Teachers will constantly be assessing the learning of their children in order to inform the effectiveness of learning, teaching and planning, together with the effectiveness of the whole curriculum and their own professional skills.

**Support Staff:** Support staff also have an integral part to play in the assessment process by giving teachers timely and accurate indicators of key children's performance, the match of task to desired outcomes and an insight into the learning perception of the children they are working with.

**Parents:** It is very important that parents understand the educational development of their children and it is the school's responsibility to ensure that such information is presented in an understandable format which can allow parents to make a meaningful contribution to their child's learning.

**Governors:** The Governing Body should have a deep understanding of emerging trends as data is presented by the Headteacher and other Leaders throughout the year. It is their job to challenge and scrutinise that data, and ensure that the school's priorities and foci are aligned, at least in part, to meet the needs identified through that process.

**Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust:** ACCT delivers moderation and book scrutiny activities throughout the year to ensure all schools within the Trust have the same high expectations and progress rates

**Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance:** DTSA collects summative performance data and provides each school with comparative analysis for benchmarking purposes and, through its designated SLE for assessment, bespoke analysis of deeper level data.

We do not carry out assessment for assessment's sake. All of our assessment activity is purposeful and informative; if it is not, it will be reviewed so that it is made fit for purpose or discarded so that teachers can focus on precise teaching.

We support the ethos of assessment without levels and are focused on mastering the primary curriculum through stimulating and interesting teaching sequences and curriculum themes, rather than focusing on a "race to the top" at the expense of quality and depth.

We work closely with our eight Partner Schools within our Co-operative Trust, and further afield within our Teaching School Alliance, to ensure outcomes are commensurate with national expectations and local realities. We do this by work scrutinies, moderation and subject leader network meetings which are held regularly throughout the year.



## 2. Arrangements for the Governance, management and evaluation of assessment

The Headteacher in our school acts as the Assessment Lead and has responsibility for maintaining the Assessment Policy and reviewing/updating it in consultation with the Leadership Team and Governors as required.

Team Leaders, particularly those leading Language and Mathematics, have a vital role in monitoring the implementation of the policy and feeding back issues or differences in application, through Leadership Team meetings.

Governors have a key role in evaluating the effectiveness of this policy, in partnership with the Leadership Team, so that information produced from the assessment of children at the school can inform the direction of the school in strategic terms, as well as the day to day running of classes and groups.

When looking at the effectiveness of the policy, school leaders will examine:

- Whether the processes of assessment are manageable by children, teachers and leaders
- Whether the product of assessment gives the school the information it requires in order to discharge its duties in an effective and timely manner
- Whether the school's processes for assessment are in line with best practice
- Whether the school's processes for, and outcomes from, assessment is compatible with other school's methods within the ACCT and, where relevant DTSA.

Whilst we recognise and celebrate that each school in our partnership may have different methods for assessment, it is vital for the ongoing success for the children in the Trust that the product of assessment is comparable across all schools. With this in mind, school leaders across the Trust will frequently discuss assessment processes and, where possible, modify arrangements to achieve this goal.

## 3. How will assessment outcomes be collected and used?

Assessment Type	Collected by Whom?	Used by whom? For what purpose?
Photographic evidence linked to objectives	By Foundation Stage practitioners	Foundation stage practitioners: Future planning, communication with support staff, deepening of child's understanding Leaders: Monitoring of subject coverage, depth of learning, progress of achievement Identification of objective achievement points for moderation purposes
Green-pen marking and highlighting	By class teacher	Class teacher: Future planning, communication with support staff, deepening of child's understanding Child: To draw attention to successes, areas for improvement, to answer questions posed by the class teacher in order to clarify or give opportunities for a better response
Purple-pen responses	By class teacher	Child and Class teacher: To elicit depth of understanding, emergence of proficiency
Teacher/child objective tick sheets	By class teacher	Child and Class teacher: To record summative judgements from teacher and child against lesson success criteria



Objective-level assessments on SPTO	By class teacher By Subject Leaders By Senior Leaders	Child and class teacher: Future planning and coverage Leaders: Monitoring of subject coverage, depth of learning, progress of achievement, Identification of links between objective-level achievement and work in books for moderation purposes Parents: To examine the progress of their child at school and understand where current learning fits into the journey
End of unit summative assessments/tests	By class teachers	Class Teacher: To test application of knowledge at child level, to prepare children for external assessments in Y2 and Y6
End of Term SPTO calculations	By School Leaders	School Leaders: To identify children who may not be making as much progress as their peers, to understand the academic dynamics of the school and to raise questions/challenges for teaching staff
Nationally standardised summative assessments	By School Leaders By ACCT By DTSA By Ofsted and LA	School Leaders: To set the future direction of the school, identify underperformance, identify good performance, to challenge key staff and hold them to account ACCT: To benchmark school performance across the Trust and to target resources accordingly DTSA: To benchmark school performance across the Alliance and to target resources OFSTED & LA: To inform judgements about the school and to set the direction of further evaluations/discussions about the school's performance

In-school assessment outcomes are constantly shared amongst school staff as part of our ongoing dialogue about the effectiveness of learning. In order to inform moderation activities, these outcomes may also be shared with our strategic partners.

Assessment outcomes held on School Pupil Tracker Online are shared with Governors and other agencies (such as LA Advisers) to check accuracy of teacher assessment and the level of challenge in lessons. It is the single holding place of national curriculum-linked objectives and there is no unnecessary duplication of this data across any other platform or media.

#### 4. Arrangements for ensuring teachers are able to conduct assessment competently and confidently

All class teachers will be trained in the school's "house style" in the use of School Pupil Tracker Online to hold data around assessment. They will also be given support by subject leaders in the



implementation of our marking and feedback expectations. We are an open school, and professionals are encouraged to discuss issues with any aspect of assessment with colleagues and line managers at the earliest possibility.

Team Leaders routinely monitor the application of marking and assessment in books, with particular reference to consistency of use across the school and the quality of use across the school.

Team Leaders also work closely with other subject leaders across the ACCT to discuss and evaluate assessment processes and outcomes to ensure the school is accurate in its judgements and expectations, and also to keep abreast of best practice. This typically happens at termly Subject Leader meetings and Scrutiny/Moderation activities planned across the year.

## 5. The School's approach to different forms of assessment

### a) Day to Day Formative Assessment

Day to day formative assessment is the single most crucial element in securing the ongoing educational success of the school. It is visible in school in the following ways:

- In Foundation Stage:
  - Foundation Stage Classes collect formative assessment data through 2simple software which assesses children against Early Learning Goals whilst journaling evidence through annotated photos, video and practitioner comments.
  - Foundation Stage Classes make consistent use of oral feedback to children in the form of open ended questions, elicitation and praise
- In Key Stage One:
  - Key Stage One children follow a transitional formative assessment programme. For example in early Year 1, oral feedback will look much like that in Foundation Stage but by the end of Year 2, children will be expected to give their own written feedback as described below for Key Stage Two.
  - Teacher Written Feedback throughout Key Stage One will follow the Marking and Feedback guidelines (Appendix 1) with increasingly precise language based on learning objectives as children develop across the Key Stage.
- In Key Stage Two:
  - Formative Assessment becomes increasingly more sophisticated across Key Stage Two. Children will be expected to contribute increasingly deep reflections of their own learning through purple pen comments and highlighting as described in Appendix 1. These contributions will be scaffolded by the class teacher through intelligent written questioning techniques.
  - Oral feedback between the teacher and child (and between children) is also vital for incidental learning across lessons and children will be expected to be able to comment on their learning using full sentences and appropriate vocabulary

Formative Assessment in Key Stages 1 and 2 are recorded using School Pupil Tracker Online Curriculum 14 Module. Staff keep achievement against the Objectives up to date at all times, marking each Objective appropriately:

T	This objective is set as a target for a child to work on within the current sequence
W	This is a planned objective within the current sequence for this child
M	This objective was mostly achieved by the child by the end of the sequence, but will require revisiting in order to secure understanding
A	This objective has been achieved independently by the child within the sequence
+	This objective has been achieved in Greater Depth by the child within the sequence

In addition, teachers will use the Upload (↑) feature to comment on which book and on which date the objective was achieved so that precise trails exist for moderation and work scrutiny activity. This trail can also be used if a child does not retain knowledge or skills and the teacher



needs to refer back to a time when they were last judged able to meet the objective's expectation.

Children with SEND who are not working within their chronological year group will be tracked within the cognitive year they are working in. Teachers may also use small steps progress for finer judgements in order to demonstrate progress across the term or year.

#### **b) In-School summative assessment**

At the end of Foundation Stage, all children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals which are used to base a judgement on each child's readiness for Key Stage 1. It is the policy of the school that we will continue to use this as our prime method of recording Foundation Stage achievement even after this process becomes non-statutory.

The school does not at the present time make routine use of summative subject based assessments, for example in end of year tests for Years 3, 4 and 5, but does use end of unit assessments which may be teacher-built using Testbase, or from proprietary test material. The school does make use of standardised reading tests in the Spring Term, which enables the school to obtain a reading age for each child and track progress across Key Stage 2. The school also regularly tests children on the acquisition of National Curriculum spelling list words and multiplication tables. The latter is recorded in School Pupil Tracker Online.

At the end of each term, the school uses School Pupil Tracker Online to calculate the approximate performance of each child against their year group objectives. The school also compares their acquisition of objectives with their (in school) peer group and from that identifies slow-moving children who may require additional focus or support. This takes place through Pupil Progress Meetings and identified children are placed on the Off-Track Child (OTC) process for close monitoring.

The school acknowledges the limitations of the SPTO calculation and is only a starting point for investigation: children who are identified as slow-moving, and those who are shown as experiencing greater depth, will have work triangulated from a variety of sources to drill down to explore issues around each child's learning.

#### **c) Nationally standardised summative assessment**

The school takes part in all required national assessment tasks currently available:

- Year 1 Phonics Check
- Year 2 Assessment Tests to inform teacher assessment in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science
- Year 6 Assessment Tests in Reading, Mathematics and Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling
- Teacher Assessments in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science

All guidance issued by the DfE and its Agencies are followed.

## **6. Implementation**

The School has implemented the strategy described above over a two year period (September 2014 – September 2016) and is now able to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures it has put in place. As part of this process of reflection and evaluation, the following stakeholders have been consulted and engaged in discussion:

- Children, through subject leader interviews and class teacher discussions
- Class Teachers and Support Staff, through staff meetings, team meetings, INSET Days and informal discussion
- School Governors, principally through the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee's scrutiny of assessment data and resulting modifications in practice
- Parents, through feedback at Drop Off Drop In meetings, through Feedback at Parent-Teacher interviews and from annual reports and Questionnaire



## Appendix 1: Feedback and Marking Guidelines

The school recognises that marking needs consistent application between practitioners in class and across classes, but that responses must be sensitive to the developmental needs of the children.

Marking and feedback should encourage children; therefore the teacher response is extremely important in providing this encouragement and in mapping next steps and ways forward for the child. It is vital that comments recognise what has been achieved in relation to what was asked of a child. In practice, this means that the main focus of most marking should be against the **Learning Objective** (LO) and/or the **What I Am Looking For** (WILF) success criteria, which will usually be taken from child-speak versions of the National Curriculum objectives as described on School Pupil Tracker Online. Comments may also reflect concerns or praise for spelling, handwriting, presentation and so on, but these comments should not obscure the key focus of the lesson.

Marking and feedback should help children avoid the repetition of mistakes so that they can continue on their learning journey successfully. It should not merely draw attention to errors and correct them on behalf of a child. Part of this process is to engage in a dialogue with the child – either orally or as a written series of questions and answers- so that marking and feedback is part of the learning process, not a summative judgement at the end of a unit of work. For this purpose we use the following tools:

**Purple Pens** are used by children to respond to teachers' feedback and questions they may raise, and for children to describe the processes, problems or other commentary on the work they have produced

**Highlighting** is used by the teacher (and sometimes by children in peer to peer work) to identify areas to develop (Growing GREEN), or excellence in applying the learning objective (Going for GOLD)

**I Wonder** moments are whole-class teacher-initiated but child-sustained discussions about a particular question or query that is suitable for debate by the class. Children are encouraged to deepen their understanding through this process, by beginning questions with "I wonder..." and responding with "I agree because...", "I agree but..." etc. This work is not formally marked but children may well use the product of their discussion in purple pen moments or in subsequent learning.

An important part of marking and feedback is to encourage children to peer- and self-assess work against strict criteria. This helps children understand and reflect on their own progress, even if they are examining someone else's work. However, this must not be the main method of marking and feedback and must only be used to supplement the teachers assessment of the learning process.

The school's house style is to use green pen for adult marking. By having a set colour, moderation, scrutiny and evaluation tasks by other adults is easier, and it is much simpler for the child to identify where a response is required by them.

### Codes and Symbols

Codes and symbols used by the school will be clearly displayed in every classroom and learning area of the school. The codes and symbols apply to all written work and are not exclusive to English or Maths.

	Incorrect spelling
	Missing word
	Punctuation error
	New Paragraph needed



✓	Correct answer
✗	Incorrect answer
C ✓	Correction
○	Circle Mistake

Teachers and Teaching Assistants may also annotate work to denote the following:

i	Independent work
gw	Guided Work
ps	Peer Supported
ta	Teaching Assistant Supported
vf	Verbal Feedback given (this should be used in conjunction with a brief comment to describe the nature/ focus of the feedback)

Self and Peer evaluation symbols (usually against lesson success criteria)

In Key Stage 1, the following codes will be used for children to evaluate learning:

☹	struggled with the LO/WILF
☺	OK with the LO/WILF
☺	happy with the LO/WILF

In Key Stage 2, the following codes will be used for children evaluate learning:

S	struggled
M	managed
Z	zoomed

Peer assessment at Key Stage 2 should also contain a comment from the marker and the marker's name.

### Feedback Conversations

Questions posed to the child as part of the written marking process should be open ended and there should be an expectation that children will respond to the original question and have the opportunity to ask the marker a further question if appropriate.

### **Oral Feedback**

Oral feedback is an extremely powerful form of feedback.

Responding to children in a whole class setting by giving right or wrong answers is a necessary aspect of teaching, and children need to know this. A feature of good or better teaching is a strong emphasis on probing questioning and children need to know this so that they can respond to probing questions to the best of their ability. Probing questioning is a key part of oral feedback.



One model of oral feedback used at Woolsery Primary School is whole-class or group marking of a piece of work. The teacher or teaching assistant takes the lead but invites children's contributions so that the piece is marked through a process of discussion, analysis and modelling. Children can progress to peer and self marking once this skill has been practised in such a setting.

Marking face-to-face with one child is also a valuable way of closing learning gaps. Teachers are encouraged to use part of their non contact time to work in this way, and also to use guided groups to give face to face feedback when appropriate.

Where teachers give oral feedback, this is annotated alongside the child's work with the code described above.

### **Written Feedback**

We believe that quality marking is the key to enabling children to understand their own achievements and to know what they need to do next to make progress.

Feedback sets the child's particular performance in the context of the tasks purpose and in the context of the child's previous efforts.

It provides positive feedback and promotes high expectations and progress linked to the main learning objectives, as described above.

The **improvement prompt** is vital to moving the child on in their learning. We use three types of improvement prompt:

**The Reminder Prompt** is a reiteration of the learning intention

**The Scaffolded Prompt** is used when the teacher decides what he or she would like the child to write, then gives an opportunity back to the children to practise.

**The Example Prompt** models a choice of possible improvements, but asks if the child has an idea of his or her own

Our marking will include:

- The provision of opportunities for prompt and regular written or spoken dialogue with children
- Constructive suggestions about ways in which the child might improve his/her work
- Agreed next steps for the child, linked to lesson success criteria
- Follow-up from the agreed targets with children to see how far they have achieved them
- Comments on specific, positive aspects of work
- Recognition of effort as well as quantity, linking effort to specific skills or understanding
- Highlighting in Green or Orange (as described above) to draw children's attention to particular blocks of work

Teachers will give children time to reflect and act on the feedback they are given. This will primarily be through the use of purple pens, which will be given high status in the classroom.

All teachers and teaching assistants will mark using the agreed marking codes. The agreed marking colour for the school is green, although the school recognises that prompt feedback is more important than a uniform colour and variations will occur from time to time.

Review of teacher's use of marking and feedback will occur during Pupil Progress Meetings, lesson observations, book scrutinies and through child interviews by team leaders and Governors.

VERSIONS:

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