

St. Mary's Primary School,
Banbridge.



Assessment Policy

Rationale

Assessment lies at the heart of the process of promoting children's learning. It provides a framework within which educational objectives may be set and children's progress expressed and monitored.

Research indicates that improving learning through assessment depends on five key factors:

- the provision of effective feedback to pupils;
- the active involvement of pupils in their own learning;
- adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment;
- a recognition of the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self-esteem of pupils, both of which are crucial influences on learning;
- the need for pupils to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

Black, P. & Wiliam, D. 1999.

In St Mary's Primary School, through the breadth and balance of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, our pupils participate in a progression of learning experiences that are carefully structured to suit their needs.

Assessment is an integral part of this process. It provides information with which to evaluate pupil's strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

It is then used to inform curriculum planning, the setting of children's targets and the provision of resources.

Our Principles

Using the principles and processes of assessment we aim to:

- evaluate levels of children's learning against previous performance, personal ability and achievement by their peers.
- monitor progress and support learning through effective planning
- generate data which will track pupil progress over time
- provide information to ensure continuity when pupils change year group
- identify children who are gifted and/or talented
- identify children with special educational needs
- fulfill statutory requirements relating to assessment.

Types of assessment in St Mary's Primary School

Formative: Ongoing assessment carried out by teachers both formally and informally during a unit of work to make specific improvement in learning. The results of formative assessments have a direct impact on the teaching materials, strategies and planning employed immediately following the assessment. Results and observations are kept in teacher's own record books.

Summative: Summative assessment enables teachers to acknowledge, record and report pupil's overall achievement at a point in time. This occurs at defined periods of the academic year or at the end of a unit's work enabling teachers to monitor progress and also in determining the overall subject level for pupils. The test may also be used for diagnostic assessment to identify any weaknesses and then build on that using formative assessment.

Diagnostic: To identify pupil strengths and areas for improvement and inform the next steps in planning, teaching and learning. All assessment can provide diagnostic evidence, however certain assessment tools can be particularly useful in providing more detailed data.

Assessment for Learning

St Mary's Primary upholds the aims of *The Northern Ireland Curriculum (2007) Assessment for Learning for Key Stage 1 and 2* and demonstrates an ethos in which the personalities, strengths and needs of children are carefully considered and addressed individually. Through St Mary's commitment to Assessment for Learning (AFL) we aim to:

- improve performance
- increase learning independence
- improve morale, motivation and risk-taking
- enhance relationships and reflection

The assessment of children's progress is an integral part of the cycle of teaching and learning. As a formative assessment, assessment for learning takes place *during* the learning and therefore gives pupils an active role in the assessment process. Assessment for learning enables teachers to judge the quality of learning against success criteria and to evaluate the need for further support, reinforcement or extension. This ongoing cycle of assessment leads to an evaluation of teaching strategies and classroom management.

Assessment for Learning is monitored through the following:

- Marking for Improvement (Tickled Pink/highlights and prompts)
- Verbal feedback/oral conversation with pupil
- WALT and WILF learning intentions and success criteria.
- Self assessment through traffic lights/thumbs up strategy.
- KWL planning grids.
- Plenary opportunities.

Assessment of Learning is carried out through the following:

<i>TITLE</i>	<i>YEAR1</i>	<i>YEAR2</i>	<i>YEAR3</i>	<i>YEAR4</i>	<i>YEAR5</i>	<i>YEAR6</i>	<i>YEAR7</i>
Baseline	X						
E.Y.F.S.	X						
M.I.S.T.		X					
W.R.A.P.S.		X					
N.N.R.I.T			X				
C.A.T.4				X	X	X	X
P.I.E.			X	X	X	X	X
P.I.M.		X	X	X	X	X	X
N.I.L.A.				X	X	X	X
N.I.N.A.				X	X	X	X
L.O.P. Lit				X			X
L.O.P. Nu				X			X
R.M. Math			X	X	X	X	X
Lexia			X	X	X	X	X
Year grp levelling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PM Book Banding	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dyslexia Screener	When needed						
A.W.M.A. (working memory)	When needed						

e-Testing

e-Testing is an integral part of our assessment portfolio and as such we have developed an e-testing policy for Saint Mary's.
(see Appendix 1)

Self- Assessment in St Mary's Primary School.

Self-assessment is essential

- for progress as a learner,
- for understanding of selves as learners,
- for an increasingly complex understanding of tasks and learning goals,
- for strategic knowledge of how to go about improving.

Sadler, D. R. 1993.

St Mary's pupils are involved in the process of self-assessment in which they comment on their work and that of their peers. Self- assessment enables our pupils to develop objectivity, raise self-esteem and encourages pride in their work.

End of Key Stage Assessment.

Assessment at the end of each Key Stage forms an integral part of the overall school assessment programme and is used to inform curriculum planning. Results in assessment units in Primary 4 and Primary 7 are also used in the statutory target setting process.

Role of the Assessment Co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator has the responsibility for the development of the assessment, recording and reporting procedures in school.

The co-ordinator's responsibilities include:

- ensure that members of staff are kept fully up to date with the legal requirements, developments and research in primary school assessment.
- provide appropriate training and act with external agencies as necessary.
- Correlate 'Data analysis' of Standardised Tests (see Appendix 2)

Target Setting and Benchmarking.

Teachers record the levels at which children are performing and retain representative samples of work.

Reporting

Reporting to parents on children's attainment is by:

- parent teacher interviews in November where CATs 4 report is presented..
- comments on written work, including homework.
- annual written reports – teacher will comment if a child is working below/ at/ or above their ability.
- in some cases, information from outside agencies.
- end of key stage assessment results.
- informal meetings.

reporting to the principal and teachers is by:

- class files containing test scores
- pupil files
- staff meeting
- informal meetings

reporting to pupils on attainment is by:

- teacher comment on class work, both oral and written.
- Marking for Improvement opportunities.
- individual class reward schemes.
- Weekly Assembly.
- Record of Achievement in Primary 7.

Marking

As a form of assessment, marking should be meaningful, informative and positive, providing an indication of a child's achievement for both pupil and parent. The teacher's professional judgement of children's abilities, based on informal observations and on formal methods of assessment are an important sources of evidence in the monitoring process.

Standardised Tests

Standardised test results enable teachers to identify specific strengths and weaknesses and so plan for future teaching and learning. This evidence may also be used to provide information about the work of a particular pupil in order to ensure that sufficiently challenging goals are set or to indicate that the pupils name be placed on the Special Needs register if he/she requires support.

Record Keeping

- Individual pupil files are kept for each child in a locked cabinet. Access to these files is not permitted without teacher/senior management permission. These contain evidence of work, yearly reports, assessments and any other information relevant to the child's school experience.
- Files are held until the pupil is 23 years of age and for Special Educational Needs pupils to 25 years of age.
- Data relating to Computer Based Assessment CBA, standardised scores and SEN testing are stored on Assessment Manager, a component of the SIMS computer management system, and also on hardcopies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment, recording and reporting procedure should be monitored annually in order that they remain meaningful and manageable. Policies and procedures may change in light of any new initiatives imposed and the school should respond to any such changes.

Planning for Assessment

Long-term, medium-term and short-term planning of coherent programmes for learning, teaching and assessment provide opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in a range of curricular and cross-curricular contexts.

In short-term planning, the *Expansion of the Levels of Progression* materials are used to identify the focus of assessment activities and therefore provide the evidence which will be used to make judgements.

Medium-term planning enables teachers to build up a picture of the progress and achievement of pupils over a period of time. *The levels of Progression for Communication, Using Mathematics* and *Using ICT* as well as the *Expansion of the levels of Progression* for cross-curricular skills can support assessment. The *From-To Progress Maps* can be used to help plan for the qualitative assessment for Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

Whole school planning should identify assessment opportunities across the curriculum, in each of the Cross-Curricular Skills and within the year and/or Key Stage. Key assessments events can be indicated on the schools long-term planning curriculum map. *The Levels of Progression* provide a useful point of reference for Long term planning.

New Admissions

Teacher will employ appropriate assessment procedures to ensure that children work at their own level and in suitable groups. They will also use information forwarded by the previous school.

Assessment for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

SEN pupils must complete Statutory Assessment NINA/NILA. Exemptions to this are pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties SLD and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties PMLD. Temporary exemptions are at the principal's discretion e.g. newcomer pupils, pupils with medical conditions and pupils suffering a traumatic experience.

SENCO to ensure teachers are aware of these exemptions. Refer to statement of special educational needs for other exemptions.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2