Assessment Policy

Agreed on: Spring Term 2025

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Assessment Policy

The principles and aims of assessment

The primary principle of assessment is that it should be fit for the purpose intended. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and lies at the heart of promoting pupils' education. It should provide information which is clear, reliable and free from bias and for all pupils. Our school assessment is tailored to the needs of the pupils, parents, staff and the school's curriculum

There are two types of assessment as defined below:

In-school formative assessment

The primary purpose of formative assessment is to inform teaching and learning and to identify pupils' gaps and misconceptions. Learning can then be tailored to meet the needs of each child, no matter what their attainment. Pupils have regular opportunities to engage in formative assessment and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.

For example:
- Questions and answer sessions during class;
- Marking of pupils' work and feedback of strengths and areas of development;
- Observational assessment;
- Scanning pupils' work for attainment and development;
- Assessing pupils' understanding of concepts, so any gaps or misconceptions are addressed;

Unnecessary recording of formative assessment should be avoided by staff.

In-school summative assessment

An effective in-school summative assessment is one that provides schools with information they can use to monitor and support pupils' progress, attainment and wider outcomes.

For example:
- PiXL Assessment windows and QLAs;
- Independent pieces of writing;
- 'Gold' pieces of work completed at the end of a Science unit; and
- Review of SEND ADPR.

There are also national, standardised summative assessments.

For example:
- National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2;
- National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1;
- Phonics Screening Check;
- Multiplication Check; and
- Baseline assessment in the Foundation Stage (Statutory from September 2016).

Assessment arrangements for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment

The Governing body, through the work of the Headteacher, monitors and reviews the effectiveness of assessment and this policy. The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and team leaders monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices throughout the school on a regular basis.

We have set criteria by which effectiveness of this policy and assessment practices are judged. There are regular reviews of classroom practice through:

- drop-ins;
- observations;
- book scrutinies;
- pupil voice;
- teacher voice;
- parent questionnaires; and
- learning walks.

Internal and external moderation is regularly used throughout the academic year to help ensure consistency and accuracy of assessment judgements.

Effective In-School Assessment

Effective in-school 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 evaluate what children already know, to evaluate learning at the end of a unit, and evaluate the impact of their 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 of time.

Assessing pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, all children are assessed using a RAG rating system to establish if they are on track (OT), just below (JB) or significantly below (B) meeting the expected milestones. A baseline assessment is completed when children begin in Pre-School or Reception and then at the end of each term. At the end of the Reception year, the children are assessed using the EYFS Profile which is a Statutory Assessment and this data is reported to the Local Authority. Assessment is based on the knowledge of practitioners, but check points have been written for each assessment point to ensure that there is consistency in the judgements being made.

In Reception, the children are also assessed within their first six weeks of joining the school using the Reception Baseline Assessment, which is statutory. These results are reported directly to the DFE.

Assessing pupils in Year 1

Phonics Screening Checks (PSC) are completed in June and are an externally monitored statutory assessment. Taught phonics sessions include reading pseudo 'nonsense' words which form a large part of the check. Children complete a 'mock' phonics screening check at the end of the Autumn term and then again at Easter to track progress and give predicted outcomes for the June check. This also gives children exposure to the style of the check and helps them to become familiar with the way the check is organised (1-2-1 in a quiet setting). This also allows staff to determine which pupils need extra

support in phonics and where gaps are in teaching. This tracking also allows the school to see how many pupils are on track to meet the standard and whether we are in line to meet our set target at the end of the year. For children who do not pass the screening check in Year 1 retake the check the following June in Year 2. During the child's time in Year 2 they receive phonics intervention as appropriate for the gaps in their knowledge. Pupils who did not meet the standard at the end of Year 2 continue to be tracked into KS2. The school holds a meeting for parents during the Spring Term to provide information about the PSC and how we assess and prepare for it. PSC scores are communicated to parents alongside their end of year report.

To complement the PSC, benchmarking reading ability using colour bands provides a systematic approach to tracking student progress. The colour bands, which range from pink for early readers to lime green for more advanced proficiency, are aligned with the National Curriculum expectations. Regular assessments using these bands enable teachers to monitor individual progress, inform instruction, and ensure that the reading curriculum is tailored to meet the diverse needs of Year 1 pupils. The combination of the phonics screening check and colour band benchmarking fosters a comprehensive understanding of each child's literacy development, ultimately aiming to build a strong foundation for lifelong reading skills.

PiXL Primary Assessments for Years 2-6 (Reading, GPS & Mathematics)

At Thorndown Primary School, we follow a calendar of PiXL assessments for Years 2-6. The ultimate aim of PiXL assessments is to support data wisdom in schools. Data wisdom is the ability to use data, information and knowledge to inform decisions – whether in terms of classroom planning, long-term planning or continuous professional development – which will impact on pupils' outcomes and life chances.

The PiXL assessments core purpose is to support in identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding so that adjustments to planning and teaching can be made accordingly. The extensive tools which form part of PiXL allow teachers and school leaders to analyse assessments forensically so that they inform planning for the cohort as a whole and for individual groups of pupils.

PiXL assessments provide teachers and school leaders with useful information about whole cohorts, groups, individuals and subjects. There are usually 3 assessment 'windows' for each year group per year (with 4 available for Year 6).

In Year 2, the autumn and spring assessments are designed to be progressive so that content and conceptual difficulty builds on previous assessments. All PiXL assessments in Years 3 to 5 are effectively designed as end-of-year assessments. This is simply because schools' curricular vary and therefore the partnership are unable to design an end-of-term assessment suitable for all schools. However, it is important that school staff and leaders are aware that, in line with national end of Key Stage 2 tests, approximately 50% of each of the assessments are designed to assess content from previous years. This is content that is important for pupils to secure and therefore identifying where there may be gaps in this content is crucial, even in the autumn term.

The PiXL Partnership provides schools with a number of tools to support the analysis process, to benchmark against schools across the partnership and to help prioritise the areas for improvement to focus on. These include:

- **MARK ENTRY SPREADSHEET/QUESTION LEVEL ANALYSIS (QLA):** This is conditionally formatted, giving teachers and leaders a visual way of analysing data as soon as the spreadsheet is populated. Each question is categorised by Topic, Year Group (for Maths) and Question Focus, which facilitates laser-sharp analysis of pupils' performance in the areas covered by the assessment, for individual pupils, groups of pupils or the whole cohort.

- **PUPIL REPORTS:** Individual pupil reports are available following the upload of the mark entry spreadsheet. The individual pupil reports RAG rate (red-amber-green) each pupil against all the topics assessed in the paper and highlight the main areas for improvement. With careful consideration – and an awareness that these reports only provide a snapshot from a moment-in-time assessment – pupil reports can be used productively to inform, for example, pupil conferencing, tutoring, therapies and discussions with parents.

- **IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING (IfT) REPORTS:** One of the most important aspect of assessments is for school staff to use them as a teaching and learning tool by identifying gaps and putting in strategies to close these gaps. The Implications for Teaching Reports support schools in doing this. Following each window of assessments, IfT reports are created based on pupils' performance in the subjects. They highlight areas which schools may wish to focus on based on their performance in comparison to the PiXL partnership.

Assessing pupils with SEND

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. Phonics assessments, progress against APDRs and EHCP targets as well as assessments used in specialist SEN programs, will be used to measure a child's individual progress.

Writing

Writing is assessed using writing indicators for each year group. Each year group will have statements that addresses the working towards age related expectations, working at age related expectations and working at greater depth within the expected standard. There is a whole-school expectation for writing opportunities to take place regularly and throughout units of work, as well as in other subject areas. Teachers are expected to assess at least two pieces of independent writing per term using the writing indicators for the year group that the child is working within.

Writing Moderation

Teachers, subject leaders and senior leaders moderate collections of writing across school to ensure that judgements are accurate. Termly summative assessment judgements are based on professional judgement and a variety of writing evidence which will come from across the curriculum subjects. Writing will be assessed "over time" so that there are ample opportunities for children to meet the expectations of the standards they are working towards in their year group. The model that Thorndown Primary School has adopted is the "secure fit model" - meaning that children must have evidence of all statements that been achieved (over a collection of work) before being awarded that standard.

Assessment Language

At the end of autumn and spring term, teachers will record their professional predictions (based on a pupil's current rate of progress) about what a pupil *could achieve* by the end of the academic year. As such, these predictions do not provide a picture of current attainment. This will be recorded on the school's data tracking system (OTrack). There are 6 PiXL grades which span all year groups:

Grades	Definition
A1	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil will secure above expected standard/greater depth within the expected standard at the end of the year.
A2	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil will securely achieve age related expectations and is showing potential to achieve above expected standard/greater depth at the end of the year.
E1	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil will secure expected standard/age related expectations at the end of the year.
E2	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil is likely to achieve expected standard/age related expectations at the end of the year, but may need some additional support and intervention to do so.
B1	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil will not achieve expected standard/age related expectations and would need forensic, high-quality additional support to do so. They are likely to be working towards age related expectations at the end of the year.
B2	Based on current rate of progress, the pupil is not expected to achieve the expected standard for their year group.

At the end of summer term, teachers will record their final professional judgement about what a pupil *has achieved*. This will also be recorded on the school's data tracking system (OTrack). In this case, there are 4 grades which span all year groups:

Grades	Definition
A1	The pupil has achieved above expected standard/greater depth within the expected standard.
E1	The pupil has achieved expected standard/age related expectations.
B1	The pupil has not achieved expected standard/age related expectations; they have achieved working towards age related expectations.
B2	The pupil has not achieved the expected standard for their year group and has been assessed on a different year group's objectives.

How we use assessment outcomes

At Thorndown, we record pupil progress assessment data termly on to our monitoring system. We do this as part of our on-going monitoring and reviewing of pupil progress. This data is shared by the class teacher with team leaders through pupil progress meetings and is then moderated by the Senior Leadership Team. The attainment and progress of different groups of pupils is analysed, for example those who receive Pupil Premium funding or have English as an additional language to ensure all groups of pupils are making the high levels of progress expected. This assessment data summary is then shared with governors every term.

If a child has barriers to their learning and progress, interventions may be put into place. These interventions, which are monitored for impact regularly, are woven into our practice to ensure that pupils falling behind their peers receive targeted support in reading, writing and maths.

Pupils' progress data and information are shared termly with parents through parents' evenings and our end of year report. Assessment information is always available for parents at other times in the year on request. Both assessment outcomes and pupil targets are shared with parents to enable them to support their child's learning.

We only collect data which provides information about genuine learning and progress. Therefore, we aim to collect valid and reliable data to capture authentic learning in the classroom. This data must be free from bias and regularly moderated, both internally and externally, for consistency.

High expectations

At Thorndown we have high expectations for learning, which apply equally to pupils with SEN and disabilities.

Implementation

This assessment policy is a live document, against which success can be regularly evaluated by staff to allow for continuous improvement. All staff have access to this policy, both in our induction pack and through regular updates online. Assessment must always be of a high quality to have maximum impact on pupil learning.

Throughout the year, school and team moderation of pupil assessments for quality and accuracy take place in English and Maths. There are also opportunities to moderate externally through Local Authority meetings and with cluster schools. Senior leaders will ensure the school is aware of current good practice through Local Authority briefings, DfE updates and professional development.

All staff have access to high quality professional development opportunities to improve their confidence and accuracy in conducting all forms of assessment. The responsibility of providing high quality professional development will be led by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

Assessment must never limit pupils' learning or develop ideas of fixed ability. There will always be an opportunity for all pupils to succeed if taught and assessed effectively.

The school will ensure that parents and carers have access to this policy by ensuring that it is accessible on the website.

Appendix 1 - Marking and Feedback Policy

The purpose of Marking and Feedback is to:

1. Understand what pupils have done well;
2. Understand how to improve; and
3. Make visible signs of improvement as a result of feedback.

Points to consider are:

1. Pupils need to understand what they have done well and the reasons for it. Discussions with pupils about recently marked work should demonstrate a good understanding of both of these points.
2. To ensure all pupils understand how to improve, different types of prompts should be used. Thorndown Primary School uses a mixture of challenge, reminder, process and example prompts as appropriate to help pupils to understand.
3. Without visible signs of progress emerging from marking or feedback, there are no signs of effectiveness. Teachers and Teaching Assistants will ensure time is given to review guidance so that pupils may act upon it and make improvements.

To ensure consistency:

1. The three purposes of marking should be evident in all classes and in all subjects throughout the school. However, individual staff's approaches may differ.
2. Sometimes it is appropriate to give feedback verbally and sometimes it is more effective to give written feedback with an adult. Each time, the three purposes of marking should be developed.
3. Consistent use of stamps and prompts throughout the school ensures all pupils are familiar with the code for feedback. The codes are listed below.
4. Feedback to pupils should be given as quickly as possible, so misconceptions are quickly corrected and the pupil can move on in their learning.
5. A smiley face drawing can be used if a child can move up the behaviour crystal due to the effort shown in their work.

Evaluation:

- Frequent work scrutiny and discussions with pupils will be undertaken by senior leaders to ensure the three purposes of marking are of a consistently high quality throughout the school.

Marking Procedures

Teachers to use a **blue pen**   TAs to use a **purple pen**   Pupils to use a **green pen**

DATES

Reception & Year 1

Reception pupils to begin to write the *short date* from Spring B.

Year 1 pupils to write the *short date* and <u>underline</u> it independently by Summer A.

Year 1 & 2

In English lessons, pupils write the *long date* and <u>underline</u> it.

All other subjects pupils write the *short date* and <u>underline</u> it.

Year 3 - Year 6

In Maths pupils write the *short date* and <u>underline</u> it.

All other subjects pupils write the *long date* and <u>underline</u> it.

STICKMEN

Reception – Year 6

This represents a teacher worked with that child (alone or in a group)

There is no requirement for any written comments such as 'CS focus group'; the stickman is the signifying factor.

This represents a TA worked with that child (alone or in a group)

This represents that the child worked independently

This represents a child worked independently with a friend or group

It is important to note that a piece of work might show different stick men at different points in the lesson.

STAMPS

Reception – Year 6

My teacher is proud of my work and I have met the learning objective.

My teacher would like to speak to me about my work. I need some support or a challenge.

This stamp indicates that the teacher would like to discuss the pupil's work with them and give feedback. This could be to correct a misconception, to correct an error, to develop the learning as it's not as expected or to encourage challenge. Pupils should be given time to respond to the feedback with the support from an adult if needed.

LIVE MARKING

Reception – Year 6

Live marking happens within the lesson, in the moment, leading to immediate action by the pupil. Referring pupils to the learning prompts in the classroom (checklists, model example, vocabulary wall, working display etc) to address any errors, will help them to respond to feedback more independently. During live marking, teachers should refer to the simple marking code to save time, improve independence and secure greater impact.

Working their way around the classroom quickly allows teachers to gain a snapshot of learning and to identify any misconceptions that may have developed. These misconceptions can then be addressed immediately, within the moment.

To reduce the amount of feedback at the end of a lesson, spelling errors should be identified where possible during live marking opportunities. The spelling errors indicated should be spellings that have been taught, or ones that the pupils should know. These should be accessible for pupils to edit with the help from word mats, display boards, dictionaries, thesauruses, focus five resource etc.

Highlighters

In English lessons blue highlighters are used to underline the best elements of a pupil's writing. This highlights how a pupil has met the learning objective or to identify how they have applied development points from previous teaching. This does not mean that every good example is highlighted in blue as it will devalue the effectiveness. The blue highlighter is only used during live marking opportunities.

Yellow highlighters are used in Year 6 to demonstrate the correct use of the Year 5/6 spelling words.

DISTANCE MARKING

Year 1 – Year 6

Distance marking is where the teacher marks the work away from the lesson. The benefit of this is that teachers have time to assess work in greater detail and reflect upon next steps.

When the outcome or learning is as expected and children have met the learning objective, a stamp is to be used to acknowledge the hard work pupils have put into their work. Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and pupils can tick using their specified colour.

Minor corrections are to be marked in blue by the teacher e.g. spelling and punctuation errors they should know, a minor calculation error where the child understands the calculation method. Use the stamps (any colour except for blue) and provide a time for children to make those minor corrections. Teachers do not need to use the blue stamp as the minor errors are unrelated to the learning objective.

When the work or learning is not as expected and children have not met the learning objective, a blue stamp should be used, and time should be provided for children to respond to feedback with the support from an adult.

SELF/PEER MARKING

Year 1 – Year 6

Self and peer marking encourages independence, deeper understanding and accountability for pupils, before handing in their work. It also provides the pupils with immediate feedback. This approach is most suitable for closed tasks which are either correct or incorrect.

This type of marking should only happen once a week for a subject.

EDITING CORRECTIONS

Year 1 – Year 6

Pupils use green pens to edit.

It is important pupils are given space and time to edit their work in all subjects.

Marking Codes

Theses codes are to be used in all subjects.

- ✓   **-to indicate a correct response in Maths and short response questions**

- •   **-to indicate an error in Maths and short response questions**

- (sp)   **- to indicate a spelling error**

- (p)   **- to indicate a punctuation error**

To indicate the error, the adult uses (sp) or (p) in the margin. Teachers would use their knowledge of the child's age and ability to judge whether it's necessary to underline/circle these errors. Most children in Year 4 and above should not require this scaffold. The pupil then responds by writing the correct spelling in green pen.

The number of spelling errors marked is at the discretion of the adult based on the age of the pupil and their ability. (For example, a very able child in Year 6 could cope with more spelling mistakes to correct than a child in Year 3 who doesn't find spelling naturally as easy.)

*   -to show when a sentence needs to be re written

A rewrite would be appropriate if a sentence doesn't make sense, could be restructured, or generally improved.

The adult places a * at the beginning of a sentence and a * at the end of a sentence as a sign/signal that this sentence isn't working, and that the pupil needs to rewrite it. Pupils rewrite these sentences at the end of their work in green pen.

^   -to show when more sentences are needed to develop an idea further

This is to be used when the adult wants the pupil to add more to develop an idea further. These additions are to be written as 'editing flaps'. Editing flaps are extra pieces of lined paper that stick onto their writing and show the additions added into their work.

VF   -verbal feedback

When an adult works with a child within a lesson to support their understanding VF can be used to indicate this. At times it may be appropriate to signal that an adult has worked with a child by using a blue stickman.

It is important to note that teacher judgment should be used for those pupils that are working below or above their age-related expectations.

Progression of marking codes

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Autumn	✓ . sp p	✓ . sp p	✓ . sp p	✓ . sp p *	✓ . sp p *	✓ . sp p * ^
Spring			✓ . sp p *		✓ • sp p * ^	
Summer			✓. sp p *			

ASSESSING PIECES OF INDEPENDENT WRITING

It is expected that two pieces of independent writing is assessed across a term.

Year 1 – Year 6

The following process should be followed:

Pupils have time to complete their independent piece of writing. Teacher to support pupils through live marking, offering verbal feedback.

↓

Once the writing is complete the teacher marks the piece of work using the age-appropriate marking codes (sp/p/*/^). (Year 1 – 5 codes to presented in the margin. Year 6 codes used at the bottom of a piece of work.)

↓

Pupils have an opportunity to edit their writing by responding to the codes demarcated by the teacher. The editing process is modelled by the teacher.

↓

Teacher then places A at the top of the work and assesses the piece against the TAF criteria.