



Assessment Policy

The Corporation of Oundle School includes both Oundle School, a boarding and day School for pupils aged 11 – 18 and Laxton Junior School, a day School for pupils aged 4 - 11. This policy applies solely to Laxton Junior School.

Introduction

We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning, ensuring a responsive cycle of assessment, planning and lesson delivery. Assessment at Laxton Junior School enables:

- Teachers to respond accurately to the learning needs of each child and, with the contribution of support staff, give ongoing support and challenge to enable all pupils to make excellent progress
- Teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs and interests of each child
- Children to demonstrate what they know, understand and can apply in their learning
- Children, through continuous feedback, to have an active role in identifying their own learning needs and know how to improve their work
- The school to guide parents with regard to their choice of senior school
- The school to evaluate and continually improve the quality of provision for all pupils
- Parents to support their child's learning

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Support children to make excellent progress irrespective of their individual abilities and across all aspects of our academic curriculum
- Ensure that their progress is properly assessed as part of a continuous process which feeds back into future learning
- Provide clear guidelines on our 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

Assessment in the EYFS

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in Reception takes the form of a wide range of observations and this involves both the teacher and other supporting adults, as appropriate.

Pieces of work, observation sheets, learning journal are all integral to forming an overall picture of the abilities and needs of the pupils. Reading records are updated each time a child reads within the school, both in home/school reading record books and in the class reading record file.

Parents receive two reports per academic year with reference to their child's progress in each area of learning. These highlight the child's strengths and developmental requirements, give details of their

child's general progress, as well as targets for each subject area. These are sent home in January and June, with Parents Conferences scheduled for the following week in order that the reports may be discussed.

Parent Consultations take place in October, February and June. Parents are also encouraged to speak to staff at any time to discuss progress or any issues; this may be an informal chat at the beginning or end of the day, or it may take the form of a planned meeting involving the teacher, Educational Support teacher and/or the Assistant Head Admissions, as appropriate.

Baseline assessments of the children's learning take place in the early weeks of each new academic year and the children undertake end-of-year assessments to assess the progress made over the course of the year. This data, along with the informal assessments made, is then shared in transition to Year 1 to feed into the teaching and learning cycle the following academic year.

For further details of our approach, please see our EYFS Policy.

Assessment Approaches

At Laxton Junior School, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to the way we deliver our curriculum. We use three forms of assessment: in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

In-School Formative Assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- Teachers to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide individualised support or challenge, evaluate teaching and plan future learning opportunities
- Children to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they are succeeding and those that they need to improve
- Parents to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they can do to celebrate achievement and support next steps

Our formative assessment involves the use of a range of techniques in the classroom, each designed to understand existing knowledge and how to move each individual's learning forwards. We believe that pupils will improve most if they understand the purpose of their learning, where they are in relation to this and the specific steps they need to take to be successful.

Responsive teaching forms a central philosophy within our school-wide approach to teaching and learning. In all subjects, this involves a systematic approach based on learning objectives against which we assess the children during lessons. After each lesson, teachers reflect on children's progress and use this to inform the next steps for every child. Gaps and misconceptions are identified immediately so that they can be addressed quickly and precisely, and so that subsequent learning can take place on firm foundations. More information about responsive teaching can be found in our Teaching and Learning Policy.

Other strategies used to support our approach to formative assessment include:

- Question and answer sessions
- Targeted questions

- Opportunities for pupils to make their learning visible, e.g. using whiteboards and other physical learning resources
- Discussions between staff working with groups of pupils
- Mini quizzes and plenaries
- Feedback sheets and exit slips

Children are also comfortable with assessing their own learning within written and verbal contexts. They 'polish' their work using a red Polishing Pen, ensuring improvements are made during critical thinking moments and opportunities for evaluation and review. Children are also encouraged to assess their peers' work and their own against a modelled piece.

In-School Summative Assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- Teachers to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period, and use this information to identify gaps or misconceptions that have appeared during that learning experience and respond to this in subsequent lessons
- Children to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time, celebrating their achievements and highlighting next steps
- Parents to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child's learning in a particular unit of work
- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions or specific professional development for staff may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve excellent progress and attainment

End of unit tests are used throughout the curriculum to ensure teachers gain a detailed insight into a child's understanding. These may be in the form of a quiz, end of unit checks or written assessments. Specialist subjects such as MFL, Computing and Science use these methods to gain an understanding of where each child's learning is.

Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- Teachers to understand children's performance against national expectations, use detailed analysis of the assessments to adapt future learning opportunities, and provide specific handover information to the next year's Form Teacher, Tutor or Subject Teacher
- Parents to understand how their children are performing in comparison to pupils nationally, which facilitates conversations around additional support and next steps
- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions or staff professional development may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve excellent progress and attainment

Core subjects are assessed half-yearly with English, Reading, Maths and Spelling GL assessments in November and May; these are written papers in Years 1 and 2 and online in Years 2 (Summer Term) to Year 6. Year 6 children will also sit a written in-house English Comprehension, Creative Writing and Maths paper during their Summer Term. Children who achieve year on year the same result in these assessments, with a margin of error, are deemed to be making good progress. This data informs departmental meetings, which identify the children who need additional support or challenge to progress further.

Cognitive Abilities Tests (reasoning) are assessed annually in Years 1 to 6, and explore Verbal, Non-Verbal, Number and Spatial Reasoning. These assessments are analysed against the subject assessments for discrepancies, supporting our understanding of whether a child is under- or over-performing relative to their academic achievement, and indicate where additional support might be needed.

Children who have received an Educational Psychology report, outlining specific additional needs, are provided for during summative assessments; this might include additional time, use of a laptop for writing, or provision of a reader or scribe.

Collecting and Using Data

Assessment data is recorded on a tracking system that enables staff to be able to respond to the needs of the children through responsive teaching. Useful and relevant information from the data analysis is communicated during staff meetings so that the data achieves its purpose and ensures school-wide trends are understood and responded to.

Formative and summative data is also used to provide useful information about curriculum strengths, staff training needs and opportunities for academic development, thus improving future learning.

The data used to support decisions about senior school entry takes the form of 'hard' assessment data and 'soft' teacher viewpoint data. Tracked assessment scores from EYFS to 6 are analysed in conjunction with conversations with staff to ascertain suitability of senior school for each child. Attitude to learning, behaviour and resilience are examples of the 'soft' data used.

Reporting to Parents

Teachers are proactive when ensuring that parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress in school. Dialogue is open and continuous between teachers and parents, and we encourage communication in both directions and whenever it is required.

Along with the regular informal opportunities for parents to meet with teachers we offer formal parent conferences each term. During these meetings, discussions take place about attainment and progress as measured against our own expectations of each child as well as national expectations in accordance with their age. Summative assessment scores are shared and discussed with parents during these conferences and each score is put in context alongside the ongoing formative assessment of learning.

All parents receive written reports of their children's progress and achievements. A mid-year report is written in January and a full report is written in June. This will include individual comments on all subjects and include strengths, achievements and appropriate targets.

Inclusion

Assessment is used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' educational needs and any requirements for specific support and intervention. When our formative or summative assessment procedures highlight a concern about a child's learning, we immediately engage our Educational Support team to carry out further assessment and analysis to understand whether tailored intervention might be needed to ensure the child is able to access the curriculum fully and make excellent progress. Indeed, we have the same high expectations of all pupils but recognise the need to adjust our provision to ensure it is tailored to the individual. For further details of our approach, please see our Educational Support Policy.

Training

Staff meetings, INSET and CPD sessions are used to ensure staff have a good understanding of assessment and assessment practice. If our data identifies a particular need for training within a specific area of the curriculum, staff training is targeted to address this. This is delivered by the Assistant Head Academic, the Head of English, Head of Maths, and the Head of Educational Support, along with other appropriate members of staff.

Monitoring

The Assistant Head Academic will monitor the effectiveness of formative and summative assessment practices across the school, through:

- Lesson observations
- Book scrutinies
- Planning reviews
- Data analysis
- Departmental Pupil Progress meetings

Linked Policies

This policy is linked to:

- Curriculum Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Educational Support Policy
- EAL Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Maths Policy
- English Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy

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