

St Thomas' CE Primary School

Assessment Principles

At our school assessment means continually evaluating children's knowledge, skills and understanding, establishing what children can do and what their next learning steps should be. Assessment is at the heart of the learning process. It provides valuable evidence to guide and improve teaching and learning. Alongside this it offers an opportunity for children to demonstrate and review their progress. It is an integral part of our relentlessly ambitious, high expectations culture.

We are committed to:

- Seeking and interpreting evidence for use by children and their teachers to decide where learners currently are in their learning, where they need to go next and how best to get there.
- Using assessment, day-to-day, in the classroom to raise children's achievement and their aspirations. We believe that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim (or close the gap in their knowledge).
- Providing children with clear, precise and easily comprehensible feedback, in oral and written forms, that will support their learning. We will always expect children to engage with this feedback and frequently we will ask them to respond to it. The quality and value of teachers' feedback will be evaluated by how great an impact it has on pupils' future progress.
- Involving children at all times in an ongoing self-improvement process and assisting them to understand that the continual quest to improve oneself is a crucial life skill. Assessment feedback should inspire ever greater effort and a belief that, through commitment, hard work and practise more can be achieved.
- The regular review of what has been learnt by children being built into our lesson structure and our programmes of study.
- Assessment drawing upon a wide range of evidence that establishes a full picture of what a child can do.
- Continually tracking the performance of children and using this information in four ways
 - to ensure that all children are suitably challenged
 - to provide additional challenge for those who are ready for this
 - to provide additional learning support for those who are currently finding learning more difficult
 - to ensure that every child really does matter and nobody is ever overlooked.

- Giving reliable, meaningful and regular information to parents about how their child is performing and how our school is performing. At all times this information will be clear, transparent and easily understood. It will be communicated in a format that parents can understand and it should assist them in supporting their child's future learning.
- Avoiding any tendency to judge, label or categorise children, but instead show a never ending commitment to the notion that all children can and will succeed. For this reason we will avoid using self-fulfilling terminology like '*more able*' and '*less able*'. In all we do and say we will communicate the message to children that they can and will succeed.
- The regular moderation of assessment judgements by professionals working within and beyond our school being used as a mechanism for refining the accuracy of those judgements.
- Making 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.
- Avoiding the tendency to continually test children, as we know that testing itself does not improve children's performance.
- Assessment providing information that is of value and justifies the time teachers spend on it.

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