

# ALBURGH WITH DENTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ASSESSMENT POLICY



Adopted by the Governing Body: March 2018

Due for review: March 2021

### Introduction

From September 2014, the Government introduced a new National Curriculum. Staff at Alburgh with Denton have reviewed and adapted the curriculum and assessment process in light of these changes.

The main changes to assessment include:

- The removal of National Curriculum levels
- Schools now have the freedom to develop their own methods of demonstrating academic progress

*'As part of our reforms to the National Curriculum, the current system of 'levels' used to report children's attainment and progress will be removed. It will not be replaced. We believe this system is complicated and difficult to understand, especially for parents. It also encourages teachers to focus on a pupil's current level, rather than consider more broadly what the pupil can actually do.'*

(Department for Education Website)

### The Purpose of Assessment

Statutory Assessment:

- To hold schools to account for the work they do with their pupils, determined by the DfE
- To measure both attainment and progress to demonstrate schools' effectiveness

Formative Classroom Assessment:

- To inform teaching and learning
- Used diagnostically to evaluate knowledge and understanding, identify gaps and misconceptions and inform lesson planning accordingly
- Determined by schools, in line with curriculum freedoms

### Our Approach to 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 at least expected progress
- Our approach to assessment is discussed regularly at staff meetings and pupil progress meetings
- As a small school, we are very conscious of the importance of focussing on individual children. The size and abilities of cohorts can have a large impact on percentage data, so our analysis is always carried out at an individual pupil level

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### **Our Use of Assessment**

- Formative assessment is carried out on a daily basis as an integral part of teaching and learning
- Teachers use individual assessment data to identify gaps in children's learning and also to set curricular targets
- Teachers use this data to plan the learning for every child to ensure that they meet or exceed expectations
- Teachers and senior leaders meet half termly to analyse the progress of each individual child and to agree appropriate support or challenge as necessary
- Assessment information is communicated termly to parents through parents consultations and a written 'Parents' Evening Feedback Sheet', as well as a child's Annual Record of Achievement

### **Our Method of Assessment**

#### **1. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

All assessment in the Reception class is based on observations, interactions and knowledge of each child through everyday activities. This starts as soon as the child enters school, with the baseline assessment. The school uses Early Excellence to complete the Baseline.

The baseline assessment must be completed within the first 6 weeks of a child joining their class. In order to ensure that children are assessed at the optimum time within these 6 weeks, we adopt a simple 'screening' process using the Leuven Scales of Well-being & Involvement.

Quality Observations are embedded in our everyday practice to build up an accurate picture of the unique child. They are purposeful, informative and capture what children know, can do and are currently interested in. They demonstrate their current stage of development.

Observations are made in a range of contexts, for example in their independent play, during daily routines and when engaged with others. They reflect multiple perspectives - the child, their family and practitioners - and are shared effectively between them.

Observations also feed into knowledge of how children learn through the characteristics of effective learning.

Detailed assessments of each child are completed every 7 weeks, which enable the practitioners to focus on individual children and their attainment. Parent meetings are then held to discuss the findings and agree next steps for the child. Half termly

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information is also uploaded to Pupil Asset which allows a more detailed view of the child's progress.

We also use an online learning journey to our class, Tapestry. Through Tapestry we upload our observations, photos, and videos of the children. We can then tag observations with EYFS statements, characteristics of effective learning, Leuven scales, P scales and KS1 and KS2 statements which can be used to assess and monitor children's progress. Tapestry can provide data for summative assessments, thoroughness checks and next steps. A check is kept to ensure that each child has sufficient observations uploaded each week. With this system, it is possible to instantly give a record of where any child is in their development.

### 2. Formative Assessment in Years 1-6

In Years 1-6 we use the 'Assertive Mentoring' system of formative assessment. Data is then entered into Pupil Asset at the end of the Autumn term and every half term from that point.

Each class has assertive mentoring grids for reading, writing and maths, as well as individual grids for each child. Each grid contains the objectives from the new National Curriculum for each year group.

As and when the teacher assesses that a child has independently met one of these objectives a dot (.) is placed on the grid next to the objective. Once there is evidence that this objective has been met again then the dot is turned into a line (/). When the teacher is secure in the knowledge that the child has met the objective again and fully understands it, then the line is converted into a cross (X)

(Example section of a grid)

|             |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Place Value | 1. Count in multiples of 6, 7, 9, 25 and 1000.   | . | . | / | / | X |   |
|             | 2. Find 1000 more or less than a given number. Round any number to the nearest 10, 100 or 1000.  | . | / | X |   |   |   |
|             | 3. Count backwards through zero to include negative numbers.   |   | . | / | / | X |   |
|             | 4. Recognise the place value of each digit in a 4-digit number (thousands, hundreds, tens, and ones). Order and compare numbers beyond 1000. |   |   |   |   |   | . |
|             | 5. Read Roman numerals to 100 (I to C) and know that over time, the numeral system changed to include the concept of zero and place value.   |   |   |   | . | . | / |

We are also using the same system for maths objectives that relate to the children's fluency, reasoning and problem solving across the different topics covered.

The evidence for formative assessment can be gathered in a variety of ways:

- A teacher may see a piece of work or hear a comment that shows an understanding of an objective which could be marked against the child's record at any time.

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- A teacher may have chosen an objective as a target to focus on, and the child has then shown an understanding of this objective over time.
- A test or assessment may be given and used as evidence to show an understanding of an objective. A half termly maths assessment is available as part of the Assertive Mentoring system.

The grids are then looked at regularly by the class teacher to see how much progress is being made by each individual or group. This is evidence that would be used by teachers to support their work done in target time and possible interventions. Objectives that the children are finding hard to meet, may be highlighted to impact on future planning and support.

### **3. Pupil Progress Meetings**

At the beginning of each half term, a pupil progress meeting is held with each teacher, the Headteacher and SENCO. The purpose of this meeting is to analyse the half termly assessment data as described in the previous section.

Children's individual attainment and progress is discussed, as well as their progress towards agreed end of year targets. If any intervention or support is deemed necessary, this is arranged and agreed at this meeting.

A record of all discussions and agreed actions is given to all in attendance and evaluated at the start of the following meeting.

### **4. Half Termly Summative Assessment**

At the end of each half term, teachers enter their assessment data onto Pupil Asset. This information builds up every half term to present a complete picture of each child's progress throughout the academic year, as shown below:

This information is used at Pupil Progress meetings to discuss how each child is progressing and what interventions are necessary.

This system also allows us to be able to clearly identify what a child can actually *do*, which is a direct requirement of the DfE (see Introduction), and also to respond quickly if children are making less than expected progress.

### **Interventions**

At Alburgh with Denton Primary School we try to ensure that intervention is used to support all learners where appropriate. We use intervention as a short burst of support rather than a long term process. Children are not taken out of English or Maths, and we believe in 'quality first teaching' as the first form of intervention.

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Teachers are best placed to deliver high quality intervention to their pupils; Teaching assistants are used to support independence rather than create dependence.

The following methods of intervention and support are used at our school:

### **1. Target Time**

Target Time is the first form of intervention, delivered by the class teacher. Each teacher has two hours a week set aside in the afternoon for this purpose. The class is covered by the Headteacher, while the class teacher is able to deliver appropriate intervention to any pupil in their class. They can use the time to:

- support pupils in their assertive mentoring targets
- clear up any misconceptions or gaps in understanding that teachers have identified during the week
- support disadvantaged and SEND pupils
- stretch and challenge gifted and talented and more able pupils.

Teachers use their professional judgement to determine how their time is used and which children they will support. However, teachers are held accountable for the progress their children make, and Target Time is monitored through 'drop-in' observations and Pupil Progress meetings.

### **2. Intervention Groups**

After a careful evaluation of published interventions, we now only use those that have proven to make a difference. We currently use the following: Catch Up Reading, Sir Kit's Quest and Fresh Start. Children with dyslexia may carry out Toe by Toe daily with a TA, and we also use the Precision Monitoring method in a number of different areas for those children who need it. Children in Year 3/4, with gaps in their phonics knowledge, may also continue with Read, Write Inc. The SENCO carefully timetables these interventions.

All these interventions are delivered for a short period of time. Children are assessed at the beginning of an intervention and stop as soon as it has had the desired impact. We continually monitor the effectiveness of all our interventions and only use those that make a demonstrable difference.

### **3. External Support**

The SENCOs in the Cluster schools work closely together. They purchase an Educational Psychologist support package each year which enables children to be assessed by another professional if teachers are concerned about the progress of an individual. They also have access to a variety of assessment tools which are used to assess children's needs.

### **Target Setting**

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At Alburgh with Denton, we set aspirational end of year progress targets for each child. Individual children also have their own curricular targets which are all based on National Curriculum objectives:

### **1. End of Year Targets**

As previously mentioned, we have an expectation at our school that the majority of children should achieve the 'Expected' level of understanding at the end of each academic year. We expect higher attainers to have met the vast majority of objectives and therefore reach Greater Depth.

Our rationale is that with high quality teaching, together with short, sharp, regular intervention focussed on a specific need, there is no excuse for children not to achieve. Any children that do fall short of our expectations are supported throughout the following year to 'fill the gaps' through our Intervention Hour initiative.

### **2. Curricular Targets**

Each child has a target for Reading, Writing and Maths, related to a particular objective from the National Curriculum. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for meeting their own targets and are supported through teaching and Target Time. As soon as a child has met their target, they move on to another, in order to make rapid progress through the objectives.

### **Moderation and Evaluation**

In order to ensure the accuracy and consistency of assessment judgements, staff undertake a variety of moderation and evaluation exercises throughout the year. These include:

- Internal staff moderation of written work
- Cluster moderation to compare standards with other schools
- Evaluation of children's books, looking at examples of how children have met specific learning objectives
- Evaluation of children's use of calculation strategies
- Evaluation against the Interim Teacher Assessment Frameworks at the end of KS1 and KS2
- Local Authority statutory moderation

### **Monitoring and Review**

Our Assessment Policy is a 'live' document that is reviewed and updated as necessary. Staff meet regularly to discuss the effectiveness of assessment practice in the school and to agree modifications or improvements. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed and maintained, and assessment practice is regularly monitored and evaluated through lesson drop-ins, evaluations of

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assessment files, moderation meetings, pupil progress meetings, and as a standing item on Governor Standards Committee agendas.