

### **In summary, the range of approaches to assessment will include:**

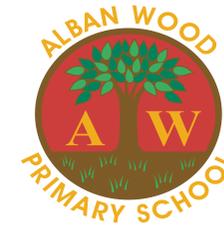
- Formative assessment, specified on planning and taking place on a daily and weekly basis—observing, marking, self-assessment, peer assessment, dialogue and discussion.
- Summative assessment on a termly basis—see previous details included.
- Conferencing with children and parents, at parents' weeks each term; including setting and reviewing targets at these meetings.
- School discussion of pupil attainment and progress, for individuals, groups and classes at pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher and INCO after each summative assessment period.
- Gap analysis: analysing the 'gaps' that children have or the errors that they make in order to identify needs and inform planning. This will include, where appropriate, investigative work, analysis of all ongoing learning and tests (for example, within phonics, spelling or grammar).
- Monitoring of learning. The process of children's learning and their outcomes will be monitored by the SLT and coordinator teams to provide feedback to class teachers, including feedback in relation to pitch, expectations and pupil progress—this will include pupil voice as a central focus.

### **Documents to support record keeping**

All summative assessment data across the school (N - Year 6) is entered, stored, reported and analysed through Assessment Manager 7. This allows precise and efficient analysis in relation to all aspects of achievement (attainment and progress), and particularly informs school self-evaluation. The new Herts assessment approach is carefully benchmarked against the previous National Curriculum levels such that transition is supported and pupil progress can continue to be measured in this interim period.

As well as this, the following documents contain assessment information in school:

- Cohort pupil progress folders, (Headteacher's Office) where each term's summative data is discussed and analysed in relation to groups within the class and individual pupils.
- Electronic learning journals within Nursery and Reception.
- Class teacher planning folders, which have evaluations and annotations on weekly lesson plans, and contain all assessment information used to inform planning (for example, gap analyses, Herts assessment criteria, pupil progress minutes).
- Children's books in all subject areas, with marking and feedback provided.
- Additional whole-school analysis documents held by the SLT and Governing Body: for example, RaiseOnline and reports from AM7.



## **Alban Wood Primary School – Assessment Policy**

It is the entitlement of every child at Alban Wood Primary School to be assessed in their learning in order that they can be supported to make good progress, such that areas of development can be addressed and strengths further enhanced. This is a positive and ongoing process in which all staff, the children themselves and parents too should play an active part. Assessment complements and assists teaching and learning. It plays an integral part in each teacher's planning and enables evaluation of current practice as well as pupil achievement.

### **Purpose of the policy**

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of assessment at Alban Wood. It ensures a whole school approach, and provides a clear outline of all assessment techniques in order to ensure that assessment is used as a tool to inform planning, to track pupil progress and to raise standards.

### **Principles of assessment and recording achievement**

An effective approach to assessment, recording and reporting achievement will include the following and aspire to:

- Raise achievement in the core subjects, through ongoing and summative assessments which can then target individual pupil needs.
- Recognise achievement in all aspects of the child's life, across the whole school curriculum.
- Ensure diagnostic use of assessment information, to continually inform planning, teaching and learning opportunities.
- Empower the child in their learning, through fully involving them in self-assessment, peer-assessment and an ongoing dialogue about their strengths and next steps.
- Involve parents/carers in all assessment information, communicating regularly, celebrating achievements and advising of next steps or

- concerns in relation to progress.
- Ensure continuity as children change classes and progress through the school.
- Provide a framework in which the school can evaluate its curriculum planning.
- Raise achievement of particular groups e.g. boys, or pupils receiving pupil premium, higher achievers etc.
- Differentiate methods of assessment to ensure that all children are supported, taking into account pupils with SEN, EBD, EAL and any other needs.
- Above all, ensure a systematic whole-school approach.

### **Information about assessment in the new National Curriculum (September 2014 onwards): removal of levels**

One of the features of the new National Curriculum is that it no longer uses a system of numbered 'levels' to describe children's attainment. This is because it was felt by the DfE that the use of levels had at times been detrimental to children. For example, talking to children about their attainment using numbered levels could contribute towards their developing a "fixed mindset" about their ability, whereas we want to foster in all our children a "growth mindset", meaning that we believe that we can all improve our abilities with practice, effort and persistence. We would also like to further enrich our pupils' learning by developing a greater breadth of skills and knowledge, so that they are confident to apply their skills to different areas of the curriculum, rather than focus on moving to the 'next level'. Pupils will still be familiar with their 'next steps' learning targets as a way of ensuring maximum opportunity for progress but there will be no emphasis on what numerical level they are working at.

### **Report by the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review December 2011 (Chapter 8.24)**

"We believe that **constant assessment to levels is itself over-burdensome, obscures the genuine strengths and weaknesses in a pupil's attainment**, obscures parental understanding of the areas in which they might best support their child's learning, and likewise, weakens teachers' clear understanding and identification of pupils' specific weaknesses or misunderstandings."

"We believe [the use of levels] actually has a significant effect of exacerbating social differentiation, rather than promoting a more inclusive approach that strives for secure learning of key curricular elements by all. It also distorts pupil learning, for instance creating the tragedy that some pupils become more concerned for 'what level they are' than for the substance of what they know, can do and understand."

Guidance is provided with the Herts grids in relation to finalising 'best-fit' judgements. For example, in pupil writing teachers are required to:

- Look across a range of texts for a variety of purposes and audiences
- Focus on statements in bold which reflect aspects of English which are a key focus
- Reflect on the use and understanding of age appropriate grammatical terminology
- Be aware of the increased emphasis on spelling and handwriting.

### **Early Years**

Please refer to the Early Years policy which details all aspects of formative and summative assessment for Nursery and Reception, in keeping with the curriculum and assessment National guidance revised in 2013. All principles are in line with this policy, with formative assessment including observations of children during child-initiated learning, and summative assessment meeting statutory requirements (including the careful tracking of on-entry baseline data), which links well to the Herts approach described here beginning in Year 1.

### **Foundation Subjects**

Coordinator teams at Alban Wood have designed assessment approaches for all subject areas which are similar to the Herts assessment approach for the core subjects (reading, writing, spoken language, maths, science, computing). This is detailed within each team's policy (Humanities, Creative Arts, Personal and Physical), but all assessment is designed to: support teachers by making links between curriculum and assessment; be skills-based to prepare children for all future learning in that subject; track progress for all pupils' to ensure good or better achievement; and celebrate pupil achievements.

### **Reporting Pupil Achievement to Parents**

Reporting to parents at Alban Wood (either verbally or in writing) is mainly criterion-referenced, rather than norm-referenced; in other words we will focus, on the whole, on the curriculum – giving some specifics about areas where children have been particularly successful and areas where they need further development. These latter areas will be linked to personal targets, information on how the school is supporting and how parents can help.

However, as well as the curriculum-focused comments, we will also report pupils' attainment in relation to the age-related expectations of the new curriculum (September 2014 onwards). We will use language as follows to do this:

- *[Name] is working broadly within the standards expected for his/her age (or 'standards expected in [Year X]')*
- *[Name] is working towards achieving the standards expected in [Year X]*
- *[Name] is working beyond the expectations for [Year X]*

We will always verbally give any key messages about pupils' attainment throughout the school year, so that these will never be a surprise within written reporting each term.

## The Hertfordshire Assessment Approach

We have adopted the Hertfordshire summative assessment approach to continue to ensure rigour in data collection and the tracking of pupils' progress over time in order to promote excellent achievement for all. This tracking system is:

- Intended as a management information tool – not as a basis for reporting attainment or progress to pupils or parents
- Designed such that once per term is sufficient for summative judgements
- Not a replacement for ongoing formative assessment against specific learning objectives, which is more appropriate for feedback to pupils about learning.

## Tracking pupils' progress using phases and steps

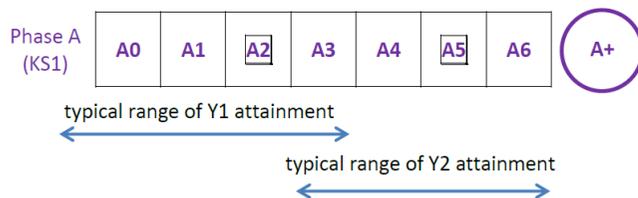
The expectations of learning are divided into key phases:

Phase A = expectations for Years 1-2

Phase B = expectations for Years 3-4

Phase C = expectations for Years 5-6

There are steps of progress within each phase (linked to detailed criteria produced by HFL) – with an expectation of one step of progress per term



A2 and A5 represent the age-related expectation for Years 1 and 2 respectively. A+ signifies that a child has mastered all aspects of the phase and the teacher is extending this child's thinking by going broader and deeper within the curriculum – e.g. exploring higher-level thinking skills, within the content domain of the phase.

Phases B and C are laid out similarly and the detailed criteria produced by HFL allows for excellent cross-over to be achieved between curriculum and assessment.

## Making judgements

All level judgements are made using all ongoing pupil evidence: for example, guided reading records, all learning within Maths and English books, as well as the application of these skills within humanities and other subject areas. More than ever before, the main purpose of all assessment weeks is to inform medium term planning and weekly planning based on pupil needs. That said, we remain committed to ensuring accurate and robust assessments, and therefore tests can be used to support teachers in deciding how well skills have been mastered. Tests may be used to support Maths; Reading Comprehension; Phonics; and English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.

At Alban Wood, we have viewed the removal of National Curriculum levels as an opportunity to reflect on our beliefs about:

- a rich, broad and balanced curriculum
- learning culture and ethos
- what good assessment looks like
- the appropriate balance between formative and summative assessment practices.

The principles of assessment have not changed and excellence in assessment at Alban Wood will:

- Be sensitive and constructive
- Foster learners' motivation
- Promote understanding of learning goals and criteria
- Be part of effective planning
- Develop learners' capacity for self-assessment
- Help learners know how to improve
- Recognise all educational achievement
- Be central to classroom practice
- Be a key professional skill for teachers
- Focus on how students learn

## However:

- Accountability at the ends of the Key Stages is still as high-stakes as ever
- Governors need to be able to monitor attainment and progress
- Ofsted still expect to see evidence of attainment and progress

## Assessment at Alban Wood in practice will:

- Fulfil all aspects of preparing children for statutory requirements. In 2016, this will include new National tests which are being written for the end of KS1 and the end of KS2. This policy will be expanded when more information has been released. New 'performance descriptors' are also being written for the end of Key Stage teacher assessment, which will then inform assessment and curricular practices across the school.
- Continue to ensure rigour with summative assessment across the school—this will be achieved through our adoption and implementation of the Herts assessment approach, see below.
- Focus on formative assessment in keeping with the principles of assessment described through this policy, which will: promote assessment opportunities that are integral to the teaching and learning; involve rich open-ended tasks, accessible at a range of skill levels; be planned to include investigation, problem-solving, pupils making choices, collaborative work and dialogue; ensure that there are no ceilings on attainment and appropriate support for pupils' motivation and engagement.