

Meriden Church of England Primary School



Assessment

At Meriden Church of England Primary School we believe assessment is fundamental to being able to extend and challenge children's learning so that they can fulfil their potential.

Assessment is at the heart of teaching

- Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning
- Assessment provides the opportunity for children to demonstrate and review their progress

Assessment is fair, honest and consistent

- Assessment is inclusive of all abilities
- Assessment is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address
- Assessment outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects
- Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning
- Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy
- Judgements are formed according to common principles
- The results are readily understandable by third parties
- The school's results are capable of comparison with other local schools, both locally and nationally

Assessment helps drive improvement for pupils and teachers

- Assessment and feedback helps pupils in developing their learning
- Assessments provides meaningful and understandable information to parents to help them support their children with their learning
- Assessment supports teachers in planning teaching and learning sequences which develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of key concepts to a deep level
- Assessment provides meaningful and understandable information to school leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources

Assessment produces recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time.

Assessment without levels

Across Years 1-6 we are now using a new system of assessment to replace the previous 'levelling' which had operated nationally for many years. We have been working closely with other schools in Solihull to implement a 'system without levels' in order to set targets and track progress of children. This new system will continue to evolve so that children, parents, teachers and the government will be kept fully informed of progress made and standards achieved.

There are many levels of assessment within Meriden Primary. This is to ensure that your child's learning is targeted in order that they reach their full potential.

Daily formative assessment:

During every lesson, the teacher and teaching assistants are asking questions of your child and assessing their learning. Work is marked using the school policy <http://meridenceprimaryschool.co.uk/markin%20policy%202015.pdf> and this is also taken into account when planning the next lesson. Sometimes, your child's teacher will change the task mid-lesson if it is too challenging or more challenge is needed. We use success criteria and marking ladders to ensure that children have ownership of their next steps and these are directly linked with marking, questioning and feedback.

Half-termly

We complete formal summative assessments at the end of each unit of work to measure pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of key concepts. The results of these assessments are used to inform judgements of attainment which are placed on SIMS, our tracking system.

Each half term teachers will assess your child's learning against key indicators in the programme of study for the year group. Each key indicator will be graded as 1, 2 or 3 depending on the depth of their understanding. This is discussed with the headteacher, and sometimes a governor, as part of a pupil progress meeting. Books are also looked at to monitor progress and impact of teacher feedback including response marking. Children achieving mainly 1's will receive intervention to support them to gain a fuller understanding. Equally, a child who achieves mainly 2's but a 1 in a few areas may receive support on the areas they are weaker at. This helps them to get an even profile across the learning objectives.

There is a chart showing the key learning in the front of the child's book. For example, expectations for maths will be in the front of the maths book. Teachers will work with the pupils to complete the grids using the 1, 2, 3 system. This ensures that the pupil knows what their next steps in learning are. As pupil's progress through the school, their understanding of the process, and their input in it, increases.

Termly

Each child has a target for reading, writing and maths which will be 'Working Towards', 'Expected' or 'Working Above'. Half-termly assessments are used to monitor whether the child is on track to meet their target and year group results are reported on to governors. Your end of term report will inform you as to whether your child is on track to meet the expectations of the year group.

Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry to the school in either Nursery or Reception the children will be assessed to provide a baseline for their knowledge and skills. Baseline assessments will be completed in the fourth week after the children have arrived in the school. The results are used to inform planning, set targets and aid the early identification of special needs. Children will be assessed regularly to ensure that the next steps in learning are appropriately planned in order to help children make progress in the following areas:

The prime areas of learning:

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

The specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

In Reception there are 17 ELG (Early learning Goal) descriptors, together with a short narrative describing the child's three characteristics of effective learning. For each ELG practitioners must judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of Reception Year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding) or not yet reaching this level (emerging).



Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the assessment system have to change from levels?

Tim Oates, of Cambridge Assessment, talks about the rationale behind moving away from levels with the new national curriculum www.youtube.com/watch?v=-q5vrBXFpm0

A friend's child at another school is using a completely different system. Why is this?

With the removal of the level system, each school is responsible for the system which assesses the children. Therefore, it is theoretically possible that every school in the country could have a completely different system. As a school our new assessment strategies have developed on what has gone before, and now allow us to drill much further down into exactly which parts of a child's knowledge need to be addressed in order for them to improve.

What will be reported to us?

Each term you will receive a report concerning your child. These look different for each term. You will receive a full report in the Spring Term and interim reports in Autumn and Summer: all reports will include targets and whether your child is on track to reach the end of year expectations for their year group. We also focus on social and emotional aspects, as well as communication and language skills.

What does 'the expected standard' involve?

The definitions of the 4 standards that will be awarded at the end of each year are as follows:

1. Working above the expected standard

A child working above the expected standard have developed a very good understanding of the objectives covered and are able to apply their skills across the curriculum. For example: In maths, they may use their knowledge of subtraction methods to solve mathematical puzzles and investigations without it being referred to in the teacher's explanation. They may apply their understanding of using commas to mark clauses by writing a correctly punctuated prayer in their RE books without a reminder.

2. Working at the expected standard

A child working at the expected standard is confidently working on the curriculum for that year. In order to be working above the expected standard, a child will have to begin using these skills across the curriculum and in a wider context.

3. Working towards the expected standard:

A child working towards the expected standard will be working consistently on objectives for their year group and will achieve these with regular support and intervention.

4. Working below:

A child working below the expected standard will be working consistently on objectives for a prior year group. They require regular extra assistance to access the curriculum and would not be able to work towards their own year group objectives before certain key skills have been acquired.

My child is currently in Year 4 but definitely has the ability of a Year 5 child. Will they be given a standard for Year 4 or Year 5?

Children will all be awarded a standard for their current year group only. However, this does not mean they will be limited to their own year group's work in the classroom. They will continue to be challenged as you would obviously expect. These challenges will be aiming to increase the depth of their knowledge to ensure they continue to make the same progress year after year.

Who do I contact if I have a question about assessment?

We value feedback from children and parents as we implement changes to our assessment procedures. Your child's class teacher will be able to answer most questions about the assessment of your child. Any questions about wider assessment issues can be directed to Mr Browning or Mrs Winkler.

<http://meridenceprimaryschool.co.uk/Assessment%20Policy.pdf>