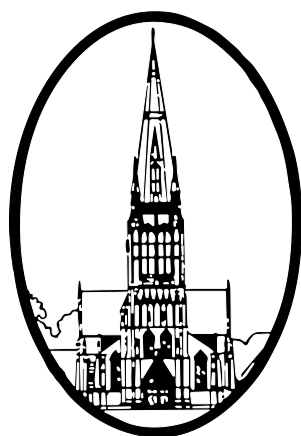


St. Mary's C. of E. Primary School

'Through God's love, we strive to be the best we can be.'



St Mary's approach to Assessment Policy

Revised: September 2015

Review date: September 2018

Mission Statement and Values

"Through God's love, we strive to be the best we can be."

St Mary's is an inspiring and creative school which fosters a love of learning as well as developing skills for life. We strive to enhance every child's moral, spiritual, intellectual, social and physical well-being and celebrate every child's gifts.

As a faith school we hold **love** at the centre of all we do. This and the following values reflect the ethos of our school.

Respect – ourselves, each other and our environment

Courage – to stand up for what is right, overcome our fears and embrace new challenges

Truth – in the choices we make and our dealings with family, friends, school and community

Hope – that inspires us to look forward in confidence to a better life for all

St Mary's approach to Assessment

Our approach to assessment has been developed with the children at the centre of what we do, after all why do it if it doesn't support the children that we teach. Using this model we will be able to successfully assess children from Reception to Year 6 whilst embodying the Department For Education (DfE) assessment principles.

The core DfE assessment principles are:

Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child's school, is performing

- a) Allow meaningful tracking of pupils towards end of key stage expectations in the new curriculum, including regular feedback to parents.
- b) Provide information which is transferable and easily understood and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment.
- c) Differentiate attainment between pupils of different abilities, giving early recognition of pupils who are falling behind and those who are excelling.
- d) Is reliable and free from bias.

Help drive improvement for pupils and teachers

- a) That are closely linked to improving the quality of teaching.
- b) Ensure feedback to pupils contributes to improved learning and is focused on specific and tangible objectives.
- c) Produce recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time.

Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation

- a) a. Ensure they are created in consultation with those delivering best practice locally.

- b) b. Ensure they are created in consideration of, and are benchmarked against, international best practice.

St Mary's Assessment Principles

We assess what we teach. The rationale for our policy is drawn upon the DfE guidance for the 2014 Curriculum and assessment beyond levels guidance. In order to ensure children are well prepared for the next stage in their education, there are Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) in learning that must be *mastered* within each key stage. Each child has to be taught and master the attainment targets for their year group and identified attainment targets; called Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are what each child is assessed against specifically for their year group and in each core subject. For some children there may be exceptions to what they are taught and therefore assessed. See sections about Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

We view all of these KPI's as non-negotiable and our tracking tool crystallises this principle. The tool that we use to track which Key Performance Indicators have been met and the progress towards the end of year target is called Target Tracker.

Target Tracker equips teachers and leaders with an immediate overview of what individual children have and have not learnt as well as looking at the progress of the whole class and groups.

Mastery model

'Mastery' or 'to master' denotes a focus on achieving a deeper understanding of subjects, through problem-solving, questioning and encouraging deep thinking. The new national curriculum is premised on this kind of understanding of mastery, as something which every child can aspire to and every teacher should promote within their classroom. It implies a shared understanding that all pupils should have access to the whole curriculum and that it is pupil support and the depth of learning which teachers should differentiate, not the content covered.

Assessment is built into this process. Following high-quality instruction, children undertake formative assessment that shows what they have learned well and what they still need to work on, and identifies specific 'corrective' activities to help them do this. After undertaking these corrective activities (or alternative enrichment or extension activities for those who have already achieved mastery), students retake assessments to ensure mastery in this area. A large amount of high-quality research has evaluated mastery learning and found consistent and positive impacts on learning

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities may be working below year group expectations. In these cases work will be differentiated to allow children to access learning appropriate for them and this learning will be assessed according to their stage of development.

Regular and on-going assessment of the impact of any interventions is essential to measure their efficacy. This should take place half termly in conjunction with the Inclusion Lead. The progress for pupils with SEND may need to be reflected on in a broader sense than just academic achievement by using e.g. classroom observation, book looks and liaison with other professionals.

How does this work in practice?

Target Tracker provides us with tracking tools for all areas of the curriculum which enables teachers and leaders to track progress from Nursery to Year 6. In each subject and in each year (Years 1 to 6) there are a set of clear attainment targets (KPI's) that a child must learn to be ready to access the next year of study.

The number of attainment targets (KPI's) in each subject and year group varies. These can be taught in any order and will be consolidated, revisited and expanded upon across the course of the year in line with the Mastery model. It is our ambition and belief that all children should achieve all of the KPI's within each year and subject: therefore securing expected progress at the end of the year.

KPI's are proportioned to the progress expected to be made over a period of time therefore giving a clear picture of where a child is at a specific point in time. The tracking tool will equip teachers and leaders to clearly assess and report on progress and achievements within each year group and subject. There are six steps of progress to be made each year. Beginning, beginning plus, working within, working within plus, secure and secure plus. Having six steps allows for smaller steps of progress to be recognised when slower progress is made. This is especially important for those pupils with additional needs.

Further, as the assessments develop, teachers and leaders will be able to create a clear 'gap analysis' of learning for individual pupils, classes, cohorts and discrete groups to inform further learning and allowing for the mastery of subjects.

This information is then used to inform school development planning, sharing of performance information and feedback to parents.

When measuring standards in Religious Education and PSHE, that are not part of the National Curriculum we will use formative assessment to make judgements against each strand taught (and in AT1 and AT2 FOR re). When that judgement is made children will be placed on one of the six steps identifying whether they are at, below or above expectations.

Finally, there are transparent reporting statements to underpin progress in each subject and year. This fully adheres to the DfE direct requirement to report to parents whether their child is working at the national standard and distance from the standard.

- A pupil will be reported to be at the National Standard only if they can demonstrate to their teacher that they meet all of the KPI's. Therefore children demonstrate skills and knowledge within 100% of the objectives for the year and subject.
- A pupil will be reported to be working towards the National Standard if they have not met all of the objectives for that year group and subject.
- A pupil will be reported to be working below the National Standard if they have not mastered any of the objectives for the year group and subject. Teachers will state within which NC year expectation the child is working. SLT will decide whether an alternative tracking is more appropriate (P Scales for example) for pupils with SEND

- A pupil will be reported to be working above the National Standard when in addition to the deeply mastering the skills and knowledge of all the objectives within the year group/phase and subject they have also have achieved objectives in the year group above.

It is expected that only a very small percentage of children will be working above the national standard as the emphasis should be on true mastery, depth and breadth within the national standard expected.

Underpinning these statements, will be clear descriptive learning profiles which detail the pupil's learning achievements and next steps. These learning profiles will be shared with children to allow them to take ownership of their own learning and become independent learners.

Assessment toolkits

Teachers and leaders will use a variety of formative assessment strategies to support judgements on whether a child has met the KPI's in each subject and year. These toolkits will be underpinned by the school based curriculum offer. Each year there will be moderation sessions where teachers can discuss pupil profiling, strategies for AfL and the range of pupil and teacher led evidence to support judgements on whether the KPI's have been secured.

Summative assessments will be used during this transition period in Year 6 where practice and validation for end of Key Stage tests are important. In other classes we will be trialling approaches to best match our curriculum.

Assessment Checkpoints

There will be three formal checkpoints in the school year: December, March and June. These checkpoints will be informed by both teacher assessment of learning against the KPI's in the first instance. Our aim is to use a formative assessment for maths, reading and writing underpinned by our curriculum at some point in the future to help teachers to validate their teacher assessments and support children with confidence in test conditions.

Target Tracker will report whether the child is achieving objectives within the year programme of study and the step that they have reached (% of KPI's achieved). This data can then be interrogated further into discrete groups and filters applied for ease of purpose.

In December and March there will be 'progress threshold targets' to determine whether the child is on track to start the next year at the national standard. This will equip SMT with a clear profile and highlight any child at risk of not reaching the national standard. In December the target will be 'beginning' and in March the target will be 'Working within'. Assessment checkpoints will focus on progression within learning and leaders/teachers to fully interrogate data to inform further CPD, interventions and create a genuine gaps analysis curriculum. The June checkpoint will allow schools to measure progress for each child/cohort and national/local benchmarking.

As Ofsted guidance is resolute in directing schools to report the percentage of pupils working at the national standard, this is how we will proceed. We will not measure ourselves against the minimum floor standard of 65% of pupils achieving expected in reading, writing and maths combined. However, we will be setting a challenging target of 85% to help us strive forward. A point system is available to us on Target Tracker so that we can compare expected progress of individuals and groups.

In between these formal checkpoints, there will be pupil progress reviews that sharply focus on core areas highlighted from the data produced at the three formal checkpoints. To this end, the continuous evaluation of learning, recordable progress in pupil's books and observations of learning in lessons will become the key drivers. Within this culture, testing becomes secondary.

To summarise, our approach to assessment will continue to grow and develop throughout 2015-2017. We will remain committed to solid AfL principles and children receiving feedback based on descriptive learning profiles. It is our view that the removal of levels has opened up a timely conversation about how progress is communicated and the limitations of levels. We are alert to changes on a national level and will ensure that once the Assessment Commission moves forward any required developments are incorporated into the model.