

HOLLINS GRUNDY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Happiness, Health and Respect for Confident, Creative Learners

Assessment Policy

This policy has been written following the discontinuation of the national system of assessment through levels and aims to ensure that the ongoing assessment regime at Hollins Grundy directly evaluates pupils' knowledge and understanding of curriculum requirements and helps to create a cycle of teaching and assessment. *At the time of writing new practices are being implemented, trialled and refined on an ongoing basis...*

1. The principles and aims of assessment at Hollins Grundy

We aim to follow an approach to assessment which works for **all** pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities, some of whom may be following an alternative curriculum. The new national curriculum (2014) is founded on the principle that teachers should ensure pupils have a secure understanding of key ideas and concepts before moving onto the next phase of learning. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs. It leads to a much more focused approach where early intervention can be provided promptly to address any concerns about pupils' progress.

Teachers assess pupils' understanding of a topic and identify where children's learning has moved forwards and there are gaps on an ongoing basis. This tells the teacher what to focus on in future lessons and prompts the teacher to consider how his or her teaching approach can be adapted to improve pupils' understanding. This, in turn, informs the teacher's thinking about which assessments to use to evaluate whether the new approach has been effective. In this manner, good teaching and assessment continually reinforce each other and generate continuous improvement.

This approach will ensure that teachers become much better informed about pupils' understanding of concepts and ideas and can build a more accurate picture of their individual needs.

Additionally, a further very important function of our assessment regime is that it is able to accurately predict outcomes of national end of Key Stage assessments. All elements of the assessment regime should be giving consistent information.

There are three broad overarching forms of assessment, each with its own purposes:

1. Day-to-day in-school formative assessment, often referred to as assessment for learning (AfL) for example:

Questions and answers during lessons
Marking of pupils' work
Observational assessment
Regular short re-cap quizzes or tests

Scanning work for pupil attainment and development
Pre & post assessment tasks

2. In-school summative assessment, for example:

Short end of topic or unit tests

Reviews for pupils with SEN and disabilities

Termly phonic checks, termly GPS, continuity books in maths, arithmetic tests

3. Nationally standardised summative assessment, for example:

National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2

National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1

Year 1 & Year 2 phonic checks

Foundation Stage Profile assessment

2. Arrangements for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment

Who is responsible for ensuring the assessment policy is maintained and followed?

The Headteacher

Who is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of assessment practices in the school?

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher SENCO and subject leaders

What are the criteria by which effectiveness of the policy and practices will be judged?

1. Do class teachers have a secure knowledge of children's achievements, the gaps in their knowledge and skills and the next steps necessary in their learning?
2. Is the assessment regime appropriate for all children in school? (SEND, HA, EAL etc)
3. Does the information given by the school's assessment system agree with outcomes from national standardised assessments?

How will good practice and the principles of the school policy be shared?

Staff meetings

Appraisal meetings

Reflective inquiry

Governors meetings

Pupil Performance meetings

Peer work with other schools

When might moderation be necessary to help ensure consistency and accuracy of assessment judgements?

Termly moderation sessions between class teachers

Twice yearly moderation between teachers from Hollins Grundy and Unsworth PS

Annual SLT moderation of statutory assessments at end of EYFS & KS1 & KS2 writing

Annual statutory moderation of FSP judgements and end of KS1 judgements by LA representatives

Annual calibration of school assessment system with national data to enable accurate predictions to be made.

3. Information about how assessment outcomes will be collected and used

Day-to-day in-school formative assessment (AfL)

Which data will we collect and what is unnecessary to collect?

The bulk of AfL data will not be collected, but may be recorded by teachers for the purposes of improving and refining teaching and learning

How will we use the assessment information we have collected?

Improving and refining teaching and learning at whole school, class and individual child level

With whom should it be shared?

Other teachers
Teaching assistants
Parent

How should it best be communicated to ensure it achieves its purpose?

Verbally, between practitioners, with children, with parents
Written, as marking

What arrangements can we put in place to ensure it is only ever collected, shared and used appropriately, without causing unnecessary workload?

No specified collection of AfL in this policy

How can we guard against the potential distortion of assessment outcomes as a result of different uses?

Moderation triangulates judgements & all moderation involves scrutiny of evidence.

In-school summative assessment

Which data will we collect and what is unnecessary to collect?

Collected: Termly grammar tests
Termly phonic check
Termly spelling tests

How will we use the assessment information we have collected?

Improving and refining teaching and learning at whole school, class and individual child level

With whom should it be shared?

Other teachers
Teaching assistants
Parents

How should it best be communicated to ensure it achieves its purpose?

Verbally, between practitioners, with children, with parents
Written, as marking

What arrangements can we put in place to ensure it is only ever collected, shared and used appropriately, without causing unnecessary workload?

Limited collection of summative assessment data specified in this policy

How can we guard against the potential distortion of assessment outcomes as a result of different uses?

Moderation (both internal and external) ensures that judgements are accurate and have been made objectively.

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

How do we ensure good understanding of assessment and assessment practice amongst all teachers?

Regular staff meeting updates

Regular updates of guidance in "Steps Guidance" document

Who will be responsible for ensuring staff have access to professional development opportunities on assessment?

Headteacher

Deputy Headteacher (CPD Leader)

How will we as a school stay abreast of good practice and what mechanisms will we put in place for sharing it?

Sharing practice between partner schools

Peer Review between Headteachers

5. Detail about the approach to different forms of assessment

5.1 Day-to-day in-school formative assessment

What are the school's ideas regarding ability and how assessment supports learning? What is the evidence base?

What should be assessed formatively?

Teachers assess pupils' understanding of a topic and identify where children's learning has moved forwards and there are gaps on an ongoing basis. This tells the teacher what to focus on in future lessons and prompts the teacher to consider how his or her teaching approach can be adapted to improve pupils' understanding. This, in turn, informs the teacher's thinking about which

assessments to use to evaluate whether the new approach has been effective. In this manner, good teaching and assessment continually reinforce each other and generate continuous improvement.

What methods of formative assessment should we use?

- Questions and answers during lessons
- Marking of pupils' work
- Observational assessment
- Regular short re-cap quizzes or tests
- Scanning work for pupil attainment and development

What is the role of pupils in their assessment?

- Responding to marking
- Joining in with peer & self-assessment
- Being aware of targets/next steps & working towards these

How will our school ensure teachers can accurately assess the progress, attainment and wider outcomes of pupils with SEN and disabilities, including those with complex needs?

- P scales
- Specific assessments as part of interventions (Talk Boost, Jump Ahead, Memory Magic)
- Assessment of attitudes and life skills – learning to learn/attributes of learning

5.2 In-school summative assessment

How is assessment used to (a) inform parents of pupils' development and progress, (b) foster an effective home-school link, and (c) promote home learning?

- a) Inform parents of the year group curriculum expectations at new class meetings
 - Inform parents of progress and next steps at autumn & spring parents evenings
 - Inform parents of progress across the year in annual report
- b) YR parents involved in on-entry assessments and further FSP assessments
- c) Children and their parents are given Next Steps in learning so that they are aware of the next major milestone to be aimed for in their education.

How does the assessment provide useful information for improving future learning, rather than just for the sake of collecting data?

Identifying gaps & identifying future learning

What is our benchmarking scheme?

National Curriculum expectations are used as a basis for setting end of year expectations in each class

Development Matters performs the same function in YR

Moderation activities with Unsworth PS provide triangulation and benchmarking at a high level

Moderation of statutory assessments by the LA ensures rigour and an appropriate benchmark

School sets very clear expectations with regard to progress within a school year. One step per half-term or 5 steps per year.

What is our rationale for using specific external commercial tests or similar?

A variety of commercially available resources are used to inform assessment judgements (Read Write Inc phonic assessments, Literacy & Language grammar tests, Rising Stars arithmetic tests) these are used to inform a teachers judgement regarding children's achievements, not to replace them.

How do we standardise and validate the different assessments we use?

Moderation is validation

National guidance available at the time (draft at time of writing)

5.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

School staff will ensure that they comply with regulations regarding statutory summative assessment.

5.4 The language of assessment

With the implementation of the new national curriculum in September 2014 expectations for what children should achieve at the end of each school year are very clear.

Progress through the curriculum for each year group is described using the terms beginning (b), within (w) and secure (s). Each of these stages can be sub-divided to give a 6 point scale:

b b+ w w+ s s+

The expectation is that children will be secure (s) in the curriculum for their year group by the end of each school year. It is however acknowledged that some children will be working below the standard of the curriculum for their year group.

For more able children who may become secure well before the end of the year the aim is to deepen their knowledge within the framework of the curriculum for their year group rather than extend it into the curriculum of the year group above, a concept referred to as mastery.

The definition, identification and tracking of mastery and high achievement are being developed so that all stakeholders are clear about these concepts.

For children working well below the level of the national curriculum ...

P scales are currently in use but we await national guidance about their continued use or replacement.

5.5 Assessment data tracking and storage

Hollins Grundy assessment grids for each subject are used on an ongoing basis to track learning and to identify gaps in children's learning. These are kept in each class in the assessment folder and passed up to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Summative assessment data for each child in each subject is held on the Target Tracker assessment data management system. This allows for efficient data analysis which can inform school improvement planning and aid accountability to governors and other stakeholders. In addition data can be analysed to ensure that all children and groups are being taught successfully and that their progress is being maximised.

6. Implementation

Frequent training through staff meetings and more formal training from external providers keep teachers up to date with assessment practice at Hollins Grundy, at other local schools and nationally. Paired moderation sessions ensure consistent practice throughout school. Monitoring by subject and senior leaders ensures consistency of practice and high expectations.

To ensure parents are kept up to date with current practice detailed information is provided on the school website. In addition teachers pass on details at new class meetings with parents each year. Parent governors are used as a sounding board to ensure that this information is clear with the appropriate level of detail.

Given that this policy deals with recent change in a significant area of work for the school it is constantly being refined and improved through use and evaluation and monitoring.

Appendix 1

The primary purposes of day-to-day in-school formative assessment

For pupils:

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.

For parents:

When effectively communicated by teachers, in-school formative assessments provide parents with a broad picture of where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie and what they need to do to improve. This reinforces the partnership between parents and schools in supporting children's education.

For teachers:

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. In this way, it supports teachers to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary. It also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons accordingly.

For school leaders:

In-school formative assessment provides a level of assurance for school leaders. If school leaders are confident their staff are carrying out effective formative assessment, they can be assured that problems will be identified at the individual level and that every child will be appropriately supported to make progress and meet expectations.

For the Government:

The Commission believes that the Government should not intervene at the level of formative assessment, which should serve the needs of pupils and teachers.

For Ofsted:

Ofsted will want to be assured that teachers are making effective use of formative assessment to support teaching and learning. It forms part of Ofsted's wider judgements about the quality of teaching in schools.

The primary purposes of in-school summative assessment

For pupils:

In-school summative assessment provides pupils with information about 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 continue to improve.

For parents:

In-school summative assessments can be reported to parents to inform them about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their children across a period, often a term, half-year or year.

For teachers:

In-school summative assessment enables teachers to evaluate both pupil learning at the end of an instructional unit or period (based on pupil-level outcomes) and the impact of their own teaching (based on class-level outcomes). Both these purposes help teachers to plan for subsequent teaching and learning.

For school leaders:

In-school summative assessment enables school leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, to identify where interventions may be required and to work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and expected attainment.

For the Government:

The Government does not have a role in determining in-school summative assessment. It is for schools to decide which forms of in-school summative assessment best suit their needs and those of their pupils. In-school summative assessment is not designed to support comparisons between schools, except where schools may be operating within a common system (for example, an academy chain).

For Ofsted:

Ofsted will want to be assured that schools are operating effective systems of assessment for monitoring and supporting pupil performance.

The primary purposes of nationally standardised summative assessment

For pupils and parents:

Nationally standardised summative assessment provides information on how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally.

For parents:

Nationally standardised summative assessment also provides parents with information on how the school is performing in comparison to schools nationally. This enables parents to hold schools to account and can inform parents' choice of schools for their children.

For teachers:

Nationally standardised summative assessment helps teachers understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context.

For school leaders and school governors:

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables school leaders and school governors to benchmark their school's performance against other schools locally and nationally, and make judgements about the school's effectiveness.

For the Government:

Nationally standardised summative assessment allows the Government to hold providers of education (schools, local authorities, academy chains etc.) to account and to measure the impact of educational policy making.

For Ofsted:

Nationally standardised summative assessment provides a starting point for Ofsted's discussions with schools when making judgements about their performance, as part of Ofsted's wider judgements of a school's overall effectiveness.

Appendix 2

The principles of assessment

The primary principle of assessment is that it should be fit for the purpose intended. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and lies at the heart of promoting pupils' education. It should provide information which is clear, reliable and free from bias.

The guiding principles of the following two types of assessment can helpfully be expressed in the form of questions that school leaders and teachers might ask themselves when developing effective approaches to assessment, as set out below.

Principles of in-school formative assessment

1. What will this assessment tell me about pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic, concept or skill?

For example: whether knowledge and understanding is secure enough to move forward, or whether further consolidation work or a different approach is necessary.

For example: whether a pupil has been able to demonstrate application of a skill with increasing independence or confidence.

2. How will I communicate the information I gain from this assessment to pupils in a way that helps them to understand what they need to do to improve?

For example: whether this is better done orally (e.g. through targeted question and answer), in writing or through an alternative form of communication; and whether it is communicated to individuals, groups or the whole class.

3. How will I ensure pupils understand the purpose of this assessment and can apply it to their own learning?

For example: building in time before the assessment to ensure pupils are prepared for it in a way which clarifies its purpose and after the assessment to support pupils in identifying what they have learned from the assessment about where they need to target their efforts.

For example: where it may be a challenge for a pupil to understand the purpose of assessment, communicating the outcomes in ways that help the pupil understand their achievements.

4. How will I ensure my approaches to assessment are inclusive of all abilities?

For example: finding alternative ways to enable pupils to demonstrate their understanding through practical application that can be observed or discussion with the pupil and parents.

5. How will I use the information I gain from this assessment to inform my planning for future lessons? How could I improve, adapt or target my teaching as a result?

For example: identifying which pupils to target for additional support or which areas of the topic to recap.

6. What follow up action should I take to plug gaps in knowledge and understanding or to support progression where learning is secure?

For example: assessing whether pupils who have demonstrated secure understanding can apply the concept in an alternative context or exploring ways in which the concept can be taught differently for pupils who have demonstrated less secure understanding.

For example: providing opportunities for exploring a concept in greater depth before moving on to new work.

7. Is it necessary to record the information gained from this assessment? And if so, how can this be done most efficiently?

For example: do not assume that everything needs to be recorded. Identify which assessment outcomes are essential to record for the teacher pupil, parent or carer and keep it simple.

For example: do not assume that formative assessment must be recorded using the same scale or terminology as summative assessment.

Principles of in-school summative assessment

1. Who will use the information provided by this assessment?

For example: the teacher responsible for these pupils the following year.

For example: senior leaders for curriculum or institutional review.

For example: for reporting to parents.

2. Will it give them the information they need for their purposes?

For example: how secure a pupil was in their knowledge of the previous year's curriculum and how ready they are for progression.

For example: useful information on levels of independence, confidence and attitudes to learning of pupils with SEN and disabilities.

3. How will it be used to support broader progress, attainment and outcomes for the pupils?

For example: how the information provided by the assessment can support the following year's teacher in differentiating the support given to pupils in the class to achieve the positive outcomes.

4. How should the assessment outcomes be communicated to pupils to ensure they have the right impact and contribute to pupils' understanding of how they can make further progress in the future?

For example: as part of end of year progress meetings, so that attainment marks are supported by the broader context of the child's progress and understanding.

For example: using visual methods such as learning journals or videos with pupils with SEN and disabilities as part of their personal learning plan reviews.

5. How should the assessment outcomes be communicated to parents to ensure they understand what the outcomes tell them about their child's attainment, progress and improvement needs?

For example: how might you communicate to parents that a child who got 12/40 on the test has actually done quite well, all things considered?

For example: how might you communicate to parents the importance of their child with complex needs building on and applying previously learned knowledge and skills?

6. How should the assessment outcomes be recorded to allow the school to monitor and demonstrate progress, attainment and wider outcomes?

For example: how it can be used to provide evidence for Ofsted of how pupil progress informs teaching, or how it informs school improvement, e.g. curriculum development.