

Thurnham C.E. Infant School



Assessment Policy

Member of Staff Responsible	Mrs E Pateman
Position	Deputy Headteacher / Assessment Leader
Dated	October 2019
Date of next review	October 2020

Thurnham C.E. Infant School

Equal Opportunities

Thurnham C.E. Infant School is committed to promoting the principles and practices of equality and inclusion. A whole school approach is used to ensure all children receive equality of opportunity - not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that each child may learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society. We acknowledge and respond to the differing needs of all children, whatever their cultural or ethnic background and experiences and whatever their physical and educational needs. We understand the importance of providing a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development and we undertake to make reasonable adjustments to enable all to participate and feel valued and supported.

Thurnham C.E. Infant School is fully committed to avoiding all forms of discrimination as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (including February 2013 update). This applies to all pupils, parents and staff members and includes inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, age, religion or belief, physical ability or disability, learning ability, other special education needs or academic or sporting ability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, family, culture or linguistic background), marital status and civil partnership, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

This policy is underwritten by our school Christian values of Kindness, Trust, Sharing, Respect, Love and Friendship. These form an integral part of all teaching and assessment at Thurnham C.E. Infant School.

1) **The Principles and aims of our Assessments**

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

Our mission statement, "At Thurnham School we learn to love and love to learn" is an important part of emphasising our Christian character as a Church school, alongside our six Christian values that were decided upon by the children themselves: Kindness, Trust, Sharing, Respect, Love and Friendship which form the back bone of all that we do in assessment.

We believe assessment should be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies in order to assess progress and diagnose any needed developments, whether on an individual, group, class or whole school basis.

We believe assessment is only effective if there is a regular review, communicated and acted upon at all levels.

Our assessment procedures are free from bias, stereotyping and generalisation in respect of gender, class, race, disability and special educational needs. However, we do analyse the progress of all our different groups in order to ensure that we meet individual and group needs.

Our AIMS of Assessment

- To identify and monitor children's progress.
- To provide teachers with useful information which they can use to plan further work targets for each child.
- To highlight strengths and weaknesses so that teaching can be targeted to individual needs.
- To celebrate children's achievements in a broad range of curriculum areas.
- To provide continuity and progression of learning between classes and year groups, and between infant and junior schools.
- To identify difficulties shared by children, including pupils who have SEN needs, so that help and support can be focused and effective.
- To provide parents with information about their child's progress at school.
- To comply with statutory requirements.
- To track a child's development throughout their time at Thurnham C.E. Infant School.
- To have cohesive procedures throughout the school.

Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning at our school

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

Assessment is fair

- 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 is honest

- Assessment outcomes are used in ways that will not cause unnecessary pressure for the pupils.
- Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist children with their learning.

Assessment is consistent

- Judgements are formed according to common principles.
- The results are readily understandable by third parties.

The school's results are compared with other schools, collaboratively, locally and nationally.

Assessment is ambitious

- Assessment places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and expected standards.
- Assessment embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child.
- Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners.

Assessment is appropriate

- The purpose of any assessment process is clearly stated.
- Conclusions regarding children's achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (to age, to the task and to the desired feedback information).
- Assessments consistently draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of each child's achievement.
- Assessment demands no more procedures or records than are practically required.

2) **Arrangements for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment at Thurnham C.E. Infant School**

- It is the responsibility of the Assessment Leader (Deputy Headteacher) and Headteacher to ensure that the assessment policy is maintained and followed by all members of the school staff.
- The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will monitor regularly the effectiveness of our assessment practices throughout the school. This will take place through lesson observations, work and planning scrutiny and Pupil Progress Meetings. Year Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their team members are following school procedures and supporting them with this as necessary. They too will undertake work scrutiny, lesson observations, planning scrutiny and data tracking activities.
- The effectiveness of this policy and practices will be judged by the ease and confidence with which staff are able to assess the children within their classes. How they are able to use these assessments to develop appropriate outcomes for all children and how well they are able to monitor and track the progress of all the children. Staff should have the confidence to be able to talk about the children within their classes and an understanding of their barriers to learning and of the next steps children need to take.
- The members of the Senior Leadership Team take into consideration our Raise on Line data and Making Figures Speak.

Governance

- The Evaluation Committee meets four times a year and considers our termly progress and outcomes as well as receiving tracking reports in a timely manner.
- Presentations and training are delivered by members of the senior teaching staff for the governors to ensure that their knowledge and understanding is kept up to date.
- Governors visit the school during the working day to see how it all looks in practice and thus to concrete their understanding.
- All governors are informed as to how the school compares locally and nationally to that of similar aged children.
- Governors have a copy of our Ofsted Dashboard so they are aware of any areas of concern or weakness.

3) **Information about how assessment outcomes will be collected and used.**

- At Thurnham C.E. Infant school we use the terms

Working Towards

Emerging

Expected and Exceeded

when we are assessing and reporting on the children's current progress within Key Stage 1. These terms are relative to each of the year groups and relate to the child's progress within that particular year.

- For our own internal tracking system we enter data numerically into SIMS. This also enables us to break each of the aspects of Emerging, Expected and Exceeded into lower and higher. In effect this gives us a 6-point range for the children. Not all children will make 6 stages of progress; some will exceed this and some may make less. When we discuss the children with their parents and report at the end of the year we use the terms Working Towards, Emerging, Expected and Exceeding against the National Standards set for that year group.
- At the end of Year 2 the terminology that is reported is slightly different:
 - Working Below the Expected Standard**
 - Working Towards the Expected Standard**
 - Working at the Expected Standard**
 - Working at a Greater Depth Within the Expected Standard**
- For tracking purposes we use the numerical system which enables us to look at progress across the school. This begins with on entry data in Reception and continues to the end of Year 2. This system tallies with our chosen terms.
- As a school we have embraced the concept of not levelling the children as levels can be seen as thresholds and progress becomes linked to moving onto the next level. We feel that our children should be offered a far wider and deeper understanding and curriculum. We seek to consolidate their understanding. We also found that parents and staff became very concerned about moving to the next level. Thus we have adopted the key terms as they are the ones chosen by Kent County Council to help schools when moderating and on their Draft Tracking statements. These statements will be used by schools when moderating together and will become a common language.
- A further reason we chose to use these terms was in the progression from our Early Years. These are the terms used to describe children in relation to the Development Matters.
- It is the aim of all the staff within our school to get all our children to Expected. Many of our children go on to greater levels of mastery and are able to Exceed.

- Writing: Six times a year we assess and moderate our children's writing. This is a summative assessment and information is entered onto our SIMS (School Information Management System) tracking system. This gives our teachers a chance to see how well the children are progressing and whether any additional support or changes need to be made. This information is then used to see whether there are any noticeable gaps in children's outcomes. We consider all our vulnerable groups including boys and girls and Summer born children.
- Reading and Mathematics are bench marked during our term 1 target setting meetings and then at three other points in the year. This information is also entered into SIMS for the same purposes as the writing.
- Year 2 teachers make reported judgements about their children's progress at the end of every term - 6 times a year.
- Science and the remaining subjects are assessed at the end of the year and a judgement made as to whether they have met the Expected Standard.
- Parents are informed as to how well their children are progressing towards the national Expected standard at parent evening meetings. Targets are set with the children and parents to help the children understand their next steps.
- To help teachers inform their decisions they highlight the Kent Statements in Mathematics and Writing throughout the year. These help when looking to see what gaps there are in the children's understanding and whether they have met or Exceeded the national expectations.
- Science sheets are also highlighted at the end of each topic area.
- Assessments are also made in Religious Information and shared with the RE Subject Leader.
- In reading teachers make formative assessments based on each guided reading session. These sheets match the statements in the Kent Reading Statements.

Moderation

- Moderation will take place across the school in reading, writing and mathematics three times a year. Year Groups will be continually monitoring and moderating their outcomes to adapt the short and medium terms appropriately.
- These moderation sessions help ensure there is consistency and accuracy within our judgements.
- External cross school moderation takes place at least twice a year with all the local schools.
- English, Mathematics and Science Subject Leaders may also attend county moderation sessions to ensure we have the correct understanding and accuracy in our judgements.
- We also moderate when possible with junior school in the consortium so that they can see how our judgements and assessments are undertaken. Further moderation takes place when our two external moderators visit other schools in terms 5 and 6. This helps develop and secure their own knowledge and gives them a further clarity to what judgements are made within our school.

4) Arrangements for ensuring that teachers are able to conduct assessments competently and confidently

- Staff will be involved in any changes to the way we assess, or the methods which we use to gain information and how judgements are made. Through staff meetings and PPA sessions (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) staff will be able to discuss and be made aware of any changes to procedure. Also, the way in which we are changing and the rationale and thoughts behind these changes are explained.
- As a school we work well together as part of a year group team and then as part of the whole school staff. We have very strong middle leaders who keep themselves informed of what is happening not just in our school but in schools in the local area. All our middle leaders are responsible for a core curriculum area. Through networking and meetings they are made aware of the national agenda in their specific areas. They then inform their team and the staff of these changes.
- The Senior Leadership Team meet once a month and discuss any issues or changes. Assessment and monitoring is always on the agenda.
- As a staff we always share good practice we have seen or learned about from other schools.

- The Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher keep informed of the local and national scene and share this with their leadership team, staff and governors.
- Pupil Progress Meetings are held four times a year. The Autumn term meeting is designed to discuss the children who staff feel may not meet the Expected standard at the end of year. Discussions are also held as to ways to support the children who will Exceed the standard. The other meetings are to track the progress of all children and discuss those who are not for various reasons making the progress they should. Interventions and support are discussed. All vulnerable groups are considered and the teaching staff are supported with any needs that have arisen within their classes.

5) **Details of the approaches we use to different forms of assessment at Thurnham C.E. Infant School**

Day to day in school formative assessment

At Thurnham C.E. Infant School we understand that assessment of children's achievement leads to our teachers asking, "What does this child/these children need to learn now in order to make improvements and progress?"

Or

"How can I extend/ enrich them further?"

- Assessment for Learning is pivotal and underpins Thurnham C.E. Infant School's approach to Teaching and Learning. Staff use Learning Objectives, Success Criteria, effective marking and peer and self-assessment to engage pupils in their own learning journey and to inform them of their next steps.
- Assessment opportunities are identified in our planning. Marking is in line with the Marking Policy and will identify successes and areas for improvements.
- We use a range of mixed ability sessions to help support and extend all the children. In writing sessions we have found it is better for the children to sit at mixed ability tables. It provides opportunity for all.
- In some sessions, particularly mathematics, the children work in ability groupings. This is so the tasks may be specifically aimed at the ability of the children, whether it is enrichment or supporting tasks.
- As detailed in our marking policy we assess/deep mark the children who are in our guided groups for that session. We extend and support at the time of working. Green marking shows what has been really successful

and Pink is an aspect the child needs to develop or revisit. There is then a response from the child at the time. The information gained during these sessions is then used to plan the next steps.

- Teachers use Lolly sticks to randomly select pupils to answer questions when on the carpet. This provides opportunity for all and ensures all children remain engaged.
- Talk partners are widely used to help peer to peer assessment and support.
- All staff use open ended and higher order questions when investigating understanding.
- Teaching Assistants and other helpers will often Scribe or make observation notes during carpet sessions. This gives the teachers invaluable insight and response to the children's understanding
- Photographs are used to capture practical activities. These then get added to the child's book and are annotated.
- Children show their understanding through responses on the carpet. Fans are used by the children with three different coloured faces on them. Those who have shown an orange or red face then have the task/activity reinforced before they begin or leave the carpet.
- Mini plenaries are used by the teachers to check understanding. Often a session will be paused to check in on the children's understanding and to provide feedback to the teacher to gauge how well the session has been pitched.
- All children are aware of their success criteria before they begin each session. These are shared and often negotiated.
- Children use peer assessment to mark work on whiteboards or to give feedback during the plenary at the end. Staff use a range of methods including Three Stars and a Wish.
- Once the task has been completed through talking to the children and looking at the books staff are very quick to become aware of those who did not grasp the activity. These children will then be supported either by the class teacher or teaching assistant with a boost or recap session so they are ready for the next session.
- Once an activity has been completed the children respond in their books as to how well it went. We use a smiley face system - When the work is marked the adult also responds with a face so that the child can see.

SEN:

Our pupils who are identified as having SENS or SEND are also involved in the assessments process in the same way as their peers.

Assessments made on these pupils will be based on the curriculum they are following. In some cases if they finished the previous year at working towards then they will be continuing with that curriculum the next year. For example, a pupil who ended Year 1 as Working Towards the Year 1 curriculum will begin Year 2 still working to achieve the Year 1 curriculum. They will still be covering aspects of Year 2 but assessments will be made against the previous year until their teacher is confident they have grasped it.

The process and support for children with Special Educational Needs is detailed in the school's *Special Educational Needs Policy and SEN Information Report* which can be found on our website.

Day to Day in school summative assessment

As a school we have chosen NOT to purchase any commercial packages or assessments. We use a range of methods to help us decide we are confident that the children have demonstrated the skills and competencies to reach Expected and beyond. Our highlighter sheets help us to confirm and cement our judgements along with our moderation sessions.

- Summative assessment at Thurnham C.E. Infant School is used to inform parents of their child's development and progress. This is shared not only during Parent's evenings but at any other time they wish to talk to the teacher about their child.
- Homework goes home on a weekly basis and this helps parents to see how well their children are progressing. They can get an understanding from how well they were independently able to attempt a task or how much support they needed.
- Contact books go home daily and comments are added by parents about reading attainment or anything they wish to share with the school. Staff also comment about the children's progress and achievements within the contact book.
- The children in Reception have home learning books which go home every week with a task or challenge in them. The Learning Journeys also go home and parents are encouraged to celebrate achievements and fun adventures within them. These give our parents a chance to discuss the learning within school and to add their own photos and events.

- Children in Years 1 and 2 have weekly spellings and Mathematics homework - these are then checked in school and the outcomes sent home each week.
- Year 2 also have a homework challenge set.
- End of term Moderated Writing.
- For tasks that require recording a shared success criteria is stuck in with the task.
- During the marking process the adult who has been working with the child will highlight whether they achieved statement. This helps form an overall picture of the child's successes over a period of sessions.
- Children who are working at closing the gap from the year below will have an individual or adapted success criteria. So, they too feel that they are able to achieve.

See our Marking and Feedback Policy

Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment

At Thurnham C.E. Infant school we strive to achieve the very best for all our children. To do this we keep abreast of all current initiatives. We invest in our teachers attending training and networking sessions. These sessions ensure staff are confident that all statutory assessments are undertaken correctly and successfully, that they are aware of the content of these assessments and that all children are well prepared when they encounter them.

The National Assessments, which are reported nationally, that our children undertake during their time at our school, are:

Reception Year:

- End of Foundation Stage assessments against the Early
- Learning goals.

Year 1:

- Phonics Screener Assessment.

Year 2:

- End of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in Reading, Writing, Spelling Punctuation and Grammar, Mathematics and Science
- End of Key Stage 1 National Standardised Assessment Tests in Reading, Writing, Spelling Punctuation and Grammar, Mathematics and Science.

At the end of Year 2 the terminology that is reported is slightly different:

Working Below the Expected Standard

Working Towards the Expected Standard

Working at the Expected Standard

Working at a Greater Depth Within the Expected Standard