

APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS TRACKING IN THE NEW CURRICULUM

At Saint Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning. It helps us to ensure that our teaching is appropriate and that learners are making expected progress.

All staff is regularly trained in our approach to assessment and we have a senior leader who is responsible for assessment.

Our Philosophy of Assessment

Assessment should have a purpose at every level for everyone involved:

- Pupils will be given appropriate feedback on their learning from the formative assessments carried out by teachers.
- Class teachers to use formative assessment to support planning and implementation of a curriculum designed to meet the needs of learners.
- Teachers and school leaders use assessment to help ensure that the pupils who need specific intervention are quickly identified, appropriately supported and monitored so that all can fully achieve their potential and no one is left to struggle behind.
- School leaders use summative assessment as a tool for monitoring the progress and attainment pupils make, to ensure the school is helping pupils achieve their potential.
- Parents are able to get a clear and accurate sense of their child's achievement and progress as well as areas where they can support development.
- Governors are able to use data to ensure the school is supporting pupils' learning effectively.
- Our school can provide data for inspection teams to show how children are performing.

Our Method of Assessment

- Assessment serves many purposes, but the main purpose of assessment in our school is to help teachers, parents and pupils plan their next steps in learning.
- We also use the outcomes of assessment to check and support our teaching standards and help us improve.
- Through working with other schools and using external tests and assessments, we will compare our performance with that of other schools.
- We assess pupils against assessment criteria, which are short, discrete, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what a pupil is expected to know and be able to do. We operate a culture of 'I can't do it yet rather than I can't do it as I am only.....

- Assessment criteria are derived from the school curriculum, which is composed of the National Curriculum and our own local design.
- Assessment criteria for periodic assessment are arranged into a hierarchy, setting out expectations of what children are normally expected to have mastered by the end of each year as children's progress may not fit neatly into school years, children may be working above or below their school year.
- The achievement of each pupil is assessed against all the relevant criteria at appropriate times of the school year. Formal assessments each term, e.g. at the end of a topic or unit and informal assessments will take place continually.
- Each pupil is assessed as beginning (b), beginning + (b+), working within (w), working within + (w+), secure (s) or secure + (s+) contained in our expectations for that year.
- Where a pupil is assessed as exceeding the relevant criteria in a subject for that year they will also be assessed against the criteria in that subject for the next year. For those pupils meeting and exceeding the expected standards, we provide more challenging work.
- Assessment judgements are recorded and backed by a body of both qualitative and quantitative evidence created using observations, records of work and testing.
- Assessment judgements are moderated by colleagues in school and by colleagues in other schools to make sure our assessments are fair, reliable and valid. Representatives from each year group in our Development Group 6 are meeting together to assess and moderate pieces of work and then meeting with colleagues from Development Groups across the city. By the end, the assessed and moderated pieces of work in Reading, Writing and Mathematics will be collated to form a 'Standards File' for each year group.

Our Use of Assessment

- Teachers use the outcomes of our assessments to summarise and analyse attainment and progress for their pupils and classes.
- Teachers use this data to plan the learning for every pupil to ensure they meet or exceed expectations. Teachers and leaders analyse the data across the school to ensure that pupils identified as vulnerable or at particular risk in this school are making appropriate progress and that all pupils are suitably stretched.
- The information from assessment is communicated to parents and pupils on a termly basis through a structured conversation. Parents and pupils receive rich, qualitative profiles of what has been achieved and indications of what they need to do next.
- We celebrate all achievements across a broad and balanced curriculum, including sport, music, art and performance, behaviour and social and emotional development.

Our Assessment System Using Target Tracker

Our assessment system has been developed carefully to meet DFE guidance and Our Philosophy of Assessment.

Tracking Attainment with Statements

At its heart, any assessment tool must have Assessment for Learning and this is the fundamental building block on which any more expansive data must sit.

The new National Curriculum has set out clear expectations for what children should achieve by the end of each key stage and, for English, Maths and Science, has provided guidance as to when in each phase this content should be covered. The programme of study expected end of year outcomes have been adapted to help support teachers in making their step judgements over each academic year. These formative statements may be shared with pupils to help define and guide next steps in learning. As a key time saving element the Target Tracker software has been designed to allow group assessment entry and reports to get a quick and visual snapshot of pupil achievement.

The statutory statements published in the National Curriculum show end of year expectations. Curriculum advisers have worked collaboratively with highly skilled practitioners to produce guidance and exemplification to support transition and, a key concern with any new system, moderation. These examples are presented in the Target Tracker software as additional statements of guidance, examples of children's work, or a video file with audio.

This supporting guidance is available for English, Maths, Science and Computing.

Tracking Attainment and Progress with Steps

To track pupil attainment we have devised a system of steps. This performs the function of communicating progression and attainment in a simple format that may be aggregated to produce reports of overall and average progress. This is based on a carefully considered logical approach to assessment and follows on from the assessment system we have introduced in EYFS.

The terminology has been selected for consistency and clarity but also to avoid any suggested judgement when describing the attainment of pupils working below the expected band for their year group.

Each year band has been broken down into six steps:

Beginning (b)

Beginning + (b+)

Working within (w)

Working within + (w+)

Secure (s)

Secure + (s+)

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

Beginning – Pupil learning is chiefly focused 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 focused on the criteria for the band. Up to 70% of the statements are confidently achieved.

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

Where the sections have been broken down into steps this is designed to allow the teacher to represent and report progress for a pupil where they may not feel that the best fit is within the next section. For example, a pupil may be assessed as Band 2 Beginning in the Autumn term in Year 2. The next time the teacher records a summative assessment they may not feel that the pupil has progressed to Working Within, but the pupil has made progress. An assessment of Beginning + allows that progress to be represented and will feed through to overall class and key stage reporting. The inability to record smaller progress measures was a frustrating issue with the outgoing levels (and points) system.

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

Teachers, in time, may assess steps in core and foundation subjects.

To allow for the tracking and analysis of progress in a statistical context we have adopted a one point scale. The numbers below each step reference the equivalent scale point.

Pupil attainment can then be monitored in the context of age related expectation and progress over time to help children reach the new secondary ready standard.

For children to be working at age related expectation, they would need to reach the secure (s) step at the end of the appropriate year.

Secure + effectively represents the consolidation of the band and, while pupils will still need to pass through it in the following year, it allows settings 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 New Curriculum allows schools to have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. It is important for children to have opportunities to apply their understanding in a range of challenging real life contexts, and to demonstrate their mastery of a particular skill at a deep and thorough level before moving on. We would expect children who are secure (s) in the band of statements they are working on to have these experiences, and therefore be working at the secure + (s+) step before being assessed against the following year band statements.

Setting Targets for Progress

Target Setting is an emotive and, potentially, controversial method when misused. When taken as another part of the holistic ‘tool box’ of assessment practice it can help identify and focus learning for pupils falling behind or showing potential for accelerated progress. The DFE refer to ‘sufficient progress’ as a way to represent progress over the key stage or

Primary phase. While this has yet to be clarified it may be assumed that progressing through the equivalent content for a single academic year would be considered sufficient.

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 or 1 point of progress each half term**.

This is an example of how targets might be set for a child with a year one entry level assessment as working just below band 1 at the end of the EYFS requirements (40 – 60s+), in order for them to reach the secondary ready standard, 6 secure (6s) at the end of Year 6.

Year 1 Autumn 1 assessment	End of Year 1 target	End of Year 2 target	End of Year 3 target	End of Year 4 target	End of Year 5 target	End of Year 6 target
40 – 60 s+	1s	2s	3s	4s	5s	6s

Any pupil target needs to be reviewed by the class teacher to ensure it is appropriate and may be changed where necessary.

Pupils working below band 1 and pupils with SEN

Year 1 pupils who are working below the beginning of the Year 1 band could still be assessed in the EYFS 40 -60 w, 40 – 60 w+, 40 – 60 s or 40 – 60 s+ month band steps. We will continue to assess Year 1 pupils using statements from the EYFS month bands in the Autumn and Spring terms (if necessary). Assessments made in the EYFS section of the Target Tracker software will not transfer across to Key Stage 1, as the subjects do not match. For pupils with SEN, it will be possible to assess using P-Scales so progression through into Year band 1 can be tracked. Progress for these pupils can still be tracked using our one point scale.

Managing School Data and Reporting to Parents

This assessment system makes it easy for our school to clearly communicate pupil attainment and progress to parents. By using step assessments, teachers can clearly help parents understand whether their child is working at the appropriate point for their age, and by using the highlighted statements can provide guidance on what children need to do to progress.

Tracking pupil data using the Target Tracker software means that statistical analysis can be done simply and effectively and can provide data on pupil attainment and progress on a summative whole school level, or deeper down at pupil level.