



St Nicolas' CE Combined School Taplow
'Living and Learning Together with God'.

Assessment Information for Parents Autumn 2015

Dear Families,

We're currently in a changing world of assessment in education. Last year we went through a significant change in the national curriculum, with the 'new' curriculum having a very different content to the 'old' curriculum. We addressed this by designing a creative and enjoyable curriculum for all at St Nicolas'.

In terms of statutory content many of the objectives in the old curriculum have shifted to lower year groups in the new, more rigorous curriculum. We have moved, under government direction, to a system which removes the assessment grades that have been with us for many years. This new assessment system is known as ASSESSMENT WITHOUT LEVELS.

In the past, assessment levels (2a, 2b, 2c, for example) have had no direct correlation to the curriculum. We will no longer be reporting using these terms.

The 'new' assessment system is now directly linked to year group national curriculum objectives, and because of this it is a positive and understandable change. We have taken this as an exciting opportunity to review our assessment and reporting systems in order to create a more holistic approach that makes sense to pupils, parents and staff.

We are now assessing children against the new curriculum framework and we have a robust assessment system which tracks and monitors pupil progress across the school. Assessment against the new framework involves objectives that have been shifted to lower year groups. This means that we are in a time of transition between old and new sets of data. Our initial assessments of children that have taken place during the first half term of this year will provide us with information to make judgements against these raised expectations. This will give us their starting points for the year against the new national curriculum and objectives which are sometimes referred to as Key Assessment Criteria.

Our new assessment system is referred to as '**Assessment without Levels**'. What it involves:

1. WHAT IS ASSESSMENT WITHOUT LEVELS?

Introduction: What is Assessment?

We use the term '**attainment**' when referring to children's levels of achievement (e.g. end of year test scores).

We use the term '**progress**' when we talk about the learning that has taken place over time.

Each school requires an assessment system that monitors each child's progress and attainment. The **tracking, monitoring and evaluation** of a child's attainment and progress take place daily in lessons, through questioning, marking and talking to children about their learning. It also takes place weekly, termly and annually through more formal assessments and tests. The tracking, monitoring and evaluation of a child's progress and attainment also informs curriculum planning.

2. THE PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN OUR NEW ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS ARE:

We believe that every child should achieve to the best of their ability. With this in mind we support and challenge children of all abilities. We plan our lessons with the thought of 'What do I need to do to help each child achieve?'

We expect the vast majority of children to make at least 12 months progress in a twelve month period. This target is set against the National Curriculum objectives. Our target is also that the vast majority of children will have a deep level of understanding of learning in each subject. Our expectation of all teachers is that they will use assessment effectively, every day, to ensure that the correct scaffolding is built into lessons to ensure that all children achieve at an appropriate level, and to an appropriate depth.

3. NO MORE LEVELS? SO WHAT WILL WE ASSESS THE CHILDREN USING?

Stages of learning in every class: Y1 – Y6

We use the same terminology in each year group. The stages in learning are:

TERMINOLOGY	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHEN IS IT EXPECTED?
Emerging	yet to be secure in the end of year expectations	as expected by end of autumn term IN THE CHILD'S CURRENT YEAR GROUP
Developing	secure in the majority of end of year expectation	as expected by end of spring term IN THE CHILD'S CURRENT YEAR GROUP
Secure	secure in almost all the end of year expectations and is able to use and apply their knowledge and skills confidently	as expected by end of summer term IN THE CHILD'S CURRENT YEAR GROUP
Mastery	n.b. if a child has developed a deep understanding of the year group objectives this will be identified as having reached the Mastery level).	A child has a deep understanding of the programmes of study for his / her year group

Depth of learning within each stage

The focus is now on the breadth and depth of a child's learning. This means that we approach concepts from different ways in order to deepen a child's understanding and application of their learning.

In each stage we use the following terminology to explain how deep a child's knowledge, skills and understanding are:

During each term, the child will be assessed as to whether they have a Basic, Advancing or Deep level of understanding:

TERMINOLOGY	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	EXAMPLES
Basic	child needs considerable support	real-life, practical and concrete tasks needed
Advancing	child is able to work with scaffolding, and prompts	can cope with representational ideas and pictorial representation
Deep (Mastery level of understanding)	child is able to use and apply knowledge and skills confidently child is able to confidently investigate, draw conclusions, problem solve	abstract – can understand and work confidently with abstract ideas confident in the application of skills in different contexts

4. TRACKING PUPIL PROGRESS

We track and record children's progress against each objective within their year group's national curriculum. Daily, we track and monitor pupil progress through:

- Questioning, observation and dialogue.
- Children knowing what they are being asked to learn, and more importantly, why.
- Learning Challenges and success criteria are discussed and agreed with or formulated by the children during each lesson. Work is then assessed against the success criteria by the child, the teacher, or both.
- Three types of feedback - pupil self assessment – peer – teacher – which clearly identifies next steps – this can be verbal or written feedback.
- Regular pupil work scrutiny by the senior leadership team, subject co-ordinators or whole staff.
- More formal end of topic assessments help us to assess progress over time. During our assessment weeks (one each term) results and formal teacher assessment are collated onto tracking sheets and in this way we can identify underachievement and plan strategies intervention to get children back on track.
- Children's work in books demonstrate progress and we frequently monitor books to make sure teachers are providing the best possible learning opportunities for children.
- Astute differentiation ensures that tasks are matched to children's abilities and provides high challenges for all.

5. HOW DO WE TEST?

YEAR GROUP	STATUTORY TESING	INTERNAL TESTS
Reception	end of year assessments against the Early Learning Goals	Teacher assessment through observations.
Y1	internal testing Y1 Phonics screening	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly.
Y2	End of Key Stage (SATs) tests: Reading; Writing; Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling; Maths.	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly.
Y3	None	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly. Formal standardised testing during the Summer Term.
Y4	None	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly. Formal standardised testing during the Summer Term.
Y5	None	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly. Formal standardised testing during the Summer Term.
Y6	End of Key Stage tests (SATs): Reading; Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation; Maths; Reported assessments of Writing and Science.	Ongoing Teacher Assessments throughout the year; with more formal recording termly.

EARLY YEARS / RECEPTION

Children in Reception will continue to be assessed against the Prime and Specific areas of Learning in the EYFS profile.

Assessments will be based on daily activities and events. At the end of Reception, for each Early Learning Goal, teachers will judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception year.:

Emerging – not yet reached the expected level of development for their age

Expected—working at the expected level of development for their age

Exceeding – beyond the expected level of development for their age

YEAR 1 PHONICS TEST / YEAR 2 PHONICS RETEST

Children in Year 1 are tested by being to read a selection of words, some real, some made up in order to test their phonic knowledge. This takes place during June and children are expected to reach a specific government identified standard. If they do not reach this standard in Year 1 they are retested in Year 2. These tests are designed to assess children's ability to use phonics to read.

END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENTS (SATs) AT THE END OF YEAR 6:

In order to be 'secondary ready', a child needs to meet the end of Key Stage 2 expectations. Y6 children take Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) in May each year. The Government will provide a scaled score for these tests. We will be able to give you more information on this when we receive it.

END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENTS (SATs) AT THE END OF YEAR 2:

Y2 children take Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) in May each year. The Government will provide a scaled score for these tests. We will be able to give you more information on this when we receive it.

WHAT DO WE DO FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF CHILDREN IN THE CLASS?

MORE ABLE CHILDREN

For children who have securely met their end of year objectives, they will be assessed as exceeded or mastering the objectives for their age group. Rather than moving on to the next year's curriculum, these children will work on 'mastering' their knowledge through the application of skills in different contexts – they will be deepening their learning.

The depth and application of a child's learning is an important marker of their achievement and progress.

SEN CHILDREN

SEN children have specific learning plans that will meet their needs. They will be expected to make progress in line with their peers, but they may not, because of their special needs, meet year group objectives. We do, however, have assessment and tracking systems that support, challenge and monitor their progress.

CHILDREN WHO MIGHT BE FALLING BEHIND

Any child who is working below the age-related expectation is given personalised learning opportunities to help them reach their potential. We have intervention systems that aim to address misunderstandings or difficulties as soon as they arise. On a daily basis, intervention strategies allow children to catch up ready for the next lesson. Over time, intervention systems and quality first teaching help children with large gaps to make accelerated progress and catch up with their peers.

6. HOW DO WE REPORT TO PARENTS / CARERS

We use the following systems to keep parents informed about their child's achievement and progress:

- End of school year annual reports (July);
- Parents Evenings, Autumn Term (October) and Spring Term (March);
- Meetings arranged as appropriate where concerns or worries have arisen;
- Provision map reviews for SEN or close monitoring children.

Our annual reports changed last year to provide information based on these ways of assessing in preparation for the changes to reporting for English, Maths and Science. We used Working Below, At or Exceeding age related expectations for all foundation subjects. We hope that this has given you an insight into how we will be reporting your child's attainment.

If you have any questions or queries about this please do come and speak to Mr Adams (Headteacher) or Ms Holmes (Deputy Headteacher and Assessment Leader), so that we can provide more detail or description for you. Thank you!

Information on objectives for each year group can be found in year group specific booklets,