# ASSESSMENT POLICY
# (including feedback and marking).

Approved by Directors January 2021

**Contents.**

1. **Principles and aims of assessment.**

The principles and aims that underpin our approach to assessment are:

- It is on-going and integral to curriculum planning and teaching;
- It ensures that all pupils maximise their potential;
- Our assessment will provide information about the next learning steps for children;
- It promotes children's self-esteem;
- It aims to involve children in their own education, including the sharing of learning objectives and success criteria;
- We use a variety of assessment techniques to maximise opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they can do;
- We use a whole school approach to the management, monitoring and evaluation of assessment practises;
- Our assessment is objective and based on clear criteria, which are understood by all involved;
- We use robust scrutiny to ensure that there is consistency in the interpretation of the National Curriculum objectives across the school and trust;
- We use methods of reporting that contribute to positive relationships with parents and develop their understanding of our assessment approach.

2. **Arrangements for the governance, management and evaluation of assessment.**

| Head Teacher (Assessment Leader) | Deputy Head Teacher (Deputy Assessment Leader) | SENCO/Inclusion Leader | EYFS Class Teacher | KS1/KS2 Teachers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Data analysis to inform school improvement.<br>• Tracking of pupil progress.<br>• Holding teachers to account for pupil progress through pupil progress meetings.<br>• Use of data and tracking to inform CPD, performance management.<br>• Reporting on progress and outcomes to Directors, LA, DfE etc.<br>• Scrutinising marking, feedback and guiding teachers in improvements. | • Leading the moderation of assessments thereby being accountable for the accuracy of assessment data submitted for tracking and reporting purposes.<br>• Ensuring that pupils' work is organised for moderation purposes in all phases/year groups.<br>• Supporting teachers in using the above effectively, particularly in translating what they know into targets for reading and writing for every child.<br>• Scrutinising marking, feedback and guiding teachers in improvements.<br>• Seek and engage with trust/external opportunities for moderation. | • Working with teachers and the SLT to ensure effective assessment of children with SEN/disadvantaged group and subsequent setting of targets to move them forward in their learning and achievement. | • Implementation and effective use of the new baseline assessment.<br>• Designing a schedule of assessment for each term so that the range of assessments is manageable, informs planning for learning and accurately tracks from the baseline.<br>• Ensuring pupil profiles broadly and rigorously reflect the progress being made by every child and provide the evidence of progress reported through tracking.<br>• Seek and engage with trust/external opportunities for moderation. | • To seek to implement strategies for assessment and to meet deadlines for assessment schedules.<br>• To engage transparently with the moderation and reporting process.<br>• To acknowledge accountability for pupil progress in learning and to pro-actively seek CPD opportunities if progress needs accelerating.<br>• To engage transparently in robust discussion regarding pupil progress in learning and what needs to be done next.<br>• To keep parents accurately informed of their child's progress in learning via regular meetings across the year and the end of year report. |

3. **Monitoring and Evaluation: arrangements for ensuring the teachers are able to conduct assessment competently and confidently.**

The Directors, in partnership with the Senior Leadership Team, determines the school policy for assessment. The Head Teacher/Assessment Leader is responsible for working with staff to devise, monitor, evaluate and review procedures for assessment. Class teachers are responsible for carrying out the agreed procedures for assessment, according to the assessment timetable that will be adjusted and updated each academic year.

The assessment Leader will ensure that all staff have the skills required to assess accurately using the principles set out in this policy. Where a development point exists, it will be added to staff Performance Management Reviews to create a focussed area for improvement.

## 4. Different forms of assessment.

Class teachers, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the Headteacher have overall responsibility for this policy. All teachers are expected to assess, record and report the achievements and progress of the children in their class. They will also:

- Assess children's work on a continuous, daily basis and use the results to inform planning;
- Help children take their learning forward by ensuring high quality and timely feedback;
- Record results in a clear, accurate manner on a regular basis, ensuring continuity and progression;
- Report highlights of achievement and progress in a clear, succinct and informative manner;
- Share results with leaders for subject monitoring;
- Share key results with children and parents throughout the year and explain the significance of them;
- Engage with both internal and external scrutiny of the assessment data they provide to ensure transparency, accuracy, consistency and continuous development of their assessment skills.

### Formative Assessment.

This is the daily assessment that takes place within classrooms, across the school and between all adults working with learners. It is the process of discussing, observing and feeding back to a learner at any point during the learning process.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) means using evidence and feedback to identify where learners are in their learning, what they need to do next and how best to achieve this. In practice, this means:

- obtaining clear evidence about how to accelerate individual attainment;
- developing understanding between teachers and learners on what they need to improve;
- agreement on the steps needed to promote sound learning and progress.

Research indicates that 'Formative Assessment strategies raise standards of attainment' (Black & William 1998). Shirley Clarke of the University of London, has broken down this research into five key areas, all of which are developed and reflected consistently in teaching practice at Westwood Academy:

- **Planning**: clear learning intentions, success criteria, differentiation and extension activities are identified;
- **Sharing Learning Intentions**: ensures focus and encourages pupil involvement in their own learning;
- **Pupil Self Evaluation**: empowers pupils to realise their own learning needs and targets; provides the teacher with essential information
- **Quality Marking**: tracks progress diagnostically, informs pupils of success and weakness and provides clear targets for improvement;

- **Target Setting**: ensures pupil motivation and involvement in progress, raises achievement, keeps all staff informed of individual needs and is linked to specific targets from the curriculum.

## Summative Assessment (School and National)

This is the formal testing and teacher analysis of what has been learned, in order to produce assessment bands and steps, which may be used for records and reports of various types.

- Statutory End of Key Stage Tests (Year 2 and 6);
- SATs/Assessment Qualification Authority's analysis and Target Tracking feedback;
- Half-termly assessment made against National curriculum statements in Reading, Writing and Maths;
- SEN One Plans and analysis tools;
- End of Unit Assessments;
- Transfer of Records (KS1 to KS2 to KS3 / next teacher);
- Staff Group Planning, Assessment and Moderation Meetings;
- Pupil Progress Meetings (half termly);
- SLT Standards Meetings;
- Phonics check in year 1;
- Times tables check in year 4;
- EYFS baseline assessment;
- Phonics tracking.

## 5. Implementation.

The National Curriculum, introduced in September 2014, has set out clear expectations for what children should achieve by the end of each key stage and, for English and Maths, has provided guidance as to when this content should be covered. The statutory statements published in the National Curriculum show the end of year expectations.

The expected end-of-year outcomes have been adapted to help support teachers in making their assessment judgments over each academic year through the creation of age-related 'Bands' (1-6). Each Band comprises formative statements that can be shared with pupils and parents to help define and guide next steps in learning. Sonar software is used in school to allow analysis of pupil achievement and progress.

Each year Band has been broken down into six Steps: beginning (b), beginning plus (b+), working within (w), working within plus (w+), secure (s) and secure plus (s+).

The three broader sections may be thought of in these terms:

**Beginning** – pupil learning is chiefly focussed on the criteria for the band. There may be minimal elements of the previous band still to gain complete confidence in.

**Working Within** – pupil learning is fully focussed on the criteria for the band. This is a teacher best fit decision but could be informed by statement assessments between around 40% and 70% achieved.

**Secure** – confidence in all of the criteria for the band. There may be pupil learning still focussed on gaining thorough confidence in some minimal elements but the broad expectations for the band have been met.

At appropriate half termly intervals, teachers select a step to show where each pupil is working. Lower and higher achieving pupils may be working at a band outside of their current year, and can be recorded as such.

Generally, to meet age related expectations, children should reach the secure (s) step by the end of the appropriate year. To move from secure (s) in one year band to the next is 6 steps over 6 half terms. Therefore this equates to 1 step of progress each half term.

Secure + effectively represents the consolidation and then mastery of the band and, while pupils will still need to pass through it in the following year, it allows the school to identify pupils who, while still operating at age related expectations, have attained a more thorough and wide ranging grasp of the content and concepts. Secure + demonstrates the foundation from which a pupil may proceed onto the criteria in the following band.

The school accepts that some statements in each band carry more weight or importance than others. These are highlighted to staff as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). It is expected that a pupil must achieve the majority of KPIs in a Band before they can be considered for progression into the next age-related band.

## Use of Sonar.

Sonar has historically provided a reliable and effective way of tracking and analysing the progress and attainment of pupils at Westwood Academy. It continues to represent a highly effective way to demonstrate progress and attainment in a form that is accessible to teachers, SLT, parents, Directors, the local authority and Ofsted. It is vital that we utilise a robust, workable and informative assessment system that can demonstrate the positive impact of teaching and learning on the progress of pupils.

## Moderation.

Periodically, teachers undertake moderation and standardisation to ensure that judgements are in line with each other or with higher or lower year groups. From time to time the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and subject leaders will undertake moderation activities across the whole school to ensure that standards are being met and progression is visible from year to year.

On a termly basis, trust-wide scrutiny across Literacy and Numeracy in all year groups takes place, further ensuring the accuracy of judgments recorded. Moderation may also be undertaken by external authorities in order to validate teachers' assessments.

Sonar contains examples of work in reading, writing and maths that have been annotated and have commentary attached to demonstrate the National Curriculum expectations that are being met. These are designed to help teachers judge where a child is working against National Curriculum expectations by offering a further moderation resource.

End of key stage assessment and resulting moderation always reflects the annual guidance published by the DfE, setting out assessment frameworks for teachers.

## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Assessing at an early stage is essential to ensure that we effectively help children to overcome difficulties accessing learning. Progress for all children identified as needing support that is additional to or different from the provision that is made for all children through Quality First Teaching will be monitored regularly against their individual 'One Plan' targets. Both

formative and summative assessments will be carried out rigorously to ensure the child's needs are being met.

See our SEN Policy http://www.westwoodacademy.org/information-for-parents/sen-and-disability/ document for more details.

## Equal Opportunities and Inclusion.

We aim to ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities, backgrounds, gender and social groups to complete appropriate assessment tasks, free from stereotypical or biased expectations. Analysis of assessment data includes a focus upon key identified groups to support, and continually develop, the very highest standards of inclusive practise.

## 6.    Marking and Feedback.

The marking of children's work has a unique place in the process of assessment. Teachers' marking and feedback alongside pupils' work will lead to a written record of progress and assessment. Marking can motivate, praise achievement or comment on a particular feature such as grammar, spelling or presentation. However strong the quality of teaching or high the level of interest generated during lessons, work left unmarked becomes devalued in the eyes of children. Conversely, pupils will perceive regular marking as showing interest in them and their achievements as well as offering them a clear indication that high expectation and standards must be maintained.

The marking system at Westwood Academy will be consistent across the school, attach value to each piece of work, completed either by the teacher or another designated staff member (to support teacher wellbeing) and over time will show a pattern of:

- being positive and constructive (2 stars/pinks), giving each child a sense of direction in their work;
- being easy to follow and understand, **modelling the presentation expectations** of the school;
- being completed with the child, where time/need permits, as a marking conference;
- where this is not possible, the child's attention should be drawn to any corrections that are necessary or next steps to be considered (a wish/green, shown as a cloud where direct actions is required);
- being linked to a child's self correction and editing where possible and showing where a wish/green has been converted to a star/pink;
- indicating where work is supported (see appendix for a list of marking codes that are used to explain what support/working arrangements have been used);
- for some younger children, there may be a need for an adult to scribe the child's work to show what the intent of writing was;
- showing that marking is clearly linked to the lesson's objective, previous wish/green or the child's target.

The learning objective (or WALT) should be written/stuck at the beginning of a piece of work. If the learning objective is met or exceeded, a star/pink could reflect this. The learning could also be extended with a wish and a cloud that directs a child to more learning through a task. If the student has achieved some success but has not wholly achieved the objective, then a wish/green could reflect this and specific advice with a task included in a cloud.

Codes must be used to show the level of support used in each session. If work is independent and this is normal for the child, then the "I" code does not need to be used. If a child usually

has support and instead works independently, then the "I" code must be included.  A full list of codes used are shown in the appendix at the back of this document.

Marks or comments should be made using blue pen.  Pink highlighters show the positive features, green highlighters the areas to develop.

**The correct handwriting script should be used when a teacher or other designated staff member writes in the child's book.**

Pupils may be optionally encouraged to self-evaluate their learning using neat traffic light symbols, where:

- green shows they found it easy;
- amber shows it was tricky; and
- red shows it was too hard.

This should correspond to how they feel about their work.

Neat presentation is to be encouraged and rewarded in all subjects, across all parts of the curriculum.

## Recording and Reporting
- Assessment is carried out in all subjects;
- Assessments, records and reports are to be available on Sonar at given times (usually the end of each half term for reading, writing and maths);
- Parents will be given feedback once per term, either through meetings with class teachers, or through a school report;
- Full reports, which contain details of achievement and progress across the curriculum, are sent to parents at the end of the academic year.

## Assessment Leader
The school has an assessment leader whose role it is to:

- maintain the school's assessment policy and guidelines in consultation with the staff;
- be responsible for the evaluation and regular updating of such guidelines, including the assessment timetable;
- ensure that assessment procedures are clear to all staff;
- ensure that assessment procedures are being carried out in line with school policy;
- set targets for improvement, with the SLT;
- develop and co-ordinate school-based formal assessments;
- ensure that statutory tests are carried out according to published regulations;
- monitor the performance of children and groups of children;
- order, maintain and store assessment resources;
- attend and recommend appropriate courses, promote school-based in-service training and be familiar with current research and statutory requirements;
- analyse end-of-year test results and produce reports for SLT and Directors as required.

**Appendix: list of marking codes used in the school.**

**G**        Guided/group work.

**I**        Independent (used when work is not usually independent).

**MC/PC**    Marking/Pupil Conference.

**S**        Supported work.

**TG**       Teacher group.

**V**        Verbal feedback.

**\***       Star - met learning objective/success criteria/target (with comment explaining how).

         (Tickled pink) Met learning objective/success criteria/target (with comment explaining how). Used to highlight where these are met throughout work as highlights.

**W**        Wish (with comment clarifying next step).

         (Green for growth) Wish (with comment clarifying next step).  Used to highlight areas to develop
throughout the work as highlights.

         A cloud shows children that there is **a job to do** with either an example of what to do
as a next step to consider or a task related to the piece of work completed.

         A **purple** cloud shows children that there is **a job to do** as part of a marking conference.

         A target symbol - used with pink, means target met.  Used with green, means focus/return to the
target or there is a new target.

**\* >\*\***    Shows that a challenge has been adapted or extended (either by a pupil or an adult).

**W > \***     Shows that a previously identified wish has been acted upon by a pupil independently.

# Assessment Summary

We use Sonar to record progress and generate the performance information required to effectively manage in-cohort monitoring and analysis. On a half termly basis, the data for every child is updated for reading, writing and maths, linking the band/step awarded to statements taken directly from the national curriculum. For foundation subjects, the progress data is recorded termly and analysed twice yearly. Subject leadership skills have been targeted this year, with coaching from the most experienced practitioners provided to build observation, book scrutiny and pupil perception skills: this has given them a sharp focus on progress and assessment during the foundation subject monitoring that is rigorously followed throughout the academic year.

Children have individual literacy and numeracy targets. Our marking and feedback identifies the successes of each activity as well identifying next steps, with an emphasis on ensuring that the feedback process between children and adults has a positive impact on the progress of children (evidenced through regular book scrutiny and moderations).

Work scrutiny, data analysis, environmental walks, lesson observation and pupil perception are all used to triangulate the performance information, creating a wider view of assessment that links to the continued professional development of staff.

For children with SEN or in the disadvantaged group, provision maps are produced to help support the analysis of impact and effectiveness of the range of interventions and strategies used, informing whether they are continued, adapted or replaced by something else. In-cohort data is analysed half termly for reading, writing and maths to identify trends or patterns and adapt our provision where required, with whole school/cohort, disadvantaged and SEN focus.

Performance information is discussed on a half-termly basis as a minimum through pupil progress meetings held with the teacher/s from each class with either SLT or other Trust members. Focus here is put upon removing barriers to learning for children in the disadvantaged group, those below age related expectations (to close the gap to age related levels), SEN or children who are making below expected progress. The meetings are used to analyse the impact of interventions and strategies and to consider the barriers to progress, and how best to move each child's learning forward during the next cycle of intervention.

Regular moderation of both literacy and numeracy is carried out in staff meetings to ensure accuracy and as a means of developing book scrutiny skills across the teaching staff. This is complemented by Trust wide moderations on a termly basis. There is also regular moderation for all year groups that takes place for both literacy and numeracy using trained moderators from across the Trust.