

# Assessment Policy

## Cranborne Middle School

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### 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

### 2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

This policy refers to the recommendations in the [Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#).

It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in [the Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#).

### 3. Principles of assessment

The principles of assessment are designed to help all schools as they implement arrangements for assessing pupils' progress against their school curriculum. With effective assessment systems, staff at Cranborne Middle School will be able to:

**Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child's school, is performing**

- Allow meaningful tracking of pupils towards end of key stage expectations in the new curriculum, including regular feedback to parents.
- Provide information which is transferable and easily understood and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment.

- Differentiate attainment between pupils of different abilities, giving early recognition of pupils who are falling behind and those who are excelling.
- Are reliable and free from bias.

#### **Help drive improvement for pupils and teachers**

- Are closely linked to improving the quality of teaching.
- Ensure feedback to pupils contributes to improved learning and is focused on specific and tangible objectives.
- Produce recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time.

#### **Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation**

- Are created in consultation with those delivering best practice locally.
- Are created in consideration of, and are benchmarked against, international best practice.

## **4. Assessment approaches**

At Cranborne Middle School, assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum. Three broad overarching forms of assessment are used: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

There is a whole-school system of assessment that operates for all children, in all subjects, from year five to year eight. Assessment is based on broad learning objectives that are set as part of long-term and medium-term plans for teaching and learning, relate to the National Curriculum and reflect expectations of progress from one year to the next. Assessment plans are created for each unit of work that describe assessment standards for each objective:

- **Working Towards (W):** children are working towards the standard expected for their stage of learning.
- **Expected Standard (E):** children are secure in specified knowledge, skills and understanding.
- **Greater Depth (G):** children have demonstrated deeper knowledge, skill and understanding, for instance by making connections with other learning or independently applying knowledge and skills in different contexts.

Children who are working below the *Working Towards* standard are assessed as **Has Not Met Standard (N)**.

A few children who are able, gifted and talented may be assessed at **Mastery (M)**, i.e. they are working beyond the expectations of their stage of learning.

Our language of assessment is in-line with the language used when reporting KS2 outcomes to government.

## 4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Formative assessment is the main means of assessing children's attainment and progress. It is securely rooted in the school's curriculum, day-to-day teaching and learning, long-term and medium-term plans and assessment plans. It is based on well-designed and differentiated activities and tasks that give children opportunities to demonstrate their learning, consolidate it, apply it and extend it; it does not require specific assessment tasks or tests. It incorporates:

- discussing learning objectives and success criteria with children;
- questioning and discussion throughout lessons to judge, develop, consolidate and extend pupils' understanding;
- opportunities to review learning against the learning objectives and success criteria;
- engaging children in peer-assessment and self-assessment;
- discussing and agreeing individual targets for learning;
- planning appropriate activities and tasks;
- celebrating and sharing achievement and progress;
- providing children with verbal and written feedback that celebrates success, helps them to understand the next steps in their learning, recognises effort, promotes a *Growth Mindset*, inspires ambition and motivates them to achieve more;
- adapting planned lessons to provide children with the opportunities they need to make the next steps in their learning.

## 4.2 In-school summative assessment

Summative assessments sum up children's learning at the end of a unit of work or period of learning. They take the form of a test or task specifically designed for children to demonstrate their knowledge, skill or understanding against specific learning objectives.

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

## 4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally

Published nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6)
- GL PT13 tests for Reading, Mathematics and Science at the end of year 8

Non-published nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- GL CAT4 tests for Verbal, Non-verbal, Quantitative and Spatial reasoning at the start of year 5
- GL PT9 tests for Reading, Mathematics and Science at the start of year 5
- GL PT10 tests for Reading and Mathematics at the start of year 6
- GL PT11T tests for Reading and Mathematics at the start of year 7

## 5. Collecting and using data

In every subject, data from student outcomes is stored in Wave 6 (the school's own purpose-built assessment system). The academic year is split into five strategic 'Data Capture Points' (October, December, February, April, June/July). At each DCP, all student outcomes are used to calculate a progress score that is compared to the student's target and previous attainment. During this time:

- Assessment data is used by the Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team to inform the 'Achievement for All' programme (Passports), school self-evaluation, reports to Governors concerning the achievement and standards of learning of children and the School Development Plan.
- Subject Leaders, Phase Leaders and teaching staff meet to share findings from data analysis, identify trends, celebrate the successes of children and the school, identify any issues arising from analysis of the data and plan any actions required to either maintain or improve standards of achievement or progress.

Published data is analysed by the Data Manager and subject leaders for English and Maths using FFT Aspire, ASP (replacement of RAISEonline) and the Year 6 County Data pack (created by Doug Gilbert, Dorset Education Services Data Advisor). Subsequent findings from the analysis is reported to the Senior Leadership Team and embedded in subject specific action plans.

## 6. Reporting to parents

Feedback is given to parents/carers verbally at parents' evenings twice each year, providing them with an opportunity to discuss their child's progress with his/her teachers. In addition, meetings with parents to discuss their children's progress can be arranged at other mutually convenient times.

Parents also receive an annual report, which is written in a clear, straightforward manner and is personal to the child. It informs parents/carers of their child's:

- achievements in all subjects, broken down into key topics/activities forming part of the school curriculum, highlighting both strengths and areas for development
- overall attitude to learning, with reference to their child's 'Growth Mindset'
- wider participation in, and contributions to, school life
- relationships with their peers
- behaviour in lessons and around school in general
- attendance, including the total number of possible attendance and the total number of unauthorised absences for that pupil

## 7. Inclusion (Vulnerable Children)

Vulnerable children are those at risk of not making progress in their learning and include those with special educational needs, disadvantaged children in receipt of the Pupil Premium and high performing children. The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

## 8. Transition and Transfer

Assessment information, both academic and social, is transferred between professionals at each stage of the child's schooling (between classes, year groups and schools). This ensures that children have appropriate opportunities, support and challenge to make progress in their learning. When children move schools, relevant assessment information is sent and expected through the CTF (common transfer file) and supporting encrypted Excel spreadsheets.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **9.1 Governors**

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils.
- Knowing current school outcomes
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously evaluating and challenging assessment data.

### **9.2 Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Maintaining an overview of assessment in the school by regularly being updated by members of the Senior Leadership Team and/or Subject Leaders.
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement.
- Holding staff to account.
- Ensuring all statutory requirements are met.

### **9.3 Senior Leadership Team**

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Evaluating the analysis of pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups (including SEND, disadvantaged and high performing students), identifying students that require additional support.
- Over-seeing the organisation of reporting children's progress to parents/carers.
- Evaluating teacher performance to support judgements performance-related pay and the appraisal process.
- Deploying resources to improve pupil outcomes.
- Holding staff to account.

### **9.4 Assessment Leader**

The Assessment Leader is responsible for:

- Reporting to a range of audiences (e.g. governors, Ofsted) on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years.
- Maintaining an overview of assessment within the school, ensuring the policy is adhered to.
- Collating and analysing assessment data and utilising the information to develop a clear and detailed understanding of the school's performance and to support school improvement.
- Monitoring, reviewing, evaluating and updating the policy in practice.
- Managing and maintaining the whole school data systems.
- Providing up-to-date CPD to staff on information required to develop an effective assessment ethos.
- Supporting subject leaders in the analysis of pupil data within their subjects.
- Holding subject leaders to account.

### **9.5 SENDCO**

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific SEND and identifying students that require additional support.
- Supporting staff in raising the outcomes of all SEND students.

### **9.6 Phase Leaders**

Phase Leaders are responsible for:

- Reviewing individual student progress across all subjects and identifying students that are underperforming in multiple subjects.
- Developing individual/family support plans to improve the outcomes for underperforming students.

## 9.7 Subject Leaders

Subject Leaders are responsible for:

- Setting targets based on a combination of baselines, summative tests and prior attainment.
- Ensuring teachers within their department have sound understanding of the curriculum they are delivering and the standards against which they are making judgements.
- Ensuring assessment plans include clear learning objectives and well-defined performance/outcome descriptors for *Working Towards (W)*, *Expected Standard (E)* and Greater Depth (G) standards.
- Identifying and promoting appropriate formative and summative opportunities for assessment, both within day-to-day teaching and learning and tests.
- Ensuring assessments are recorded and tracked, providing advice and support where required.
- Working with teachers to ensure that they identify pupils that require further support or, for high performers, further challenge and that appropriate action/intervention is taken.
- Using assessment information to inform them of the effectiveness of the practice within their subject area and how it can be used to raise standards.
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of quality first teaching and intervention within their subject.
- Providing opportunities for the moderation of assessments and engaging in moderation activities with colleagues from outside of school.
- Providing reports to SLT and Governors concerning standards within their subject as required.

## 9.8 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are familiar with assessment standards within the subjects they teach.
- Providing appropriate opportunities, encouragement and support for children to achieve their learning objectives and targets, as well as reflect on their own learning.
- Carrying out on-going formative assessment in accordance with this policy, recording assessments on Wave 6.
- Ensuring that children's work and other records provide evidence to support judgements.
- Providing feedback to children and parents that helps them to understand the next steps in their learning.

## 10. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher/Data Manager. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

Members of the Senior Leadership will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Work Moderation
- Lesson observations/drop-ins
- Book Looks
- Pupil progress meetings.

## 11. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Curriculum policy
- SEND policy
- School Handbook