



## Thameside Primary School: Assessment Guidelines

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<b>Policy reviewed by:</b>	Sophie Greenaway
<b>Key changes:</b>	Updated and checked links Updated statutory assessments now KS1 not mandatory Changed Target Tracker to Sonar Insertion of new assessment rationale Removal of appendix as no longer required Addition of information on our KS1 assessments – tasks, not tests



Our Assessment Guidelines are designed to ensure that assessment is consistent across the school whilst taking in to consideration recommendations from the [‘Improve workload and wellbeing for school staff’](#) 2024 DfE guidance. Please read this document in conjunction with our school [Assessment Rationale](#).

## Our Assessment Principles

Assessment at Thameside Primary School supports good teaching and learning through:

### 1. Recognising and Celebrating Achievement

- Assessment should acknowledge and celebrate the full range of children's achievements and experiences, both academic and non-academic.

### 2. Ongoing, Formative, and Integrated Approaches

- Assessment should be a continuous process embedded in learning, helping to guide instruction and support individual progress.

### 3. Being Task-Based and Practical

- Wherever possible, learning should be assessed through meaningful tasks such as projects, role-playing, storytelling, group work, and hands-on activities rather than traditional tests (which the school recognises children still require experience of sitting to ensure that they are best prepared for KS2 statutory assessments i.e. SATS).

### 4. Clear Connection Between Assessment, Target Setting, and Learning & Teaching

- Assessment should directly inform teaching strategies, support targeted learning, and ensure that objectives align with student needs.

### 5. Child-Centred and Inclusive

- Tasks should accommodate diverse learning styles, abilities, and interests, ensuring all children can demonstrate understanding in ways that suit them.
- Access arrangements will be put into place for those children requiring additional support due to their special educational needs.

### 6. Shared Understanding of Assessment Purpose

- Both pupils and teachers should clearly understand the purpose of assessment, ensuring that it is used as a tool for learning rather than a judgment e.g. revisiting past learning and short quizzing/testing of prior knowledge or skills is to help commit what has been taught to long term memory.

### 7. Process Over Product

- The focus should be on how students approach, engage with, and complete tasks, not just the final outcome.

### 8. Developing Reflective Learners

- Assessment should help students develop the skills needed for self-reflection, self-assessment, and peer assessment, fostering independence in learning.

### 9. Feedback-Oriented

- Provide regular, constructive, and personalised feedback to help students understand their progress and next steps e.g. through conference marking.

### 10. Demonstration of Understanding in Multiple Ways

- Students should express learning through different mediums such as presentations, experiments, art, drama, and creative writing.



### 11. Effective and Manageable Data Collection

- The school should have a clear, efficient system for collecting, recording, analysing, and sharing assessment data to support learning.

### 12. Informing School Self-Evaluation and Development Planning

- Assessment data should contribute to the **School Self Evaluation (SEF)** and **School Development Plan (SDP)** by identifying trends, target groups, and priorities for improvement.

### 13. Parental Involvement

- Parents should be engaged in the assessment process through discussions, student-led conferences, and regular progress sharing.

### 14. Fulfilling Statutory Requirements

- Assessment processes should meet national and local educational requirements while remaining focused on student learning and well-being.

### 15. Raising Standards and Identifying At-Risk Students

- Assessment should be used to raise overall standards, track progress, and identify children at risk of underachievement, ensuring early intervention and support.

### 16. Encouraging Critical Thinking and Creativity

- Tasks should promote inquiry, exploration, and creative problem-solving, allowing students to take risks and engage deeply with learning.

## Statutory Requirements

In the UK, statutory testing in primary schools is designed to assess children's progress at key stages of their education.

At the start of **Reception (Early Years Foundation Stage)**, children complete the **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)**, a short, teacher-led assessment focusing on early literacy, communication, language, and mathematics. *Baseline assessment gives practitioners the best start with getting to know the children and it gives the school the best starting point from which to demonstrate progress.*

At the end of Reception, pupils are assessed again through the **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** to evaluate their development across key areas.

In **Year 1**, children complete the **Phonics Screening Check** to assess their ability to decode words.

In **Year 4**, pupils take the **Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)** to assess their recall of times tables.

At the end of **Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**, students sit externally marked **SATs** in reading, mathematics, and spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPaG), while writing and science are teacher-assessed.

These statutory assessments help monitor individual progress, inform school performance measures, and ensure that children receive the necessary support for their learning.



A record must be kept of each pupil's academic achievements, progress and other skills which must be updated at least annually. The curricular record must include the results of statutory tests. At Thameside, we use Sonar Tracker for all assessment recording and reporting purposes.

A written report, containing an assessment of each pupil, must be sent to his/her parents/carers at least once per academic year.

When a child moves to a new school his/her records must be forwarded to the new school within 15 working days.

Children who join the school at other starting points have their learning assessed on entry by working with our Transition Lead who also supports their wellbeing.

### KS1 Assessment

The **Key Stage 1 SATs (Year 2)** became **optional from 2023**, meaning schools can decide whether to use them to inform teacher assessments in reading and mathematics, while writing and science remain teacher-assessed.

'For assessment to have an impact on pupil progress, it must be used to inform teaching. High quality learning takes place when we, as teachers, are deeply aware of the strengths and gaps in pupil understanding and build lessons which move them on from where they are. A test alone does not give us this information. It is only by enabling pupils to engage in dialogue with their peers and with adults, in listening and looking at how they respond to tasks, that we can ascertain the way they are thinking and the depth of their understanding.'

ATM 2024

Following the rationale of the 'Association of the Teachers of Mathematics' (see above), at Thameside, we decided not to continue to use the optional KS1 SATS. Instead, we have developed child-friendly assessment tasks to inform both teacher assessment judgements (which are reported to parents via annual reports) and planning/interventions for the summer term to ensure that our Year 2 pupils are KS2 ready.



Through **tasking and not testing**, we effectively use assessment in KS1 to determine:

- How secure children are in Y1 content
- Whether they have a flexible and deep understanding of content from Y2
- Their preparedness for content in Y3.



## How we assess

**Summative assessment** shows where pupils are at a particular point in time and includes:

- End of year/progress tests
- Pupil progress meetings
- Foundation stage baseline
- Progress checkpoints in EYFS
- Progress checkpoints for Y1 & EYFS maths (for a sample of children)
- Phonics screening
- SEND reviews
- Optional SATS in Years 3-5
- National assessments at the end of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2

**Formative assessment helps** check for understanding in lessons and embeds learning into long-term memory. It also supports pupils to identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas for improvement. Examples of formative assessment include:

- Is ongoing (day to day)
- Conference marking
- Questioning (using Cold Calling following Think, Pair, Share)
- Quizzing
- Together Time in EYFS
- Rapid recall/reasoning lesson prequels
- Observations
- Feedback
- Accelerated Reader quizzes and termly Star Reader Assessments

Teachers use formative assessment techniques to continually assess children's progress in order to set targets, to inform planning and teaching and to challenge and support. These techniques include informal observations, discussions, marking and feedback (pupil-led, teacher-led and shared) and the sharing of lesson goals and success criteria.

Children are expected to take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they move through the school. This includes self- and peer-marking, working with a 'talk partner', self-assessment, polishing work following feedback etc.

To support the development of assessment for learning, teachers use conferencing or ICT (e.g. using a visualiser) to model marking and editing/improvement techniques and to share examples of good work.

See also *Marking & Feedback Policy*.



## How is assessment reported?

Children are assessed against the curriculum for their assigned year group. Summative teacher assessment judgements are recorded (at set assessment points) onto an electronic assessment tool (Sonar). This ongoing information is used to build a clear picture of each child's progress and to put in additional support as required.

The following terms will be used when reporting assessment to parents, governors and external parties:

- **below** (below age related expectations / below ARE)
- **expected** (at age related expectations / at ARE)
- **above** (above age related expectations / above ARE)

Governors and external parties will receive reports of the percentage of pupils who are working below, at expected and above in each year group. This will include an analysis of groups e.g. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Disadvantaged pupils.

## What is progress?

At Thameside, we believe that progress is:

**Knowing more, remembering more, doing more and feeling more.**

## What is good progress?

A child who is at the expected standard has made good progress if they gain the knowledge, skills and understanding expected of them each year, as defined in the national curriculum.

At Thameside, we aim to increase the percentage of pupils who are working at and above ARE, whilst reducing the percentage of pupils who are working below thus closing gaps in attainment and progress. This will demonstrate securely good progress over time.

## Assessment during the EYFS

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Assessments are based on observation of what children are doing in their day-to-day activities in a wide variety of contexts.

Teachers and support assistants:

- Make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles;
- Use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child to help them make progress towards the early learning goals;
- Match their observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.



At the end of the EYFS, each child's development and learning achievements are summed up in the Early Years/Foundation Stage Profile. Assessment is based on ongoing observation and assessments in 17 early learning goal (ELGS) descriptors which are split into seven key areas of learning:

#### Prime Areas

- Personal, Emotional and Social Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

#### Specific Areas

- Understanding the world
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Expressive Art and Design

Judgements against these scales, which are set out in section 1 of the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#), are made from observation of consistent and independent behaviour through children's self-initiated and other activities.

Children will be assessed as: **On track or not on track i.e. expected or below**

Teachers will also report on '[The Characteristics of Effective Learning](#)' which will support Year 1 staff in designing an appropriate curriculum for the children moving up.

#### Data Analysis & Pupil Progress Meetings

Assessment data received and collected by the school – DfE, Local Authority, ASP, internal tracking – is analysed and translated into plans and actions affecting teaching and learning in the classroom.

Summative assessments are used to identify:

- (a) the numbers of children working at age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths;
- (b) the progress that cohorts, groups and individual children have made from entry; and
- (c) the numbers of children meeting targets.

Through regular Pupil Progress Meetings and SEND reviews, this information is used to inform subsequent teaching and learning by identifying 'target groups and pupils' requiring additional support or challenge.

Analysis of assessment data is shared with the staff collectively and individually. Data analysis is also shared with the Governing Body.



## Roles & Responsibilities

### The Assessment Leader:

- ensures that the Assessment Policy is up to date and regularly reviewed and that the assessment sections of other related policies are coherent and consistent.
- ensures that summative assessment takes place, the data is collected and recorded and that information is disseminated. They ensure that assessment methods and procedures are followed and used consistently. The Assessment Leader sets a timetable clearly showing events and deadlines associated with the assessment.
- informs staff of new developments and supports and trains colleagues as required. They support colleagues in identifying assessment opportunities and in using assessment information/data to inform teaching and learning.
- collates whole school data and presents it to the Team Leaders for analysis.
- reports findings to the SLT, School Improvement Team, Governing Body and staff.
- is responsible for reviewing assessment throughout the school, identifying key outcomes, strengths and weaknesses and future development. They rationalise assessment systems to ensure manageability and promote the use of electronic data management and the use of electronic analysis tools.

### Other Leaders:

The AHT of Inclusion and SENDCOs use the assessment data to inform discussions with class teachers and to monitor progress against intervention programmes (e.g. Learning Plans and provision maps). Assessment data is also used to help maintain the SEND registers, for liaising with external agencies and for formal assessment for EHCPs.

See also *SEND and Inclusion Policies*.

Reading, Writing and Mathematics Leaders ensure that their subject's assessment procedures and tools are consistent with the Assessment Policy. They provide additional support and advice to staff as appropriate. They use assessment data to support evaluation and improvement in their subjects, using or producing data and analysis as required and reporting their findings to the SLT and governors.

Team Leaders use assessment data to support evaluation and improvement in their phases, producing or using data and analysis as required and reporting their findings to the SLT and governors. They use assessment data to inform Pupil Progress Meetings with class teachers and plan effective interventions. These meetings are focused on progress towards Reading, Writing and Maths targets.

Using the Subject Leader Toolkit, foundation subject leaders ensure that formative assessment methods and procedures are implemented effectively. They monitor planning and feedback to ensure assessment informs planning and teaching. They monitor attainment / standards / rate of progress. They report to the SLT, to governors (periodically) and to the School Improvement Team on schemes of work, standards and on progress.



## Headteacher

The Headteacher ensures that the school meets statutory requirements, including the setting of statutory targets (whole-school level) and data reporting. They disseminate information to Assessment Leader (if they themselves are not the Assessment Lead).

## Class Teachers

- use assessment data to inform effective teaching and learning in their classrooms. They give pupils regular feedback and give verbal progress reports to parents. They use summative data analysis and formative assessment to identify groups and individuals that require additional support or challenge.
- carry out assessment tasks and make judgements as set out in the Assessment (Whole School) Calendar, Assessment Policy and subject policies. They ensure that data is passed to the Assessment Leader via Sonar Tracker.
- use and develop a range of 'assessment for learning' techniques, including talking partners, self- and peer-marking, setting targets and success criteria. Children are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for self-assessment and self-correction (polishing).
- write an annual report for parents summarising their child's achievements, progress and areas for development over the course of the year.

## Governing Body

Governing bodies have a legal duty to know, and continually monitor, the educational performance of the school and its pupils to ensure the best possible education and opportunities for children.

Our school governors understand how Thameside leaders plan for assessments of pupils' progress through their time at our school – including how it is moderated and how the data is used. They ensure that our assessment systems are robust and provide accurate information about pupils' progress.

The Governing Body receives internal data from teacher assessments throughout the year; they use this information, including phase leader analysis, to monitor how well pupils are progressing. If pupils or groups of pupils are not making expected progress, governors request explanations and a plan of action from the Headteacher and Assessment lead.

## Support for staff

The implementation and effectiveness of these guidelines will be monitored and evaluated regularly by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Assessment will be monitored through classroom observation, learning walks, work sampling, interviews with children and other methods as appropriate. If there are any queries, we will have professional dialogues with staff to understand how certain judgements have been made and to offer further support and guidance where it might be required. Following analysis of data, the SLT reports its findings to staff. The HT and deputy report to governors who have a strategic oversight of assessment data.

**S Greenaway, March 25**