

Assessment Policy



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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our school's approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated
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2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

This policy refers to the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.

It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

3. Principles of assessment

At Headlands, assessment is considered a continuous process which is integral to all teaching and learning taking place as well as curriculum development. We acknowledge that high-quality teaching supported by ongoing formative assessment should be at the heart of good practice whether in the classroom or whilst providing remote education provision (see Appendix 1 - COVID Addendum). Both are key in raising standards, enriching learning and enabling teachers to grow professionally and make the best use of their time, knowledge and skills.

At Headlands, we aim to ensure that:

- Assessment is an integral part of teaching, based on best practice, focusing on the curriculum and that it lies at the heart of promoting children's education;
- High quality, in depth teaching, is supported and informed by high quality formative assessment;
- The school ethos promotes and emphasises the opportunity for all children to succeed if taught and assessed effectively regardless of their gender, disability ethnicity or background;
- There is always a clear purpose for assessing and assessment is fit for its intended purpose;
- Assessment is used to focus on monitoring and supporting children's progress, attainment and wider outcomes;
- Assessment provides information which is clear, reliable, free from bias and informs teaching and learning;
- Assessment supports informative and productive conversations amongst staff and with pupils and parents;

- Children take responsibility for achievements and are encouraged to reflect on their own progress, understand their strengths and identify what they need to do to improve;
- We achieve our assessment without adding unnecessarily to teacher workload;
- Assessment is inclusive of all abilities
- A range of assessment tools are used including Day to Day In-School Formative Assessment, In School Summative Assessment and Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment.

4. Assessment approaches

At Headlands, we use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Formative assessment refers to the wide variety of methods used by teachers during the daily learning process to assess pupils' understanding and progress in order to modify teaching and learning activities as necessary.

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve or areas in which they excel
- **Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

At Headlands, marking is integral to the formative assessment process and provides opportunities to actively involve pupils in their own learning. Marking at Headlands takes the form of oral feedback, written feedback, peer marking or self-marking. Carrying out observations of pupils is another technique used to formatively assess at Headlands, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. If/when gaps and misconceptions are identified it is our intention that this information is responded to as quickly as possible. This often means that planning is adapted so that the next day's teaching is tailored accordingly. In some year groups, interventions are carried out the very same day and pupils may be withdrawn from class to work with a teacher or teaching assistant in order to consolidate learning objectives. Formative assessment techniques are also used to ensure that children's work is sufficiently challenging and it is common practice at Headlands for teachers to prepare challenge/think tasks for children to complete if/when an opportunity arises to broaden and deepen their understanding.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Summative judgements are often informed by more formal tests. Summative assessments take place less frequently; usually at the end of a unit of work or period of time. They can help determine what skills have been embedded and can now be applied by pupils and help teachers to ascertain the learning goals that have been met.

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders and governors** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

At Headlands, we use an online assessment management system called Target Tracker to support our ongoing formative assessment in English and Maths and to assist us in making summative evaluations regarding how much a pupil has learned at the end of a specific teaching period. Teachers tread with caution when using this system and are very mindful to ensure that they do not simply track teaching coverage but instead make accurate observations about the exact skills that individual children have acquired and can apply across a range of contexts. Using this management system, a pupil's ongoing progress towards achieving National Curriculum statements can be tracked. Summative step judgements can be made for each child at the end of a teaching period to assess their attainment in relation to age related expectations. In EYFS, a programme called Evidence Me is used to collate written observations/photographs which contribute to personalised learning journeys for our youngest pupils.

At Headlands, we have reduced the number of times in a year that we collect and report assessment data. We recognise that over-frequent summative testing can add unnecessarily to teacher workload and is likely to take time away from quality first teaching and on-going formative assessment. A detailed schedule for assessment is devised each year and key dates are shared with staff and governors. In many year groups, pupils will take age-appropriate summative tests at the end of a teaching period. The taking of these tests provides pupils with further opportunities to demonstrate retention and independent application of skills that they have acquired and also supports and validates the judgements made by teachers as part of their formative assessment processes.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments at Headlands include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of Reception
- Phonics screening check in Year 1 (plus re-checks in Year 2 for pupils who did not meet the required standard in Year 1)
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 6)
- Multiplication Tables Check in Year 4 (postponed in 2021, planned to be introduced in June 2022)

5. Collecting and using data

At the end of each teaching period, teachers complete pupil progress discussion sheets in response to the summative judgements that they have made. They complete records for Reading, Writing, Maths and SPAG. These records are shared and discussed with key stage managers during pupil progress meetings. During these meetings, the record sheets enable the progress and attainment of all pupils (including those in vulnerable groups) to be discussed. Actions are considered for those pupils where intervention is felt necessary. These actions are recorded on cohort provision maps which are reviewed regularly. Actions are acted upon as quickly as possible in order to secure next steps for pupils and ensure maximum impact upon teaching and learning.

At the end of each term, teachers also make judgements regarding pupils' progress and attainment within the non-core curriculum subjects. Pupils are assessed against taught objectives and teachers make a best fit judgement regarding whether pupils are working towards, at or beyond expectation for a particular stage in the year.

Data is collated by the assessment manager and subject leaders, analysed further then shared with other members of the SLT and governors. The findings help to determine potential CPD/enrichment opportunities and feed into the continuous cycle of school improvement and budget planning.

6. Reporting to parents

At Headlands, we value and continuously seek to strengthen our relationship with parents and carers. If concerns arise, parents are encouraged to contact school without hesitation in order to speak to a class teacher about the learning and progress of their child. All parents are invited into school to meet class teachers during our parent consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms. We also hold drop in sessions for parents in July when teachers are available to discuss written annual reports.

Written annual reports for pupils are sent home to parents once a year, in the Summer term. They measure pupils' attainment against age related expectations and comments are made about progress. Strengths, areas for development and targets in core subjects are shared with parents. Achievements in others subjects and enrichment activities that form part of the wider school curriculum are also outlined. For pupils in Years Two and Six, the results from nationally standardised summative assessments are also listed so that parents can ascertain how their child and the school has performed in relation to other pupils nationally. Parents of pupils in Year One receive the results of their child's Phonics Screening Check. From June 2022 onwards, parents of pupils in Year Four will also receive the results of their child's Multiplication Tables Check.

A pupil's attendance record is also included in the annual written report. The total number of possible attendances for each pupil are shared alongside the total number of unauthorised absences for that pupil.

Written reports for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are also sent home in the Summer term. Pupils' progress is outlined in relation to both the Prime and Specific areas of learning and parents of pupils in Reception will be informed whether or not their child has achieved a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of EYFS. Characteristics of learning for each individual child are also listed which explain the way in which each pupil uniquely engages with other people and the environment around them. In addition to this, there are also regular opportunities for parents of pupils in EYFS to come into school to look through their child's ongoing learning journey documents.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

8.2 Senior Leaders

The headteacher, assessment manager and subject leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring of standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Ensuring that the school stays abreast of good practice
- Ensuring all teachers, especially NQTs, have a good understanding of the assessment procedures and have access to training and development opportunities where necessary

8.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy

9. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by the Achievement and Curriculum Committee of the governing body.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The assessment manager is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The SLT will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Moderation
- Lesson Observations
- Work Scrutiny
- Pupil Progress Meetings
- Learning Walks

Appendix 1 - COVID-19 Addendum

During the COVID-19 pandemic there are circumstances in which it will be necessary to educate pupils remotely rather than in the school classroom setting. These circumstances may include the self-isolation of individual pupils, whole year group bubble closures and whole school closures.

When educating pupils remotely, formative assessment will remain integral to the process of teaching and learning. Verbal feedback will be provided as appropriate during live lessons and all work submitted online will continue to be marked by teachers and teaching assistants in line with the school marking policy. Through the feedback provided online, pupils will still be aware of their successes and areas to develop. In some cases, through the use of the Microsoft Forms tool, pupils will be able to receive instant automated responses to answers that they have submitted.

Parents of pupils in EYFS will be encouraged to use the 'Parent Share' function of the Evidence Me APP to submit observations of pupils' practical responses to tasks/activities set by the class teacher. Teachers will be able to acknowledge the observations that have been submitted and will be able to provide feedback/challenge through the APP. When appropriate, teachers will also be able to authorise which observations are included in the child's ongoing EYFS learning journey.

In-school summative assessments will still take place as appropriate (COVID permitting). Senior leaders will still aim to hold three pupil progress meetings during the academic year but these will take place remotely.

All Nationally Standardised Summative Assessments have been cancelled by the DfE during the pandemic. The administration of these assessments will remain under review.