



The Academy at
St James
Aspire, Achieve, Believe

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The Academy at St James

Assessment Policy



Headteacher:
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Introduction

Purpose:

We believe that assessment provides the basis of informed teaching, helping pupils to overcome difficulties and ensuring that teaching builds upon what has been learned. It is also the means by which pupils understand what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Formative assessment creates a positive learning environment where children can see the steps necessary for their own success. It enables teachers to set appropriate work at the level necessary for the children's continuing progress. Summative assessment is important for accurate information regarding a child's attainment and progress. It informs whole school target setting and prediction of a cohort's future attainment.

Aim(s):

1. Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning.
 - a. Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning.
 - b. Assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate and review their progress.
2. Assessment is fair.
 - a. Assessment is inclusive of all abilities.
 - b. Assessment is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.
3. Assessment is honest.
 - a. Assessment outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects.
 - b. Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning.
 - c. Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy.
4. Assessment is ambitious.
 - a. Assessment places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and expected standards.
 - b. Assessment embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child.
 - c. Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners.
5. Assessment is appropriate.
 - a. The purpose of any assessment process should be clearly stated.
 - b. Conclusions regarding pupil achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (to age, to the task and to the desired feedback information).
 - c. Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement.
 - d. Assessment should demand no more procedures or records than are practically required to allow pupils, their parents and teachers to plan future learning.
6. Assessment is consistent.
 - a. Judgements are formed according to common principles.
 - b. The results are readily understandable by third parties.
 - c. A school's results are capable of comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally.



7. Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:
- a. pupils in developing their learning;
 - b. parents in supporting children with their learning;
 - c. teachers in planning teaching and learning. Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent;
 - d. school leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
 - e. government and agents of government.
8. Assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

Taken from the NAHT Commission on Assessment Report 2014

Wider school aims / ethos:

Good quality assessment leads to high quality learning experiences. Through this children develop a love of learning and have high aspirations of what is achievable if they work hard.

Sources and references:

Lord Stuart Sutherland's report in the NAHT Commission on Assessment, February 2014

NAHT Commission on Assessment Report 2014

STAT Sheffield Model Assessment Policy



Procedures and practice

Aspects

Definition:

We use a combination of formative and summative assessments:

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning – AfL)

Formative assessment is a powerful way of improving pupils' achievement. It is based on the principle 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. Formative assessments are recorded using the EAZ Mag Tracker. This evidence is found at point of learning, at distance and both in and out of context.

Formative assessments are used to:

- identify children's strengths and gaps in their skills/knowledge
- identify next steps for learning
- inform future planning
- enable appropriate strategies to be employed
- facilitate the setting of appropriate targets for the class, group, and individual
- track children's rate of progress
- facilitate an evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- inform future teaching and learning strategies
- identify individuals and groups for specific intervention support.

Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

Summative assessment is important for informing both parents, governors and teachers of a child's attainment and progress. This will also inform whole school target setting and prediction of a cohort's future attainment. The EAZ Mag Tracking system is used to support the analysis of data.

Summative assessments are used to:

- identify attainment through one-off standardised tests at any given point in time
- record performance in a specific area on a specific date
- provide age standardised information
- provide end of key stage test data against which the school will be judged
- ensure statutory assessments at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are met
- provide information about cohort areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future

4. Planning for assessment

- The 2014 National Curriculum objectives and Development Matters are used to guide our teaching. These documents provide us with the framework to ensure breadth and balance in our curriculum.
- The school ensures that there is progression of skills planned in year on year.
- Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives and success criteria, based upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each child. We strive to ensure all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability.
- The Sheffield Teaching and Assessment Tool (STAT materials) are used alongside the New National Curriculum and this is used to make assessments for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 in Reading, Writing, Spelling Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) and Mathematics. STAT is effective in informing teachers about their pupils and enabling them to plan with clear differentiation. □

Teachers use focused marking to assess children's progress in relation to the planned learning objectives and set next steps to show where the child is in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim. Teachers use this information when planning for subsequent lessons.

Assessment and Reporting in the Foundation Stage

Children in the Foundation Stage are observed regularly against the 'Development Matters'/ Early Years outcomes objectives. Observations are ongoing and recording in many varied ways. Often, learning is captured through photographs, recorded on labels and on documents filed for each child. All the evidence for each child will help teachers make judgements on the Foundation Stage profile.

Focus Activities: during focus activities, teaching staff write comments on the child's work, often identifying the level of support needed or if the work was done independently. Next steps are also identified. Children, where possible, are encouraged to comment on their learning and next steps are also discussed with the children in child friendly terms.

Assessment and Recording in Key Stage 1 and 2

- Teachers use assessment for learning (AfL) to provide on-going assessment, through the use of focused marking and/or observations of children's work against learning objectives and success criteria. This information is then used to assess progress towards meeting learning targets and to identify and set next step targets for each child.
- Teachers use the STAT statement descriptors for each child on an on-going basis to record progress and to identify next steps for learning in reading, writing, SPaG and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is recorded in steps.



- The ongoing assessment information is recorded in EAZ Mag. This should be continually/regularly updated.
- Year group targets set expected National Curriculum Age Related Expectations (ARE) for individual children to reach at the end of each academic year.
- Annotated plans and planning notes made by class teachers and other adults involved with each child record other important information about the progress of children in the class.
- Target for Improvement sheets are written for any child who 'needs to catch up'. These sheets contain personalised and bespoke steps that aim to enable the child to make rapid progress and catch up.
- A variety of tests may be used from time to time as part of the assessment process to identify progress and gaps in learning.
- Children with identified special educational needs and those children not making expected progress are supported appropriately and their needs assessed regularly.
- Half termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to identify and analyse progress and set targets, in reading, writing, and mathematics for all classes.
- Assessments are passed on to the receiving teacher at the end of each academic year. These assessments are moderated and agreed by both parties.

5. Moderation

Regular moderation of pupils' achievements takes place regularly to ensure consistency of judgements. Teachers meet in phase groups or in cross phase groups to analyse children's work against National Curriculum level descriptors, APP, STAT materials or Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. On some occasions, moderation between schools takes place to provide external moderation. During the summer term, teachers in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 are involved in formal teacher assessments, as part of end of Key Stage assessments and local authority moderation. Pupils in Year 1 are tested on Phonics using the National Phonics Screening test.

6. Links to other policies and documents Please refer to:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy

Concluding notes

Monitoring and review:

This policy is subject to annual review, as part of the school self-evaluation process. Its success in relation to the school's attainment targets for assessment will be evaluated as part of the school's assessment audit. Lesson observation reports, scrutiny of work and marking, monitoring of planning and assessment analysis will be kept centrally in a school Assessment File.