

Our assessment system

Assessment without levels

Following the introduction of a new National Curriculum from September 2014, the government has also decided to remove level descriptors. The government's policy of removing level descriptors from the National Curriculum is set out in terms of freeing schools from an imposed measure of pupil progress. The Department for Education has said that levels are not very good with respect to helping parents to understand how far their child is improving. In their place, from September 2014, "it will be for schools to decide how they assess pupils' progress".

With levels removed and the focus now on progress and raising the achievement of every pupil, Redhill's leaders and teachers have developed ways to measure pupil attainment and progress. During the academic year 2014-15, the school is in a period of transition from old levels to new assessment descriptors:

- Nursery and Reception assessments are not changing in school or nationally.
- Year groups 1, 3, 4 and 5 are being assessed against new descriptors, see below.
- Year groups 2 and 6 will continue to be assessed using levels and sub-levels, in-line with national testing arrangements for 2015.

Assessing Progress

Teachers are constantly assessing, as they ask questions in lessons, listen to children, look at work in progress and thoroughly mark work-providing children with opportunities to respond to misconceptions through 'Closing the Gap marking'. We place great importance on this style of formative assessment during lessons that supports next steps in learning. Marking recognises the positive aspects but it also focusses on the 'next steps' for each child. Children are strongly encouraged to enter into a daily dialogue with their teacher about how they have found each day's task and to participate in self and peer assessment against daily objectives and success criteria.

We encourage 'risk taking' and persistence and we value mistakes and recognise that this is how we learn – and we make much of 'good mistakes' in lessons, encouraging a resilience and positive attitude to meeting challenges and learning from them.

We also value summative assessments, where the children are tested against national standards. At the ages of 7 and 11 the children take Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) during the Summer Term of Year 2 and Year 6. The results show the progress children have made and their level of achievement in the core subjects as set against national standards. Most importantly, these kinds of tests help us to identify gaps in children's understanding that we can then address in future planning. Underachievement can be identified and measures such as increased focus on a particular area, intervention groups etc can be implemented.

Children in Year1 also take a statutory phonics progress test at the end of the summer term.

Parents are invited to a parent consultation meeting in the spring term to discuss their child's progress (amongst other things) and, at the end of each school year, teachers write a report on each child. However, we don't wait if there are concerns: teachers will always contact parents to share worries – and good news! Parents are also warmly welcomed to discuss their child's progress at any stage throughout the year if they have any concerns.

The New Curriculum

The old and new curriculum has different content. Many of the objectives in the old curriculum have shifted to lower year groups in the new, more rigorous curriculum, this means it is not possible to have an exact link between a level that was the outcome of the old National Curriculum assessment and the requirements new National Curriculum, this means a change in thinking and in the way we assess out children's outcomes.

At Redhill, we see this as an exciting opportunity to review our assessment and reporting systems to create a better that makes sense to parents. We were very clear that whatever assessment tool we used, it needed to be able to track pupils' progress across the whole school and not just at the end of a Key Stage.

We are now assessing children against the new framework, one for which they may have not been taught the previous years' objectives and content, so we are in a time of transition between old and new sets of data. During this transition time children and teachers have completed baseline assessments to find out their starting points for the new national curriculum.

Our assessment and reporting system includes:

- Ongoing assessment by the class teacher throughout each lesson, through questioning, observation, dialogue and marking.
- Children knowing what they are being asked to learn and more importantly, why.
- Targets which enable children to move forward.
- Success Criteria are discussed and agreed with or formulated by the children during each lesson, work is then assessed against the success criteria.
- Three way feedback, pupil, peer, teacher with clearly identified next steps – this can be written or verbal feedback.
- Regular pupils' work scrutiny.
- Pupil progress tests (Rising Stars)
- A progression tracker for each individual child.
- Use of the I-track computerised progress tracker

Tracking progress over time

We will assess children against age-related expectations at the end of every half term. Children will be assessed as being:

- **Commenced,**
- **Developing,**
- **Secure,** reflecting that age-related objectives have been achieved
- **Advanced,** showing that age-related objectives have been achieved and the child is working at a deeper level of understanding and application

More able children

For children who have securely met the end of year objectives they will be assessed as exceeding or mastering objectives for their age group. Rather than moving onto 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.

Early Years - Nursery & Reception

Children in Nursery and Reception will continue to be assessed against the areas of Learning in the EYFS profile. Assessments will be based on observation of 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
- **Expected**
- **Exceeding**, beyond the expected level of development for their age.

Year 2 & 6 (2014-15 only)

Children in Year 2 and Year 6 continue to be taught the old National Curriculum. They will be tested against the old National Curriculum in 2015. We will continue to assess these children using existing Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) techniques and track progress using levels, sub-levels and Average Point Scores (APS).

Beyond 2015

End of Key-Stage 1 and 2 tests are changing in 2016. We will provide further detail regarding these changes next year.