

Assessment Without Levels

Introduction

In April 2014, the Department for Education released “Assessment Principles”, a document outlining the core values all effective assessment systems should implement as part of the changes introduced with the 2014 National Curriculum.

As the “Government will not impose a single system for ongoing assessment”, it is up to schools to implement a system that can: “Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child’s school, is performing, help drive improvement for pupils and teachers, and make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation.”

Background: Curriculum 2014

The main changes to the core subjects are:

English

The programme of study for English is knowledge-based; this means its focus is on knowing facts rather than developing skills and understanding. It is also characterised by an increased emphasis on the technical aspects of language and less emphasis on the creative aspects. English is set out year by year in Key Stage 1 and two-yearly in Key Stage 2. Appendices give specific content to be covered in the areas of spelling and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. These are set out yearly across both key stages.

Mathematics

The main areas in the programme of study for mathematics are called domains. These are number, measurement, geometry, statistics, ratio and proportion and algebra. Two of these, number and geometry, are further divided into subdomains. The way that the curriculum is organised varies across the primary age range – every year group has a unique combination of domains and subdomains. There is no longer a separate strand of objectives related to using and applying mathematics. Instead, there are problem-solving objectives within the other areas of study. Most of the changes to the mathematics curriculum involve content being brought down to earlier years.

Assessing Without Levels

Assessment will be guided by the end of year expectations for each year group, split into 3 categories as follows:

- Below — Yet to be secure in the end of year expectations.
- At — Secure in the majority of the end of year expectations.
- Above — Secure in almost all or all the end of year expectations and is able to use and apply their knowledge and skills confidently.

Children who are Above are required to add more depth and breadth to their knowledge, and to have more opportunities to develop their using and applying skills (Mastery and Depth). Only Above children will move into working towards the end of year expectations from the year above. Similarly, children who are unlikely to be Below at the end of the year may work towards the expectations from the year below.

Key Stage 1

St. Wilfrid's CE Primary School

It is anticipated that the majority of children will reach the assessment point of Year 2 At, a smaller number of children will reach Year 2 Above, and a small number will be Year 2 below, or possibly Year 1 Above/ At/ Below.

Key Stage 2

Similarly, the target for Year 6 children will be At; some children may be Above and some children who are Year 6 Below. There may also be a small number of children who are still working at a lower level e.g. Year 4/5 Below/ At/ Above.

Assessing and Tracking

A tracking document has been developed using a variety of available information to monitor individuals and groups of children throughout KS1 and KS2. A numerical value, derived from on-going assessment will indicate how a child is performing against the Age Related Expectations: 1 = Below, 2 = At and 3 = Above

The National Curriculum sets out expectations for each year group and children will be assessed against those every year, therefore, a child's target will always be the end of year expectation in the first instance. This target may then be modified according to progress and prior attainment.

In the autumn term, by the 1st assessment point (approx.12 weeks), teachers will have had an opportunity to assess how the children are working and set a target for the end of the year (3rd assessment point, 36 weeks), judged against the End of Year statements.

During the year (moderation, analysis, parents' evenings, etc), progress can be discussed in terms of if a child is on track to meet their end of year target. It may well be that they are above or below where they need to be, in which case their end of year target may be adjusted.