



## Assessment Policy 2025

**Pear Tree Mead Academy**

Part of the Passmores Co-operative Learning community

## **Our vision for assessment**

This policy has been written for staff at Pear Tree Nead Academy to set out our approach to assessing pupils' attainment, both formatively and summatively. This policy should be read alongside our Curriculum policy.

The purpose and aims of this policy and our approach to assessment are to:

- Improve pupil outcomes.
- To evaluate the impact on learning of our intended and implemented curriculum
- Inform teachers and pupils of their next steps in learning
- To ensure we identify individual pupils' needs and provide them with the right support.
- Ensure assessment is not onerous for teachers, through thinking carefully about the purpose and frequency of data collection and data input.

**We believe that all forms of assessment should be used to improve teaching and learning.**

- The best forms of assessment result from ongoing dialogue and interactions with children.
- Frequent interactions provide the soundest judgments of pupil progress and are what should inform planning and teaching.
- Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their own work, the more precise the feedback is, the greater the clarity in terms of the teaching and learning steps.
- Wherever possible, children should receive 'live' feedback either within the lesson itself or in the next appropriate lesson.
- We recognise that progress in learning is not linear and therefore children should not be judged solely on the basis of a test.
- Where data is gathered, it should also be used as a means to support those children who are underachieving or to extend the most able.

**Principles of assessment:**

- All forms of assessment should be used to improve teaching and learning, be simple to use and understand.
- Testing should be rigorous and reliable.
- Underpinned by a knowledge of the curriculum.
- Informs planning and delivery of the curriculum
- Helps a child to recognise the next steps in their learning.
- No unnecessary paperwork that does not contribute to teaching and learning.
- Provides reliable information to parents about how their child is doing.
- Ensures that PTM is keeping up with external best practice.

**This policy has been informed by:**

- EEF report - Assessing and monitoring pupil progress.
- Assessment without levels - DFE report
- The work of Kate Jones, Dylan William and John Hattie

## Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is the most crucial type of assessment as it informs the next steps in teaching and learning. It is also an opportunity to find out which children are reaching expected outcomes and those exceeding or falling behind. This information should be used to ensure that any children who are falling behind are helped to catch up. We believe that teachers know their children better than anyone and are the most accurate judges of their children's progress. We use a range of information to inform teachers' formative assessments.

## National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum Expectations

The National Curriculum and the Programmes of Study, along with the EYFS Framework provide the backbone of our formative assessment framework but, as they are not ready to use as an assessment framework in themselves, we have developed a set of progression documents for each subject and the whole of EYFS, closely connected to the national documents. These documents also provide the basis for all teacher assessments of children in all subjects, providing clear broken-down statements of yearly expectations.

The progression documents stipulate a benchmark standard for children throughout EYFS and at the end of each year group. Children not accessing their year group material can therefore be assessed according to their actual ability by tracking back through the document to previous year group expectations. All progression documents are also organised by strands so that teachers can also see strengths and areas of development for different areas within a subject.

## Assessment against the planned curriculum

All subject leaders (including EYFS) have 3 key documents that form the foundation of their planned curriculum. They are:

- 1) subject statement of intent
- 2) the subject curriculum map detailing what is covered when
- 3) Medium term plans so that all staff are clear on which specific objectives are taught and assessed against.

## Feedback and marking

- Feedback and looking at pupils' work is the teacher's day-to-day means of assessing pupil progress and of planning work to meet pupils' needs.
- Quality and timely feedback indicates to the pupil what they have achieved and what they need to try to do next / how they can improve their work.
- We provide feedback *in line with the planned curriculum*, the careful planning of which identifies the knowledge or skill to be learnt in that lesson or sequence of lessons.
- The best feedback should be timely and specific. We encourage live feedback in lessons, either to an individual, a group or a class.
- Good feedback will support children there and then improve their work or move on.
- In addition to feedback on lessons, pupils' common errors should be brought to the child's attention so that they are able to improve on these too. e.g. incorrect formation of particular letters, common spelling errors/grammatical errors etc.
- Books should be looked at every day in order to inform next steps and all work done by the child should be acknowledged by the teacher.

### Other details

- All work will be acknowledged in some form by the class teacher/teaching assistant, this may be through codes, stampers or ticks.
- Work will be marked in an alternative coloured pen to purple, to ensure that this is clear for the children to see.
- Children will make improvements during the lesson using a purple pen.
- In most cases written comments will be focused on extended/end of unit pieces of work. This will allow children's achievements to be recognised and provide further guidance for future learning.

- Not all incorrect spellings will be corrected in books, however common spellings spelt incorrectly will be written and displayed in the classroom for children to practice and use.
- All homework will be acknowledged with a Homework checked stamp and HTA given if it is of an excellent standard.

### **Marking codes**

#### **EYFS**

I	Independent
WS	With adult support
V	Verbal feedback (marking during a session where an adult has interjected for impact, or to show feedback at the end of a session)
H/H	Held hand
T/I	Traced Independently
Co/I	Copied independently
D/S	Dictated sentence
UPC	Used phoneme card/ word mat
SO	Sounded out
KWM	Keyword mat
O/T	On Tapestry

#### **KS1 and KS2**

LSA	Learning Support Assistant
S	Supply Teacher
ST	Student Teacher
I	Independent
WS	With Support
V	Verbal Comment
SA	Self-Assessed
PA	Peer-Assessed

### **Assessment of the English curriculum**

In Year N, Year R and KS1 children are assessed for their phonic knowledge through both summative and formative methods. Each child reads books that match their current phonic knowledge/ability. In reception assessments are carried out to check that children are placed in the correct reading groups. In year 1 children complete further termly assessments to ensure that they have acquired the appropriate phonics knowledge. Alongside formal assessments, ongoing day-to-day assessment enables teachers to continuously adapt their strategies to support optimal individual progress. Each child is provided with books that support and match their current phonic ability. Adults listen to all children reading every week and are skilled in

identifying when a child is either struggling with their reading or exceeding the expected standard. Reading bands are adjusted accordingly to ensure each child is appropriately challenged and supported. Phonics knowledge is formally assessed termly, and any gaps are addressed through targeted interventions. Phonics teaching is also embedded into writing sessions to ensure children apply their phonetic knowledge in context.

In Reading, teachers use formative assessment during lessons, including guided reading, to respond to whole class or to individual student needs based on any misconceptions or areas for improvement. We do not only use hands up, to avoid certain children dominating class discussions: teachers should circulate the room when asking pupils to talk to their partners so that they can gather a clear picture of the progress being made by the class. Reading trackers are maintained to monitor each child's progress through the reading bands.

In Writing, teachers, and pupils, assess against success criteria tailored to specific genres/forms of writing. Assessments are based on year group expectations or, where appropriate, pre-key stage standards (identified pupils). This makes the children active and thoughtful participants in their own learning. This process helps children to recognise their successes and to identify and take ownership over how to improve. We have found that this approach means that children are able to pinpoint their individual next steps in learning, rather than being given a generic target.

Spelling tests are given regularly. These are based on words taken from the National Curriculum and have been studied in class rather than on a random selection of words.

In Grammar, teachers use formative assessment to assess pupil understanding and knowledge during the lesson. Live feedback marking will be used as appropriate. Grammar concepts for each year group are revisited every year to ensure that pupils learn more, know more and understand more.

From Yr 1 - 5, a termly summative assessment of reading is taken using a published test (see details below) to support teacher assessment judgement and provide a standardised score. Y1 will only do this for the spring and summer terms, with year 2 completing these in the autumn and spring terms, with a past Y2 SATs paper being used in the summer term (end of year). A summative assessment of writing is also undertaken using the writing progression document to support teacher judgements on a termly basis, using evidence from children's work for that term. Year 6, previous SATs papers are used to provide a summative assessment at different points in the year.

## **Assessment of the maths curriculum**

In Maths, we follow a school-based curriculum for Pre-school and Nursery, White Rose for Reception, Primary Stars for Y1-2 and White Rose for Y3 – 6. Formative assessment is the most important approach to learning in mathematics and use live marking so that the next steps can be addressed in the lesson.

From years 1 - 5, a termly summative assessment of maths is taken using the NFER tests (see details below), to support teacher assessment and provide a standardised score, this is a published test. In Year 2, previous SATs papers are used for their summer term summative assessment. In Year 6, previous SATs papers are used to provide a summative assessment at different points in the year.

Arithmetic and times tables tests are also used to assess children's progress on a regular basis.

We focus on fast and automatic recall of number facts. Every day, there will be dedicated time within maths lessons to teach arithmetic skills that support automatic recall. These will be based on regularly revisiting key objectives taken from the National Curriculum.

By the end of year 4, children should be proficient in all of their times-tables up to 12x12. In the summer term, the children in Year 4 sit the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) to test their knowledge of times-table. To support the learning and continued practice of times-tables, we use Times Table Rockstars (TTRS). This is an online platform where children engage in a range of games to improve their speed and accuracy with times-tables. The platform provides detailed information on children's proficiency, enabling us to target additional support to pupils not meeting the standards.

## **Assessment of the Science curriculum**

In Science, we also use unit-based approach to deliver the National Curriculum. Progression maps and medium-term plans identify key knowledge, and skills children need to require at each stage of their learning journey from Year N to Year 6. There is also a strand dedicated to working scientifically.

Mini end-of-unit tests, concept maps, low-stakes quizzes, test base questions, and investigations are just some of the ways that teachers track pupil progress and address misconceptions effectively. In order to prioritise teaching and learning rather than testing, we do not ask for end of unit testing, with teachers making a teacher assessment judgement against the unit objectives.

Like core subjects, science assessment takes place in two ways. The backbone of the science assessment is the science progression documents. This document is split by year group and is organised by units of work along with the working scientifically strand. Within each unit, each year group has to learn essential / key knowledge, at the end of each unit children are assessed on Insight to be not yet understood, not yet secure, objective secured or working at greater depth according to how they meet these statements. We do not require a certain amount of statements to be ticked to achieve a certain standard. Rather, teachers use the document to help them form an overall judgement of science attainment for the year.

## **Assessing the impact of our wider curriculum**

As a school, we assess pupils' attainment in the foundation subjects. We expect teachers to be able to talk with confidence about each child's progress in all subjects benchmarked against our planned curriculum. Teachers are expected to know if their pupils have learnt what has been taught and to what extent. All teachers are expected to understand the core learning and concepts for the units they teach, to be able to articulate the school's vision for that subject and to know how that unit builds on or fits into the wider curriculum for a subject.

Teachers already monitor the impact (what pupils know) in a variety of ways such as looking at pupils' work in books on a daily basis and providing feedback and through regular insightful questions and conversations in class. They provide low-stake quizzes to assess pupil understanding.

Each subject has a planned curriculum, with progression documents to ensure that children are learning essential skills and knowledge in a sequential way what we have taught from Year N to Year 6. Teachers use these to assess pupils' knowledge and skills accurately. Formative assessment takes multiple forms, moving from quick quizzes of knowledge learnt from previous lessons or units of work to a debate looking at two sides of an argument or to an end of unit task that requires pupils to display their learning of an entire unit. We will gather this assessment information in different ways (such as using videos or online quizzes) for subjects which require more practical work (e.g. PE, French, Computing, Music). By the end of the unit and end of the year teachers are expected to have built an overall picture of each child's attainment in each subject. Every child assessment is recorded on Insight.

## **EYFS Curriculum.**

Our EYFS assessment checkpoint document is based on Development Matters and identifies key milestones for children to work towards throughout from the age of 2 years old through to achieving ELG at the end of Year R. We assess pupils within 6 weeks of them starting in any of our EYFS classes to create our own baseline assessment and in Year R, this is in addition to the Government Baseline. Children's progress is tracked from their baseline throughout the year, with teachers making a summative assessment in Spring 1 and Summer 2. All assessments are tracked on Insight.

## Learning conversations and Pupil Voice

We use a learning conversation alongside a book scrutiny approach to assess the quality of units of work and of pupil outcomes. This includes a conversation with pupils about their learning in that unit, which provides teachers and SLT with a good understanding of learning gleaned within a unit.

SLT are also expected to regularly carry out similar conversations with pupils informally to review what they have learnt and to support teachers in reviewing units of work to ensure the best possible outcomes.

We use pupil voice to help assess the impact of the curriculum and to monitor the progress of pupils towards our curriculum end points. This is carried out by curriculum coordinators who use this to adapt units of work and individual lessons where required.

## Recording Information

We use Insight for teachers to record the results of summative tests given within the classroom. The purpose is to use this information formatively, to inform the next steps in each child's learning, to identify whole class areas of concern, and to help identify children performing above or below national expectations. During termly progress meetings, teachers should use this information to inform SLT of children who require additional support, so that support can be provided in a targeted and timely fashion.

The following information is recorded on Insight.

- Termly summative assessment standardized score
  - Termly teacher assessment in Reading, writing and Maths.
  - EYFS Assessments
  - End of unit assessments for science and non-core subjects
  - Mock SATs outcomes
  - Practice phonics check scores.
  - Results of all statutory assessments
  - Mock MTC outcomes

Teachers can also keep information to be used to inform parents of children's areas of strength and weakness.

- *Maths*: arithmetic tests if done, end of unit test data, times tables (if not captured on TT rockstars)
- *Literacy*: spelling tests, reading challenges
- Homework (but all should be following up if not recorded)
- Book lending lists
- Book Bands
- Common Exception words
- Yark Assessments

## Summative testing

Summative assessment is the formal testing of what has been learned in order to produce marks or grades which may be used for reports of various types.

## Pre-school

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. This is called the 2-year-old check. This progress check identifies the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, practitioners will develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals (for example, the provider's SENDco or health professionals) as appropriate.

## Reception

The NFER Reception Baseline Assessment tool is used to assess children in mathematics, literacy (including Communication and Language) and the personal and social aspects of learning. This assessment is completed as soon as children have settled during the autumn 1 term. In addition to this, children are assessed, using observations and focus activities, against the 7 strands of the EYFS Development Matters statements to provide a baseline assessment in all of the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. Children are also assessed in their phonic knowledge using the ELS (Essential letters and sounds) assessment tool.

## KS1 & KS2

Children are given formal tests in the core subjects of Mathematics and Reading at three points in the school year. In Year 1 pupils are tested in the Spring and Summer term only, but teachers provide teacher assessment judgement every term.

Autumn and Spring term testing provides data to identify whole cohort progress and also children who need further support and intervention and summer tests give the final judgment for the year. Teachers will have the opportunity to provide a teacher assessment alongside any test data submitted. This is especially relevant for EAL and SEND children, who may not achieve test results. Alongside this, we ask teachers to set targets for each child at the start of the year and to reflect in progress meetings on whether students are on track to meet their targets. These results are all stored centrally and provide us with a whole school picture, which we can analyse in different ways.

We believe that summative tests need to have '*validity and reliability*' (EEF AMPP report) so that they can provide the most accurate information of how our children are doing in line with national averages. For Mathematics and Reading we use the NFER standardised tests for Years 1 – 5. We use previous SATs papers in Year 6. We are confident of their robustness as they are drawn from a large sample size. We have selected an age standardised score to report our data. The results of the tests will be reported as an age standardised score, with 100 being the national average. Children falling within the range 100 to 115 will be deemed to be working at national standard. Children falling below the 99 mark will be deemed to be working towards a national standard and children falling above the 115 mark will be deemed to be working at greater depth. Scores below 80 and above 130 will be considered exceptional, so these scores will be a way of identifying children falling significantly below or performing well above national expectations.

The shared language of testing in our school is:

- Expected Standard (EXS),
- Working below / Working towards National Standard (WTS)
- Working at Greater Depth (GDS)
- Working well below.
- Emerging within a band (e.g. 4e)
- Developing within a band (e.g. 4d)
- Secure within a band (e.g. 4s)
- Mastered a band (e.g. 4m)



## **Summative judgments of writing**

During the termly assessment cycle (Autumn, Spring and Summer), teachers will use the progression document to provide a summative judgement of writing at three points in the year. This judgement will be based on the writing that pupils have produced in class. A best fit approach is used.

## **Statutory National testing**

During their time in school children will sit some external national tests. These are as follows:

- Reception Baseline (September) and EYFS profile (submitted in June)
- Year 1 – Phonics screening test – June
- Year 4 - Multiplication check - June
- Year 6 – KS2 SATS in Reading, SPaG and Mathematics May – externally marked. Teacher assessments in Writing and Science.

## **Target setting and benchmarking**

When using data to judge progress, we would expect most children to be emerging within their band in the Autumn term. A small proportion of children would be at National Standard in the Autumn or Spring terms so working at greater depth by the summer term. We appreciate that progress is not always linear and some children move on faster than others but by the summer term, we would expect) at least 75% of children in each year group to be achieving the National Standard in the core subjects and around 25-30% should be working at greater depth.

As well as looking at this broad measure of progress, we also look in more depth at a child's standardised age score and calculate the changes within the score over the course of the year and year on year. This helps us to measure the progress that the child has made over the course of the year and from one year to another.

At the start of the year, we set end of year targets for each child and derive a target for the year group on that basis. We expect targets at the National Standard for each year group to be roughly 70%-80%, with around 25%- 30% working at Greater Depth. By the end of KS2 we aim for around 75% - 85% at EXS in all subjects, between 25% and 35%.

## **Moderation**

Moderation is key to creating consistent judgments within our own school and across the group of schools in our trust we work alongside.

During Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 2 teachers work alongside others from within PCLC Trust to share and discuss pupil's work to support their teacher assessment. This provides an excellent opportunity for teachers to support one another in finding ways to support pupil progress and teachers are encouraged to share work of 'stuck' pupils.

Every year the trust ensures at least two members of senior staff are trained KS2 moderators for the DFE / LA. The moderators provide additional moderation sessions for Year 6 teachers to support end of key stage assessments as well as support before and during any external moderation. As an academy, we choose to use Essex as our moderating local authority.

As part of Harlow Education Consortium, our Year 6 teachers also attend cross town moderation sessions during the Spring and Summer terms.

## Monitoring progress - Assess and review

### **90% of each class have made at least expected / good progress moving at least 4 steps within their band (e.g. 4e to 5e)**

Top level data is important to see how whole or parts of cohorts are performing, but it is also imperative to drill down to the progress made by individual children and to intervene to support those children when necessary. To this end, we finish off the termly assessment cycle with pupil standards meetings. Here, teachers look at their particular groups (core subjects) and assess how they are doing. They consider issues that the whole group might be struggling with and how they may address this in class, as well as thinking about individual children and what can be done to support them.

Members of the leadership team then meet with each member of staff and discuss each child. Children who are struggling, not making progress or who are a concern for their teachers in any way are then picked up individually. The relevant member of the Leadership team, alongside the teacher, will decide on a course of action for that child, which may include a course of intervention, a possible referral for SEN or a social intervention. That child is then followed up on each term to monitor their progress.

## Support and Interventions

In order to ensure that all children achieve, the school has established a rigorous catch-up programme, tailored to the needs of the child. Some of our offers are as follows:

### Academic

- Daily 1:1 catch up sessions run each afternoon in literacy and maths, which focus on the specific needs of the child attending.
- Assembly interventions run by the teacher during assembly times, for Maths and Literacy with targeted children.
- LSAs trained in our Maths catch-up programmes – EPS Maths and 1stclass@number
- WELCOMM - early language intervention for our younger children and or/EAL pupils
- Precision teaching
- Rapid reading and Reading fluency
- Weekly times-table in Years 3, 4 and 5

### Learning or emotional support

- Speech and Language programme – children have a tailored programme to follow, delivered by a trained teacher or LSA.
- Social skills group work from the Learning mentor
- 1 to 1 support from Learning mentor
- Counselling service (1 day per week) for specific children.
- Drawing and Talking intervention delivered by trained staff

## Children with SEND

The school has a number of children who have learning needs and who may therefore not be accessing the curriculum for their year groups. Those with high needs SEND, who are working below the yearly progression documents, are assessed using Pre Key stage Learning Steps. The SEND team is responsible for collecting their data. The class teacher and relevant 1:1 support staff are responsible for the upkeep of individual SEND children's records of progress and data. Their data will also be included on the centralised EduKey system. Those children moving on from the Learning Steps but unable to access the work for their year group will be teacher assessed using the school's progression documents. The SENCO will meet regularly with LSAs and teachers to monitor record keeping and target setting for these children. As part of the termly pupil standards meetings, the SEND team will attend to discuss the progress of children with SEN and identify further actions for individuals e.g. involvement of external agencies and classroom strategies. These actions are then reviewed and discussed in the leadership meetings.

**Reporting to parents**

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's learning. We aim to provide an open-door policy whereby parents can seek advice or support from any member of staff. We endeavor to communicate well through newsletters, termly curriculum letters, homework tasks, reading journals, reports, open days, parental workshops and the website.

Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Formal parents' evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms for children in Year N to Year 6, with Pre-school offering a parent meeting in the Autumn term. Parents will also get the opportunity to look at their child's books in the Summer term. EY children will receive a full report in the summer term. A full report is sent to other year group parents during the Spring term. This report will provide information about the child's performance in all areas / subjects including their attitude towards learning.

At the end of the academic year, parents in Year R to Year 6 will be sent an overview of their child's end of year assessment along with their attendance for the academic year. For children in Year R this will include their assessments against the early learning goals; for Year 1 and Year 2 it will include details of the phonic screening check; in Year 4 it will include detailed of the Multiplication Tables Check and in Year 6, it will indicate the results of the child's Statutory Assessment Tests as well as the level awarded through Teacher Assessments in Reading, Writing, Maths, Science and SPAG.

