



Robert Miles Junior School

Assessment Policy

At Robert Miles Junior School, we are committed to providing the best possible opportunities and the highest levels of support for all children to enable them to fulfil their potential. Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning. Our assessment approaches are designed to reflect our curriculum, sitting alongside and guiding it when necessary, and to impact continuously upon the learning of our children. Through thoughtful and thorough assessment in a range of forms, we aim to ensure that our children make excellent progress in their learning, whilst taking into account the needs of each pupil as an individual.

We have developed an assessment system based around the aims of the 2014 National Curriculum and the specific curriculum and needs of our school, placing particular focus on developing secure and deep learning. Assessment takes into account children's strengths alongside areas where they need more support. We work hard to develop a growth mindset culture in which we try very hard to ensure that children are not labelled, understand their successes and challenges, and strive to achieve their very best. Formative assessment is at the heart of our approach with the belief that highly effective focus in this area will lead to greater achievement in summative judgements.

Aims

- To enable our children to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work.
- To allow our teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each child.
- To focus on the specific, individual needs of our children to ensure that are able to progress through our curriculum.
- To engage children in the learning process; helping them to understand their strengths, know what they can do to improve their work and to support them in becoming independent, lifelong learners.
- To provide regular and valuable information to parents/carers that helps them to support their child's learning.
- To fulfil statutory requirements.

Approaches to Assessment

Our focus for assessment is on the very specific needs of individual children rather than groups and arbitrary numbers and labels. Through the wide range of methods used, we aim to ensure that each child is able to fulfil their potential and that no one 'slips through the net.' By carrying out more of the most useful assessment, but perhaps sometimes formally recording it less, we aim to highlight successes, quickly identify and address possible gaps,

target teaching and support appropriately and ensure that children have access to an education that truly meets their needs and enables them to succeed. All information collected is based around analysis and future action.

Staff have worked together to identify the key objectives from the 2014 National Curriculum for reading, writing and maths for each year group. This process focussed around identifying the specific skills that we believe are essential for the children to acquire in order to successfully access the next stages of learning in our curriculum. These objectives provide the basis for many of our summative assessments, whilst also being an essential focus for ongoing formative assessment. Staff also think carefully about the small building blocks that need to be in place to secure these objectives, especially for children who are finding aspects more challenging.

The Three Aspects of Assessment

- In-school formative assessment – used to evaluate pupils’ knowledge and understanding on a day to day basis and to tailor accordingly.
- In-school summative assessment – enables us to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of an assessment period.
- Nationally standardised summative assessment – used by government to hold schools to account.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is central to teaching and learning, enabling the teacher to gain a thorough understanding of each child’s needs on a daily basis and respond appropriately. It focusses around the successes and areas of difficulty for each individual child against both the curriculum and their specific prior achievement. Through this process, both within and when preparing new lessons, we aim to ensure that key skills are secure, difficulties are identified and addressed quickly, and that challenge is provided appropriately for all children. By focussing closely on formative assessment, we aim to secure evident progress in summative assessments.

Teachers use a wide range of formative assessment strategies to gain understanding of children’s knowledge and understanding. These may include observations, questioning, discussions and reflecting upon information in books. Various low-stake assessments in the form of quizzes, mini-tests, hot and cold tasks, visualiser breaks, exit tickets etc. are also used regularly to inform teachers of next steps needed, either within a lesson or in the future.

Feedback, both written and verbal, is a key element of formative assessment, providing rich evidence for the teacher and helping children become aware of their achievements and targets. By involving children through formative assessment, we aim to engage children fully

in the learning process, helping them to become increasingly independent as learners. (See Feedback and Marking Policy).

Information gained from formative assessment is often not written down as teachers use their skills and experience to act appropriately upon what they have identified. However, it can be useful to record some elements of formative assessment and this is kept within an assessment folder in each class. This may include, for example, details of weekly/end of unit tests, notes linked to issues and strengths during lessons, intervention details etc. The content of these folders may differ between staff members, with the focus being on useful and workable information for the teacher about the individual children in their class. At all times, whether recorded or not, the focus is on the actions carried out and its impact.

In School Summative Assessment

Our use of summative assessment allows us to evaluate pupils' learning and progress as well as the impact of teaching at the end of set periods of time.

Key Objectives have been selected through the Trust Assessment Group for writing and for maths for each year group and are available on our tracking software, Insight.

Teachers assess against the key objectives for their particular year group in writing and maths termly. They create bespoke assessments for maths, combining questions from a range of sources, in order to produce tests and tasks which focus on the key objectives covered in that particular term. Externally produced assessment material that becomes available is regularly reviewed to see if they may complement these.

Using *Insight*, teachers are able to use results of these assessments, backed up with their own judgements from formative assessment if appropriate, to decide which stage of learning children are at in relation to a specific key objective for their year group.

Descriptors used are:

- Below
- Just Below
- On Track
- Greater Depth

Through these descriptors, we aim to assess depth of learning and progress against each objective, alongside the development of competency.

Analysis of these results is used to help inform future planning for the whole class, groups and individuals.

Our termly assessment system is based on developing an understanding of children's progress against objectives taught, not against all of the year group's objectives. Therefore,

we would not be able to consider a child 'on track' to meet age related expectations, or otherwise, based on their achievement at a particular point. Only at the end of the year will we be able to identify what percentage of the curriculum they are secure in and identify further, specific steps for individual children to focus on and what support is necessary in the next academic year.

Teachers are trusted to use their experience and professional knowledge when making judgements. They are supported to see information collected as a point for reflection and analysis. Moderation within year groups and across the whole school takes place to help teachers to continually enhance their skills, discuss their thinking and ensure consistency. This is particularly important as we get used to the expectations of the new curriculum. Each year group is currently developing a file where examples of work from a range of children will be collated. These will then be used as a resource to help teachers make judgements when assessing.

In addition to these approaches, the following commercially published assessments are used within the school:

- Single Word Spelling Test
- NFER Progress Tests in Maths and English
- NFER Non Verbal Reasoning (Year 3 on entry)

The spelling tests are carried out three times a year. Results are tracked using *Insight* to identify patterns, examine the performance of key groups and identify children who may require further investigation/support.

The NFER Assessments are carried out annually in May. Standardised scores and an analysis of children's strengths and areas for development are provided when the results are returned. The feedback from these is used, along with all other assessment information, as a discussion point during transfer discussions between class teachers in order to provide appropriate support for the following year. The standardised scores are tracked using *Insight* to identify patterns and highlight children whose learning and progress needs to be examined further.

We ensure that we consider standardised scores and reading/spelling ages as providing indications of progress and starting points for analysis, not judgements in isolation.

Pupil progress meetings are used as non-judgemental discussions relating to improving the outcomes for children and to enable both teaching staff and senior leaders to share information, concerns and ideas. They are carried out at key assessment points during the year and focus on the successes, gaps and barriers relating to individual children. This may stem from the analysis of data or from the teacher's formative assessment. Meetings will particularly focus on the specific areas of development for children who have not yet met key objectives covered that year, where spelling and reading ages are moving slowly or not

at all, or are presenting with other causes for concern. Discussions with teachers focus on analysing possible reasons for this and identifying approaches and specific support to be put in place to ensure that the children identified can make progress.

Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment

Children in Year 6 are assessed through the National Curriculum Assessments (SATS). The results of these are reported annually to parents. Results are analysed annually in order to identify strengths / areas for development within the school in order to improve learning.

Tracking Progress Over Time

We do not have a prescribed rate of progress or a numerical measure of progress at any given point in the term. Progress will largely be demonstrated through work in books, observations, talking to children and summative tests which focus on specific understanding in relation to the key objectives. Our curriculum is based on developing secure, deep learning and not racing through a list of objectives. The focus is always on the strengths and areas for development for each child in relation to our curriculum. We firmly believe that progress is an individual process for each child; it is not linear and may be about consolidation or developing deeper understanding.

Our tracking system, *Insight*, is used to identify and analyse patterns, as well as highlighting specific gaps in children's learning.

Moderation

The school understands that moderation is necessary to help ensure consistency and accuracy of assessment judgements. The school will moderate assessment in the following ways:

- In year moderation of books and summative assessments by teachers.
- Whole school teacher moderation.
- Moderation of books and summative assessments by senior leaders.
- Working with other schools in the Trust to moderate work in books and summative assessments.
- The use of commercially bought tests to moderate teacher assessments.
- The use of national tests to inform end of key stage judgements.
- Moderation of the implementation of national tests and writing assessments by the local authority.

Parents/Carers

We believe that positive links with parents/carers are essential in order to achieve the best outcomes for our children. Two parent/carer consultations a year will focus on celebrating children's current achievements and discussing next steps for their development, including

practical advice on how parents can help with this. A written report in June will be provided which focusses upon children's achievements in relation to year group expectations, key strengths, areas for developments and their approaches towards learning. Parents/carers are encouraged to provide their own feedback to the school.

Where we have particular cause for concern with a pupil's progress, and that pupil is not on the SEND register, we will consider offering parents/carers an *Achievement for All* style structured conversation three times a year. This will include a detailed picture of the pupil's attainment being shared with parents/carers, with targets based on the assessments we have made.

Inclusion

Robert Miles Juniors is an inclusive school and we work hard to meet the needs of all of our children. The principles of our approach to assessment are the same for all children, focussing on key strengths, areas of development and high expectations. Through ongoing formative and summative assessment, we are able identify children who are not making the expected progress. We follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to ensure that all children are monitored closely and make progress.

The use of provision mapping enables teachers to set specific targets for children which are then evaluated after a set period of time. Methods for collecting this information may include: pre/post tests, reading/spellings ages, observations, work analysis etc.

A small number of children may be following an individualised curriculum due to their specific needs. Assessment of this may be against P-levels or through the small steps of bsquared. Evidence for these may be collected in a wide range of ways, such as observations, discussions, work analysis, photographs, ICT, in order to gain a true reflection of an individual child's particular strengths and areas for development.

Review meetings are held with parents/carers and external agencies (if appropriate) for children on the SEND register termly. Children's and parents'/carers' views are discussed, as are strengths and areas for development identified from ongoing assessment.

We also maintain a list of 'Class Concern' children who we monitor closely following any issues identified by staff or parents.

Arrangement for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment.

The senior leader responsible for assessment will ensure that the policy is followed through regular reviews of classroom practice, through lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutiny, data collection and pupil progress meetings. The effectiveness of assessment practices within the school will be monitored by senior leaders and outcomes will be reported to the governing body through the head teacher's report.

The criteria for the effectiveness of the policy:

- Does the policy provide clear guidance for how to assess pupils at Robert Miles Junior School?
- Are teachers following the policy?
- Is assessment information used to improve learning outcomes for all children?
- Can leaders understand, interpret and use the data to drive school improvement?

Good Practice

We believe this policy reflects the guidance and principles as outlined in the DfE Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels as exemplified by the following from page 34:

Good practice

The Commission has seen good practice in a primary school that is developing an assessment system that uses short tests in key subjects. For example, comprehension questions in literacy, spellings and times tables tests and end-of-unit tests in maths. The marks, which will be used in place of levels, will be recorded by teachers in mark books (or spreadsheets); but not entered on a central data management system. The results of these tests will be used diagnostically as a starting point for discussions with parents, as well as in discussions with the leadership team to identify pupils who may need further support.

For pupils who may need further intervention, teachers will also complete an assessment form for review meetings to consider what additional support or intervention might be appropriate. Intervention will be woven into the system to ensure those who are falling behind receive targeted support in reading and number. It may include, for example, short daily one-to-one 'keep up' sessions. Alongside this, the school uses commercially produced standardised end-of-year tests in reading and mathematics, the marks for which are recorded centrally by the school.

Appendix A: Feedback at Robert Miles Junior School

Feedback in our school takes place in many forms and much of it is not written down. The feedback may be from the teacher to the child or the child to the teacher. Teacher judgement is used to decide when feedback should be used and what form it should take.

Type of Feedback	Possible Examples	Evidence (for observers)
<p>Within lessons</p> <p>Enables the teacher to impact quickly at the point of teaching.</p>	<p>Mainly provided verbally.</p> <p>Questioning – may be targeted to individual children, groups or whole class. This may be based on previous assessments.</p> <p>Observation of responses on whiteboards, number cards etc.</p> <p>Further questioning as a response to establish understanding, support or extend.</p> <p>Teacher observing and responding to children’s non-verbal signals.</p> <p>Use of visualiser to look at children’s successes/areas for improvement.</p> <p>Adjusting work during the lesson in accordance to children’s responses – this could be whole class, group or individual.</p> <p>Discussion with children as they work.</p> <p>Guidance/modelling may be noted in children’s books if appropriate.</p> <p>Establishing a group that may need extra input on a common theme.</p> <p>Stopping the class at an appropriate point to tackle a common issue.</p> <p>Mini-quizzes to recap and assess knowledge from previous learning.</p>	<p>Lesson observations</p> <p>Learning walks</p> <p>Discussion with children</p> <p>Possible annotations in children’s books</p> <p>Corrections / amendments in children’s work</p> <p>Improvement in children’s work during the same piece</p>
<p>Lesson endings</p> <p>Enables the teacher to immediately evaluate the learning, identify successes or difficulties and, if possible, address quickly.</p>	<p>Questioning to establish security of learning or challenge once work has been completed.</p> <p>Children self-assessing their work. This could be in the form of traffic lighting, written comments, against a success criteria or through discussion.</p> <p>Exit tickets.</p> <p>Quick Identification of a child/group to address issues/challenge further immediately or later that day</p> <p>Immediate reflection on how to take learning forward during the next session</p> <p>Discussion with teaching assistant over their observations and assessments</p>	<p>Lesson observations</p> <p>Learning walks</p> <p>Work analysis</p> <p>Discussion with children</p> <p>Children’s self-assessments</p> <p>Possible annotations/notes by teachers</p> <p>Some evidence of self and peer assessment in books</p> <p>Evidence in books of immediate intervention</p>
<p>Marking/review</p> <p>Enables the teacher to reflect on the security of learning and identify the next steps future lessons. Provides opportunities for children to</p>	<p>Acknowledgement and celebration of achievements.</p> <p>Use of marking code for basic improvements.</p> <p>May involved written comments to support or challenge.</p> <p>Identification of focus for the next lesson, making adaptations to original plans if necessary.</p> <p>Identification of target children/groups for future lessons/quick intervention.</p> <p>May link to setting of or assessing against individual targets.</p>	<p>Work analysis</p> <p>Acknowledgement comments at end of work</p> <p>Use of marking code in English Support/challenges provided if appropriate</p> <p>Children responding to feedback</p> <p>Follow up work with groups/individuals to address a misconception</p> <p>Evidence of how the next lesson builds on from the previous eg. consolidation, different approach needed, challenge.</p> <p>Notes/adaptations may be evident in planning or assessment folder.</p>