



## **Assessment Policy**

Yew Tree Farm School  
Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway  
Swanton Street  
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ME9 8AT

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Reviewed by - Executive Board

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## Assessment Policy

### Underpinning Principles for assessment

1. Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning.
  - a. Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning.
  - b. Assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate and review their progress.
  
2. Assessment is fair.
  - a. Assessment is inclusive of all abilities.
  - b. Assessment is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.
  
3. Assessment is honest.
  - a. Assessment outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects.
  - b. Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning.
  - c. Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy.
  
4. Assessment is ambitious.
  - a. Assessment places achievement in context against expected standards.
  - b. Assessment embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child.
  - c. Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners.
  
5. Assessment is appropriate.
  - a. The purpose of any assessment process should be clearly stated.
  - b. Conclusions regarding pupil achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (to age, to the task and to the desired feedback information).
  - c. Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement.
  - d. Assessment should demand no more procedures or records than are practically required to allow pupils, their parents and teachers to plan future learning.
  
6. Assessment is consistent.
  - a. Judgements are formed according to common principles.
  - b. The results are readily understandable by third parties.
  - c. A school's results are capable of comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally.
  
7. Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:
  - a. pupils in developing their learning;
  - b. parents in supporting children with their learning;
  - c. teachers in planning, teaching and learning. Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent;
  - d. appropriate agencies and local authorities;
  - e. school leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
  - f. government and agents of government.
  
8. Assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

### **Our philosophy of assessment**

- Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning. It helps us to ensure that our teaching is appropriate and that learners are making expected progress.
- All staff are regularly trained in our approach to assessment.
- We have a senior leader who is responsible for assessment, currently the headteacher.
- Assessment serves many purposes, but the main purpose of assessment in our school is to help teachers, parents and pupils plan their next steps in learning.
- We also use the outcomes of assessment to check and support our teaching standards and help us improve.
- Through working with other schools and using external tests and assessments, we compare our performance with that of other schools.

### **Our assessment system**

At Yew Tree Farm School we use B squared's 'Steps4Life' to record formative and summative assessment data.

"It is a holistic and practical assessment framework for learners to help them to prepare for adulthood. The framework covers academic skills, independence/life skills and employability skills." - B squared

This enables us to

- assess pupils against academic frameworks alongside life skills that will help them be better learners on the farm and better prepared for moving on to a different educational setting.
- record all progress, even small scale, that our students make, through the use of various assessment levels.
- interpret individual progress, class progress and whole school progress easily and using a variety of different variables.
- compare students to ARE in different subjects, including life skills.
- clearly see student next steps and knowledge gaps, allowing for effective assessment for learning.
- assess pupils against assessment criteria, which are short, discrete, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what a pupil is expected to know and be able to do.
- record assessment judgements using observations, records of work and testing.

Assessment judgements are moderated by colleagues in school to make sure our assessments are fair, reliable and valid.

Our admission procedures include an assessment period involving literacy, numeracy, reading and speech and language assessment. This allows us to formulate a baseline level for each student and begin the process of developing a bespoke curriculum for each student.

### **Our Approach to different forms of assessment**

#### 1. Day to day in school formative assessment

Formative assessment takes place during learning and:

- assesses knowledge, skills and understanding
- identifies children's strengths
- highlights gaps in learning
- tackles children's misconceptions
- identifies the next steps in learning
- diagnoses need for support or intervention

- informs teacher planning and reporting.

Types of formative assessment include:

- rich question and answer sessions during lessons
- marking of pupils' work
- observational assessment
- regular short re-cap quizzes
- scanning work, from across the curriculum, for pupil attainment and development
- adult and peer feedback and responses
- child self-assessment, reflection on learning

## 2. In school summative assessment

In-school summative assessment sums up what a child has achieved over a period of time, relative to learning aims. The outcomes of in-school summative assessments support teachers in making rounded professional judgements on the attainment of a child at a particular time in specific subjects/subject areas.

In-school, summative assessments inform teachers and senior leaders on attainment and progress within specific groups, classes, year groups and across school.

Summative assessments are carried out at the end of each term and provide ratification of formative assessment. They take the form of written tests, observations, assessment tasks or photographs.

As national curriculum levels have been phased out, our approach is to map children's progress against age-related/stage appropriate expectations via the Steps4Life criteria on B squared. We use some summative assessments as diagnostic tools and to help inform our on-going teacher assessments.

These include:

White Rose Maths assessments- termly

Codebreakers Phonics assessments- weekly and then termly

Autism Tracker - termly

B squared Steps4Life - termly

Extended writing - termly

## 3. Nationally standardised summative assessment

The focus for our pupils at Yew Tree Farm School is to develop their wellbeing and self-esteem alongside learning. They often start at school below ARE due to gaps in education provision due to their needs. We feel that it is of no benefit for our children to undertake Nationally standardised summative assessments as they are individually assessed against the year band 'stage' they are working towards/within. We have very high expectations for teaching and learning and teachers are knowledgeable with regards to the standard for ARE for the age of the children they teach.

### **Our use of assessment**

- Teachers are kept up to date with developments in assessment practice through school staff meetings. Professional development opportunities are provided and accessed as necessary.
- Teachers use the outcomes of our assessments to summarise and analyse attainment and progress for their pupils and classes.

- Teachers use this data to plan the learning for every pupil to ensure they make progress. Teachers and leaders analyse the data across the school to identify children that may need specific intervention to help them make progress.
- The information from assessment is communicated to parents and pupils. Parents and pupils receive information on what has been achieved and guidance on what they need to do next.
- We celebrate all achievements across a broad and balanced curriculum, including farming, art and performance, behaviour, and social and emotional development.

### **Arrangements for the Governance, management and evaluation of assessment**

The Assessment Leader is responsible for ensuring that this policy is maintained and followed. In this school, the Assessment Leader is the headteacher.

Monitoring of the effectiveness of assessment practices will be carried out by senior leaders and will include, for example, pupil performance meetings, data analysis, tracking data and work scrutiny.

Regular moderation will be undertaken to ensure consistency and accuracy of assessment judgements.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Governance/Proprietors

- Monitor whole school data.
- Monitor assessment practices in school.

Senior Leadership Team

- Moderate teacher assessments and tests.
- Analyse data for school improvement and reporting.
- Lead and monitor whole school assessment practices.
- Provide training for teachers to ensure a good understanding of assessment and assessment practice.

Teachers

- Regularly use ongoing formative assessment.
- Make summative judgements at defined points in time.
- Provide feedback to pupils and set realistic targets for individual pupils.
- Provide assessment information to the senior leadership team, parents and pupils.
- Moderate alongside colleagues

Teaching Assistants

- Provide feedback to teachers on pupil progress and attainment.

Parents and carers

- Attend meetings with teachers to discuss their children's attainment and progress.

Pupils

- Take ownership of their learning, working hard to achieve their targets.
- Allow others to learn in a safe and settled environment.
- Meet Yew Tree Farm School's Learning Expectations.

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the school's policy review cycle.