

New Assessment model for Schools – ‘Assessment without levels’

Following the introduction of a new National Curriculum framework from September 2014, the government has removed level descriptors for assessing pupils’ attainment. Schools have been given the freedom to develop their own approaches to assessment to align with their curriculum, and to meet the needs of their pupils.

National Curriculum: Tim Oates on assessment

Tim Oates from Cambridge Assessment talks about the purpose of changes to assessment in the new curriculum and rationale behind moving away from levels.

Tim oates video link here

With national curriculum levels removed and the expectation that all pupils will reach age related expectations we have chosen to adopt the Hampshire model of assessment when assessing pupils progress and attainment, outlined below.

Our new assessment system

The old and new curriculum have different content. Many of the objectives in the old curriculum have shifted to lower year groups in the new, more rigorous curriculum, which means that it is not possible to have an exact correlation between a level that was the outcome of the old National Curriculum assessment and the requirements of the new National Curriculum. This had led to a shift in thinking and the way we assess our children’s progress and achievements.

The changes in the National Curriculum and need for new assessment system have given us the opportunity to evaluate our assessment of children’s learning. We are very clear that whatever assessment tool we use, it needs to be robust and track pupils’ progress across the school.

The principles that underpin assessment at Harrison are:

- optimising success for all
- children taking responsibility for their learning
- children understanding of what they are being asked to learn and more importantly why
- motivation leads to success for all
- planning linked to analysis of children’s learning needs and excellent teacher subject knowledge

- assessment must be used diagnostically to contribute to the accurate and early identification of children's special educational needs
- children's requirements for support and intervention will be identified at the earliest opportunity
- assessment information will inform productive and informative conversations with children and parents.

We have high expectations for all our children and expect all children to achieve at least age related expectations.

In order to be 'secondary ready' children need to meet the required end of Key Stage 2 expectations; this is broken down into key outcomes for each curriculum year. We use the National Curriculum objectives to assess outcomes for children at the end of each curriculum year – for example, a child that has achieved all the objectives set out for Year 3 for English (and no further) would be said to be working at the end of Year 3 expectation for English.

The new national curriculum is founded on the principle that teachers should ensure children have a secure understanding of key ideas and concepts before moving onto the next phase of learning. This leads to a much more focused approach where early intervention can be provided to address any concerns about children's progress.

The new curriculum is premised on 'Mastery learning' where learning is broken down into discrete units and presented in a logical order. Children are required to demonstrate mastery of the learning from each unit before being allowed to move on, with the assumption that all children will achieve this level of mastery if they are appropriately supported. Assessment is therefore built into this process.

We have three main forms of assessment:

In-school formative assessment – used by teachers to evaluate childrens' knowledge and understanding of a topic, concept or skill on a day-to-day basis and to adapt teaching accordingly. Teachers will analyse whether children's learning is secure enough to move forward or whether further consolidation or a different approach is necessary. Teachers will ensure all children understand the purpose of assessment and will use approaches that are appropriate to the age, confidence and, if appropriate in consideration of the special educational need, of the children.

This could include:

- Question and answer during lessons
- Marking
- Feedback (orally, questioning, in writing) – individual/group/whole class
- Self and peer assessment by pupils
- Observational assessment
- Rich, probing teacher questioning
- Recap quizzes
- Scanning children's work for attainment and development
- Opportunities to apply and explore the concept further

In-school summative assessment – enables schools to evaluate how much a child has learned at the end of a teaching period. This information will be used to monitor and support children’s progress, attainment and wider outcomes. It may also be used to inform further planning and targeted differentiation and where this is shared with children, teachers must ensure that children understand how to make further progress. This assessment will be used to inform colleagues, senior leaders and parents and will inform school action planning.

This could include:

- End of year teacher assessment
- End of topic or units tests
- Pupil progress reviews
- Standardised reading and spelling tests
- Diagnostic tests for targeted children (as required)

and **Nationally standardised summative assessment** - used nationally to and measure all schools’ achievements. This summative assessment provides information on how children are performing in comparison to children nationally:

- National curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2
- National curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1

We will make sure that parents understand the purpose and format of assessment processes to be used.

The cycle of teaching and assessment:

All assessment of children’s learning must be clearly related to its intended purpose. Teachers are experts at assessment - assessment will be effectively used to ensure the correct scaffolding is included in lessons to ensure all children achieve. Ensuring assessment directly evaluates pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the curriculum requirements helps to create a virtuous circle of teaching and assessment. Teachers assess pupils’ understanding of a topic and identify where there are gaps, which informs the focus on future lessons and prompts the teacher to consider how his teaching must be adapted to improve pupils’ understanding.

The process of assessment:

In each Year group we teach the national curriculum for that year. We expect the majority of the children to have to be **secure** in the age related expectations at the end of the academic year. These will be identified against the NAHT Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are key elements within the new national primary curriculum programme of study that, if mastered, will demonstrate a child’s grasp of aspects of the subject.

At phased assessment points during the year (November, February and June) we assess the children against national curriculum objectives. At these points children are identified as ‘Close to, Secure and Beyond’ expectations. There may be a small minority of children, perhaps those with English as an

additional language or those with Special Educational Needs who may not yet have reached national expectations, although we aim for all children to 'keep up, not catch up.'

Once Secure, likely to be Spring (most able) or Summer, children's understanding is deepened through a range of opportunities in order for them to be considered to be at a 'Mastery' stage. Opportunities will be planned for children to apply their learning and deepen their understanding; this will include investigative and project based work as well as opportunities to apply new skills across the curriculum.

To assess 'Mastery' children's learning will be examined over a period of time – not just a week or for the length of time a project or theme lasts.

All class teachers have a responsibility to ensure that both informal and formal assessment are used to inform their planning. Each term Pupil Progress meetings are held with the Senior Leadership team in order to identify groups of children making sufficient progress against assessment national benchmarks. At this time class teachers identify trends within their classes and the actions they have taken to accelerate progress to ensure all children are on track to securely meet end of year expectations.

The Phase and Year leaders are accountable to the Senior Leadership for the ongoing assessment and planning within their year teams. Moderation across year teams occurs regularly within plan-assess-review cycle of teaching and learning. The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the assessment policy is followed and this will be done alongside a regular review of classroom practice. Monitoring procedures are the responsibility of the Governors, senior leadership team and subject leaders.

Progress tracking:

Early Years pupils are tracked using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Years 1-6 English and mathematics: - at the Phased Assessment points formative assessment data is recorded electronically on school pupil tracker using the Hampshire Assessment Model. Children are deemed to be 'Secure' when they have achieved the assessment objectives expected at that phase. Children can also be described as 'Beyond' or 'Close to' according to their performance and a small minority who have not yet met the expectations will be recorded as 'No', meaning has not yet met the expectations. Performance data will then be collated to show the number of children within each year group who are secure, beyond, close to or not at age related expectations at the end of each term. We are expecting the majority (85%) of each year group to be on track to meet the end of year expectations.

In order for children to be 'Secure' they must be able to demonstrate that they can practice and apply a certain skill or demonstrate their understanding. Children's books will provide evidence that they have met the age related expectations.

Foundation Subjects - children are assessed against the skills and knowledge of the National Curriculum, using the Pioneer Teaching School Alliance Foundation Subject tracking document.

Reporting to parents is a vital part of the communication between parents, children and teachers. Termly pupil progress meetings during the school day are held in order to provide opportunities for children and their parents to discuss their progress with class teachers, the SENCo and the senior leadership team. Discussion from these meetings is recorded in a termly report to parents, in addition to the end of year annual report to parents. Additional meetings will occur as required for vulnerable children and those who are in danger of not making expected progress.

Reporting to Governors happens each term through the Head teacher's report to Governors.