Assessment Policy

Date policy reviewed: October 2025

Signed by	Date
Headteacher:	
Trust:	

Purpose of assessment at St Thomas' C of E Academy

Assessment is a process for making inferences about children's learning, either set pieces or windfalls of opportunities. Once you know the outcome, what do you know?

Learning is a permanent change in the long-term memory over a period of time. Assessment is not a singular activity but an ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence of learning produced by the children to make informed and consistent judgements in order to improve future learning. Assessment strategies are not 'bolt-on' but are central to the promotion of effective learning and teaching. Assessment of is the measurement of performance at a given point in time and takes place during lessons, planned APP lessons and the end of a unit.

Principles

Key assessment principles at St Thomas' Academy are:

- Measuring what we value rather than simply valuing what we are able to measure.
- Assessment is part of effective learning and intrinsically linked to supportive feedback
- Focuses on how children learn
- Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning which allows teachers to understand pupil performance on a continuing basis.
- Is a key professional skill
- Is constructive
- Fosters motivation
- Helps learners know how to improve
- Develops the capacity for self- assessment

Objectives

The objectives of assessment in our school are:

- To feedback to children on things that have done well and have successfully achieved
- To help children to understand how to improve their work in order to achieve their individual targets.
- To provide guidance to children in their journey of self-assessment.
- To allow teachers to plan effective work for the children.
- To inform parents of their child's attainment and progress.
- To provide SLT and governors with information to help them to maintain standards throughout the school and provide support as appropriate,

Five core strategies

- Find out what children know, understand and can do
- Differentiate when planning for learning needs
- Plan for dialogue
- Feedback involving learners in a productive dialogue and active participation
- Review and plan for learning needs.

Philosophy of Assessment for Learning

Independent learning:

- Children are encouraged to develop independent learning skills that will enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, to work collaboratively with the teacher and with each other to take their learning forward, rather than being passive recipients of what they are being taught.
- Individuals are active partners in their learning.

High expectations;

- High expectations shared to give every learner confidence they can succeed.
- Staff establish what learners already know and build on it.
- The learning experience has structure and pace to make it enjoyable and challenging.
- Learning is inspired through passion for the subject.

Conditions for learning;

- A supportive learning environment that helps children take more responsibility for their learning and participate in the process of learning how to learn (TIGER learning – see appendix 2)
- Ambitious teachers with high expectations that all learners can achieve
- Children are motivated to do 'the best they can'.
- A range of teaching approaches are used to enable children to make learning visible (oral, written, photographic evidence)
- Established routines and learning behaviours
- Social and emotional skills are given priority both explicitly and implicitly.
- A clear emphasis on learning intentions and on sharing them with pupils and other adults in the classroom
- Assessment criteria for feedback and marking, peer and self-assessment is in place in the Steps to Success
- Differentiated classroom groups (where appropriate)
- Review time and flexibility is a crucial feature of AFL

On Entry Assessment

- EYFS Staff use information from EY baseline and from other settings to inform their initial planning along with their own knowledge of what the children know, understand and can do that has been determined during the induction process.
- A baseline is completed in September and data entered into arbor
- On entry to the next year groups- staff liaise and share previous learning and attainment.
- Previous end of year assessment is moderated within school to ensure accuracy.
- Phonics information is shared with the next class teacher on transition.
- Children that join at any point have baselines gathered from previous school and entered onto our Arbor. This baseline (DFE) is used to set targets and measure progress.

Daily Assessment For Learning (AfL)

AfL is used to enable teachers to collect information about what children know, can do and what they have understood in order to adjust their teaching to meet children's learning needs more fully. Assessment for learning focuses on the gap between where a learner is in their learning, and where they need to be – the desired goal.

In order to achieve this staff need to:

- Know their pupils well, know why pupils make mistakes, and be able to make judgments about next steps or interventions
- Share learning intentions with pupils and use them to mark work or give feedback or rewards (see linked Feedback Policy)
- Build in review time for themselves and their pupils against success criteria
- Use Blooms question stems to create probing questions to further investigate children's learning. (See appendix 3)
- Provide opportunities to phrase questions differently to ensure a full understanding of basic skills.
- Analyse pupils' performance and use the information for future learning plans including immediate changes to planning

Assessment of Learning

Periodically, teachers use evidence of pupil learning to make judgments on their achievement against end of Key Stage milestones to determine their level of attainment.

- Reading is assessed against the school based system using a variety of guided reading tasks and tests. Standardised tests are also used to track reading and Comprehension ages.
- Mathematics data is collected and measured against the school based system. Standardised tests are also performed at the end of each term.
- Attainment in Foundation subjects is tracked through the year by class teachers using St Thomas' C of E Academy grids in the form of % of children below, at or above ARE national expectations for that subject.
- All results are moderated internally and externally across the Trust.

Whole school approach

RECEPTION		YEAR 1			YEAR 2			YEAR 3		
EM	EX	WTS	EXS	GDS	WTS	EXS	GDS	WTS	EXS	GDS

YEAR 4			YEAR 5			YEAR 6		
WTS	EXS	GDS	WTS	EXS	GDS	WTS	EXS	GDS

- A whole school approach to assessing children's learning and their progress is based on end of Key Stage national curriculum expectations. Children are judged to be either; working towards the expected standard, working at (within) the expected standard or at greater depth at each level. Mastery at each stage is encouraged, this allows pupils to demonstrate that they are fully understanding of the skills required at each stage. This is assessed using school and subject specific tracking grids using a best-fit approach.

Recording

Results of assessments are kept by teaching staff and evidence gathering is supported by support staff. Recording includes:

- Children's maths and writing targets are shared with the children so that they have an understanding of their next steps.
- Children identified as having additional needs are managed within the whole class provision or on 1-1 basis. These children who are on the SEND register will have a individual education plan with specific SMART targets which are reviewed termly.
- Differentiated learning opportunities are provided to all children to ensure continuous progress. If gaps appear or learning needs a periodic boost, children are identified by teaching staff for intervention
- Intervention groups are decided at pupil progress meetings and the impact is measured each half term.
- Teaching staff take part in standardisation and moderation in house and with another local school.
- Arbor is used to record termly attainment and progress of all children.
- Termly, Pupils Progress Meetings take place with the head teacher to ensure all children are given the best possible chance to achieve.
- SLT and key subject leads moderate data, to ensure parity of provision and expectation.
- Data tracks pupil progress, attainment and including vulnerable groups
  - Curriculum planning to show coverage
  - Journeys are provided to show the children where they started and where they have moved to during each Maths unit.
  - English targets are given at the beginning of a unit(s).
  - On-going test and task results.

EYFS

- Baseline Assessment= Baseline booklet (DFE national baseline)
- Evidence Me software collects photographic evidence and observation
- Adult led books
- Continuous provision files
- Arbor entry for all 17 areas against the Assessment tracking criteria (including Reading, Writing and Maths.)
- All date on Arbor is updated at the end of each term by the class teacher.

Key Stage 1 and 2 classes

- Assessment tracker grids to be used for foundation subjects.
- Independent work in books
- Home reading records/diaries
- Progress towards Reading, Writing targets
- Arbor entry against Assessment tracking criteria in Reading, Writing, Maths
- Standardised tests in Reading (age and Comprehension) and Maths.
- Reasoning and problem solving evidence in mathematics.
- All date on Arbor is updated at the end of each term by the class teacher.

Reporting and sharing information

The details within this section are based on the philosophy of the school that values the contribution of parents to their child's continued learning.

- All classes provide information about what is to be taught and how in a half termly curriculum overview leaflet to enable parents and carers to become more involved in their children's learning. This is sent at the beginning of each half term.

- Information about the whole school approach to assessment is contained within the Planner and the termly reports.
- Two parents' consultation evenings are held each academic year, one in the autumn term and ne in the spring term. This is when parents can look at their child's work and discuss their progress and targets with the class teacher.
- A brief written overview with current attainment and targets is shared at the Autumn and Spring parent consultation evening.
- A in-depth yearly report is written and sent home at the end of the summer term. This is followed by an open evening if parents wish to discuss the written report.
- Liaison meetings are held to ensure exchange of personal data, information and a smooth transition for children entering High School

Appendix 1 – Yearly Assessment overview

Term	Assessments to be completed and date windows
Autumn 1 (8 weeks)	Reception Baseline (within first 4 weeks) Baseline data added to Arbor by 17.10.25 Phonics Check (WC 20.10.25) To be added to Arbor (Y1 and Y2 retakes) MTC check scores to be added to Arbor (WC 20.10.25) Wolverhampton Assessments – Y2-6 Week Commencing 29.09.25 – **spreadsheets to be completed by 09.10.25**
Autumn 2 (7 weeks)	Phonics Check (WC 08.12.25) To be added to Arbor by 15.12.25 MTC check (WC 08.12.25) to be added to Arbor by 15.12.25 Teacher assessment for R/W/M to be added to Arbor by 10.12.25 (Y1-6) End of term EYFS data to be uploaded to Arbor by 10.12.25 Wolverhampton Assessments – JUST Y6 – **WC 24/11 – Optional (2024 paper)**
Spring 1 (6 weeks)	Phonics Check (WC 09.02.26) To be added to Arbor (Y1 and Y2 retakes) MTC check (WC 09.02.26 to be added to Arbor Wolverhampton Assessments – Y1-5 Week Commencing 26.01.26 – **spreadsheets to be completed by 05.02.26**
Spring 2 (5 weeks)	Teacher assessment for R/W/M to be added to Arbor by Wednesday 18th (Y1-6) End of term EYFS data to be uploaded to Arbor by 18.03.26 Phonics Check (WC 23.03.26) To be added to Arbor (Y1 and Y2 retakes) MTC check (WC 23.03.26) to be added to Arbor Wolverhampton Assessments – JUST Y6 – **WC 2/3 – Optional (2025 paper)**
Summer 1 (6 weeks)	KS2 SATS WC 11.05.26 Phonics Check (WC 18.05.26) To be added to Arbor (Y1 and Y2 retakes) MTC check (WC 18.05.26) to be added to Arbor
Summer 2	Y1 Phonics Check (and Y2 retakes) WC 08.06.25 (1 week window) Y4 MTC WC 01.06.25 (2 week window) Teacher assessment for R/W/M to be added to Arbor by 06.07.26. (Y1-5) DFE Y6 teacher writing and science assessment data – Date to be set but normally June DFE Reception GLD data – Date to be set but normally June Wolverhampton Assessments – Y1-5 Week Commencing 08.06.26 – **spreadsheets to be completed by 18.06.26**

Appendix 2 – TIGER learning

Tiger Learning

TIGER Learning is a system of embedding positive learning behaviours in our children, which enable them to take responsibility and ownership over their own learning. We aim to empower our pupils to understand that by adopting the learning behaviours of the TIGER characters, they can impact positively on their own achievements. The TIGER characters and their learning behaviours are as follows:

Termites like Travis – **T**ry hard
Iguanas like Indi – **I**gnore distractions
Gorillas like Gustav – are **G**roup workers
Emus like Enid– are **E**nthusiastic
Racoons like Rita – **T**ake risks

The philosophy behind TIGER learning is rooted in 'Growth Mindset Theory', a concept that encourages learners to understand their brain as a muscle that can be trained to develop and grow. Learning from mistakes and developing resilience in our pupils are key to achieving this. The behaviours described by the TIGER characters, particularly those of Travis and Rita, trying hard and taking risks in learning, link significantly to growth mindset theory.

Appendix 3 – Bloom's question stems – ideas.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

1 Knowledge Identification and recall of information	define fill in the blank list identify	label locate match memorize	name recall spell	state tell underline
	Who _____? What _____? Where _____? When _____?		How _____? Describe _____. What is _____?	
2 Comprehension Organization and selection of facts and ideas	convert describe explain	interpret paraphrase put in order	restate retell in your own words rewrite	summarize trace translate
	Re-tell _____ in your own words. What is the main idea of _____?		What differences exist between _____? Can you write a brief outline?	
3 Application Use of facts, rules, and principles	apply compute conclude construct	demonstrate determine draw find out	give an example illustrate make operate	show solve state a rule or principle use
	How is _____ an example of _____? How is _____ related to _____? Why is _____ significant?		Do you know of another instance where _____? Could this have happened in _____?	
4 Analysis Separating a whole into component parts	analyze categorize classify compare	contrast debate deduct determine the factors	diagram differentiate dissect distinguish	examine infer specify
	What are the parts or features of _____? Classify _____ according to _____. Outline/diagram/web/map _____.		How does ____ compare/contrast with ___? What evidence can you present for _____?	
5 Synthesis Combining ideas to form a new whole	change combine compose construct create design	find an unusual way formulate generate invent originate plan	predict pretend produce rearrange reconstruct reorganize	revise suggest suppose visualize write
	What would you predict/infer from _____? What ideas can you add to _____? How would you create/design a new _____?		What solutions would you suggest for ____? What might happen if you combined _____ with _____?	
6 Evaluation Developing opinions, judgements, or decisions	appraise choose compare conclude	decide defend evaluate give your opinion	judge justify prioritize rank	rate select support value
	Do you agree that _____? Explain. What do you think about _____? What is most important?		Prioritize _____ according to _____? How would you decide about _____? What criteria would you use to assess ____?	