**Hexham First School Assessment Policy 2024**

The purpose of this policy is to make explicit how we assess pupils at Hexham First School. At Hexham First School we believe that assessment lies at the heart of the process of promoting children’s learning. It has a clear purpose and helps to inform all of the adults working in the classroom. It helps to provide a framework within which educational objectives may be set and where children’s progress can be expressed and monitored. All teachers have been heavily involved with the assessment systems that have been put in place and have had opportunities to feedback and share developments.

**This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:**

* Feedback and marking policy
* Equality and Information and Objectives Policy
* Data Protection Policy
* SEND policy

**The aims and objectives of assessment in our school are:**

● To enable pupils to demonstrate what they know and understand

● To enable pupils to demonstrate the skills they have learnt

● To allow teaching teams to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each child.

● To help pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their work.

● To provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child’s learning.

**What should good assessment look like?**

The overriding principle of good assessment is that it should be clearly tied to its intended purpose. The three main forms of assessment at our school are:

**Formative assessment**

Formative assessment allows teachers to know whether children’s knowledge and understanding is secure enough to move forward, or whether further consolidation work or a different approach is necessary. Teachers will be looking for whether a pupil has been able to demonstrate application with increasing independence or confidence. Teachers will then communicate findings with the children, explaining what they need to do next. This might be done orally or through marking. These assessments aid children in embedding knowledge into the long-term memory, concepts are revisited frequently throughout a year and across key stages to ensure that children are given the opportunity to retrieve this knowledge regularly in a variety of ways Formative assessment is used by teachers to evaluate pupils’ knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day, lesson to lesson basis and to tailor teaching accordingly. This can include probing questions, through retrieval practice activities e.g. low stakes quizzing and recap questions, specific assessment for learning activities and scrutiny of work.

**Summative assessment**

Summative assessment will be used to provide information to parents, provide the Headteacher and subject leaders with data so that they can identify ‘headlines’ for the school, and in turn inform the strategic plan for the school. The assessments will also provide information on how secure a child was/is in their knowledge of the curriculum, which informs teachers’ planning and enables schools to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of a teaching period. This is termly at Hexham First School.

The Headteacher will evaluate data collected termly and conclude in reports considering:

• starting points of all children

• different groups of children

• progress

• attainment

• comparative data

• impact on school development plan

• CPD needed within school

**Nationally standardised summative assessments**

**Reception**

Children are assessed regularly throughout their reception year. A baseline assessment is conducted within the first 6 weeks on pupils starting school. This is a government statutory requirement for all schools. Children are assessed on seventeen areas of learning using development matters. At the end of the year a decision is made regarding the children’s attainment against the Early Learning Goals for each of the seventeen areas.

**Year 1**

* Year One phonics check

All children in Year 1 will participate in a phonics check. This assessment will be administered by the Year 1 teacher. All children are taught phonics and spelling regularly through the phonics scheme we have adopted ‘ Read Write Ink’. Pupils who do not pass the phonics check in Year 1 will retake the test in Year 2.

**Year 4**

* Year 4 times tables check

The Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) is a key stage 2 assessment to be taken by pupils at the end of year 4 (in June).The purpose of the MTC is to make sure the times tables knowledge is at the expected level. The MTC is an online test where the pupils are asked 25 questions on times tables 2 to 12. For every question you have 6 seconds to answer and in between the questions there is a 3 second rest. Questions about the 6, 7, 8, 9, and 12 times table come up more often. The questions are generated randomly based on the rules of the MTC.

**Nursery**

We use the Northumberland School Readiness Passport. It is a transition document for Early Years education settings. It is used to gather information about key events in a child's early life from the child's parents/carers which can follow them as they grow and move on to new settings.

A summative assessment tool forms part of The School Readiness Passport. This is a 6 monthly assessment, based on developmental milestones which will support practitioners to make accurate judgements about whether the child is on track to school readiness. Practitioners will record any actions they will take to support children to get back on track to school readiness if they are identified as being 'not on track'.

**Feedback and assessment**

We aim to provide feedback to children through live and active marking, so that they have specific advice about improvements to their work. Children are given time to read and review their work following feedback.

We use an assessment program (SIMS) to track data and provide data analysis. Data is collated in reading, writing and maths at three points throughout the year and Pupil Progress Meetings follow the data input to enable the Headteacher to ask questions and find out more about the current achievement and attainment of pupils.

**Parents’ Evenings**

Parents' evenings take place in the Autumn and Spring / Summer terms. At these meetings, parents are provided with a data update for their child so they have a clear picture of how their child is progressing.

**Reporting to parents**

At the end of each year, families will receive a full report detailing the progress and achievements of their children across the curriculum. Parents/carers are encouraged to provide feedback to the school. Parents of pupils on our SEND register have more regular meetings with the SENCo and class teacher to monitor progress.

**Reporting to the Governing Body**

Data is presented annually to the Governing Body and discussed in more detail in committee meetings. There are always opportunities for the Governors to challenge and ask probing questions to elicit key information.

**Inclusion**

Hexham First is an inclusive school and we work hard to meet the needs of all our children. Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class. High quality teaching is available to all children, including those with additional needs. We work hard as a school, supported by our SENCo, to ensure that all additional support in the classroom is deployed effectively. Where a child is not making the expected progress the class teacher will work alongside the SENCo, parents and relevant support staff to plan tailored support. Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) are assessed regularly for progress towards their personalised targets identified in their Pupil Passports), as part of our graduated approach to SEND. This review is held formally 3 times per academic year but should be considered as 'continuous and ongoing'.

**Teaching and Assessment System for reading**

**Phonics**

We use the Read Write Inc phonics programme to teach reading. The programme’s ‘cycle of instruction’ means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach their partner. In this way, they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. ‘Partner teaching’ is a key assessment tool.We teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils’ poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge. Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers’ assess: pupils’ phonic knowledge - the speed at which pupils are able to read the text - their understanding of the stories they read. Daily formative assessment opportunities are built into every RWI lesson. Choral response group work, partner work, the small group size allows teachers to evaluate pupils’ phonic knowledge and hence modify the pace and focus of their lessons.

Summative Assessment: All pupils are assessed every 4-6 weeks, or more frequently for those making speedier progress, using RWI Assessment materials. They assess a pupils’ sound to grapheme correspondence, ability to apply phonic knowledge to decode regular words and to read common exception words. Pupils reading fluency is also evaluated. Pupils’ progress is tracked, to record their phonic knowledge and decoding skills, and this information is used to reorganise groups,

**Vipers**

Towards the end of KS1 and in KS2 Reading, teachers use formative assessment during ‘Vipers’ lessons and use live feedback marking to respond to the whole class or to individual pupil needs based on any misconceptions or areas for improvement. We do not use hands up to avoid certain children dominating class discussions: teachers 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.

**Accelerated Reader**

Once pupils are secure in phonics and have completed the Read Write Ink programme they move to Accelerated Reader. The Accelerated Reader (AR) is a reading management and monitoring programme that aims to foster independent reading. The software assesses reading age, and suggests books that match pupils’ needs and interests. Pupils take computerised quizzes on books to test for reading comprehension. Passing the quiz is an indication that your child has understood what has been read.

**Teaching and Assessment System for writing**

We use Talk for writing in English. The Talk for Writing approach puts formative assessment at the heart of teaching. Talk for Writing’ starts with enjoying and sharing stories. Children learn to tell a story off by heart. They tell the story with expression and actions. Once a story is learnt, the children are encouraged to adapt it to make it their own, for example by changing the characters or the setting. Writing is assessed throughout each Talk for Writing cycle. The hot write, at the end of each cycle, is used to complete formative assessments. Hot writing is marked using the Talk for Writing toolkit to show what the pupil has achieved within this specific text type. Children are also given the opportunity to assess their own piece of writing against their toolkit created earlier in the unit of work. Teachers moderate writing every term as well as sharing a sample at a cluster moderation meeting with local schools. Children can prove they have ‘mastered’ an area of writing and data is reported as WTS ( working towards expected standard) EXS ( working at the expected standard or GDS ( working at greater depth within the expected standard.

**Teaching and Assessment System for maths**

We follow the White Rose mastery maths curriculum. Therefore, we aim, where possible, to keep all of the children’s learning together. Children can prove they have ‘mastered’ an area of maths and data is reported as WTS (working towards expected standard) EXS ( working at the expected standard or GDS ( working at greater depth within the expected standard, White Rose End of Unit Assessments are used to inform teacher judgements. Formative assessment within every lesson helps teachers to identify the children who need more support to achieve the intended outcome and who are ready for greater stretch and challenge through planned questioning or additional activities.

Interventions, often same day, are planned (in addition to Maths lessons) for those children who are working below expected levels enabling them to make rapid progress. 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 of children’s proficiency, enabling us to target additional support to pupils not meeting the standards.

**Teaching and Assessment System for science**

Before starting any new unit, children are asked to share what they already know about that subject. We use the PLAN prior learning assessment lessons at the start of each new topic. This knowledge gets added to throughout the unit to ensure the recall and retention of that knowledge. Science lessons are planned using Kapow Science to ensure that there is overlearning of key knowledge. End of unit assessments are planned into the timetable throughout the year, carried out a few weeks after the unit has been completed. These assessments form the basis of future planning for current and future teaching of that child. TAPS assessment is also used to assess children’s ability to work scientifically.

**Key assessment strategies used across the curriculum**

Lessons across the curriculum will include a ‘flashback’ section - where teachers assess pupils' prior knowledge. Retrieval or assessment for learning activity/activities are used during lessons and feedback is provided against learning objectives. Teachers regularly use flashbacks at the beginning of a lesson– What did we learn last week? Check back – What have we learned today? Knowledge organisers are used to review learning against assessment questions.

When planning a lesson within a unit of work, teachers will build assessment criteria in as they plan. Teachers will use the subject progression documents to ensure that cross year group links are made explicit to the children of their prior learning. Teachers will review during and after lessons to help inform future planning (eg re-visit aspects/address misconceptions). Teachers will use the learning objective to assess whether the children have met this by being clear about what/how they might expect the children to demonstrate this.

Quizzes: Low stake knowledge based quizzes throughout a unit (regular review – eg name the 5 oceans) – test on knowledge as well as understanding of vocabulary. Before teaching a new unit – review previous learning.

Mind mapping: Used at the beginning and/or end of a unit – this could be completed individually, small groups or as a whole class. Vary the approach to this to avoid it becoming mundane, eg post-it notes, graffiti walls, think/share/pair etc

**Arrangements for ensuring teachers are able to conduct assessment competently and confidently.**

The Headteacher and subject leaders will ensure the staff are kept up to date with developments in assessment practise through appropriate CPD, staff meetings or INSET days.

Monitoring of standards and assessment practices is ongoing, in lesson visits, the observer will be looking for methods of assessment and will be able to see how the teacher questions the children to elicit their understanding. Is the thinking and learning moved along using rich questioning? When subject leaders carry out book looks alongside the staff member, they identify if a child is working at an appropriate level and what progress is being made. The books build a picture as to whether misconceptions are being picked up and if the teaching sequence shows clear progression but also readdresses learning when needed. Pupil voice discussions allow teachers and leaders to check if knowledge has been embedded in children’s long term memory. Are children able to articulate their learning, explaining their knowledge about a concept that they did not have before teaching and learning took place?

**External Moderation**

External moderation is carried out with other subject leads within the Hexham Partnership as well as County led moderation.