



Cedars Academy

Assessment without Levels Policy

2017-2018

Originated by: MF

Approved by: Gov Body Oct 2016

Next Review: Oct 2018

Cedars Approach to Assessment without Levels Policy

1 Background

In June 2013, the Education Secretary, Michael Gove, announced that National Curriculum levels for reporting attainment and progress will not be used in the new curriculum that will come into force for maintained schools in September 2014.

National Curriculum levels cease for Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 at the end of 2013/14 and for Years 2 and 6 at the end of the academic year 2014/15. Schools will be able to introduce their own approaches to formative and summative assessment, in order to support pupil attainment and progression.

Ofsted's inspections will be informed by whatever pupil tracking data schools choose to keep. Schools will continue to benchmark their performance through statutory end of key stage assessments, including national curriculum tests. In the consultation on primary assessment and accountability, the department will consult on core principles for a school's curriculum and assessment system.

Schools will be expected to demonstrate (with evidence) their assessment of pupils' progress, to keep parents informed, to enable governors to make judgements about the school's effectiveness, and to inform Ofsted inspections.

2 OfSTED perspective

2.1 On the 1st July 2014, Ofsted published information about how inspection in 2014/15 and beyond will take account of the removal of national curriculum levels. They specified that inspectors will not expect to see a particular assessment system in place and will recognise that schools are still working towards full implementation of their preferred approach.

2.2 However, they did state that inspectors will:

- Spend more time looking at the range of pupils' work to consider what progress they are making in different areas of the curriculum
- Talk to leaders about schools' use of formative and summative assessment and how this improves teaching and raises achievement
- Evaluate how well pupils are doing against relevant age-related expectations as set out by the school and the national curriculum (where this applies)
- Consider how schools use assessment information to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support to reach their full potential, including the most able
- Evaluate the way schools report to parents and carers on pupils' progress and attainment and assess whether reports help parents to understand how their children are doing in relation to the standards expected."

2.3 Schools are expected to track their pupils' progress

- No particular approach will be endorsed
- Inspectors will want to see:
- How often children are assessed and what tests are being used.
- How well the tests are linked to the curriculum
- How the results are being used to inform the school about the quality of teaching and the progress of children.
- “We do expect every school to be able to show what their pupils know, understand and can do through continuous assessment and summative tests.”

A good or outstanding school will:

- Set targets for the children to achieve at the end of every key stage.
- Use assessment to see if children are hitting those targets.
- Use summative tests at the end of each year
- Not ‘teach to the test’

3 Cedars Core Principles of Effective Assessment Systems

3.1 It seems to Cedars that assessment should begin with the curriculum and produce outcomes that help teachers direct their teaching. It should embed ambitious expectations for every pupil and take a growth mind-set. It should really help parents understand where their child is and how they can help. It should be rigorous and honest.

Schools will be able to introduce their own approaches to formative assessment, to support pupil attainment and progression. The assessment framework should be built into the school curriculum, so that schools can check what pupils have learned and whether they are on track to meet expectations at the end of the key stage, and so that they can report regularly to parents.

3.2 Our Assessment System will:

Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child’s school, is performing; our assessments:

- Allow meaningful tracking of pupils towards expectations in the new curriculum, including regular feedback to parents.
- Provide information which is transferable and easily understood and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment.
- Differentiate attainment between pupils of different abilities, giving early recognition of pupils who are falling behind and those who are excelling.

3.3 Help drive improvement for pupils and teachers – our assessments:

- Are closely linked to improving the quality of teaching.
- Ensure feedback to pupils contributes to improved learning and is focused on specific and tangible objectives.
- Produce recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time.

3.4 Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation; our assessments:

- Are created in consultation with those delivering best practice locally.

b. Are created in consideration of, and are benchmarked against, international best practice.

4 Our Approach to Assessment – Cedars Policy Statement

4.1 Core principles for assessment at Cedars

- 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 are regularly trained in our approach to assessment.

4.2 Underpinning principles for assessment at Cedars

1. Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning.

a. Assessment provides evidence to guide teaching and learning.

b. Assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate and review their progress.

2. Assessment is fair.

a. Assessment is inclusive of all abilities.

b. Assessment is free from bias towards factors that are not relevant to what the assessment intends to address.

3. Assessment is honest.

a. Assessment outcomes are used in ways that minimise undesirable effects.

b. Assessment outcomes are conveyed in an open, honest and transparent way to assist pupils with their learning.

c. Assessment judgements are moderated by experienced professionals to ensure their accuracy.

4. Assessment is ambitious.

a. Assessment places achievement in context against nationally standardised criteria and expected standards.

b. Assessment embodies, through objective criteria, a pathway of progress and development for every child.

c. Assessment objectives set high expectations for learners.

5. Assessment is appropriate.

a. The purpose of any assessment process should be clearly stated.

b. Conclusions regarding pupil achievement are valid when the assessment method is appropriate (to age, to the task and to the desired feedback information).

c. Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement.

d. Assessment should demand no more procedures or records than are practically required to allow pupils, their parents and teachers to plan future learning.

6. Assessment is consistent.

a. Judgements are formed according to common principles.

b. The results are readily understandable by third parties.

c. A school's results are capable of comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally.

7. Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:

- a. Pupils in developing their learning;
- b. Parents in supporting children with their learning;
- c. Teachers in planning teaching and learning.

Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent;

- d. leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
- e. Government and agents of government.

8. Assessment feedback should inspire greater effort and a belief that, through hard work and practice, more can be achieved.

5 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 where appropriate
- 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.
- 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 what children are normally expected to have mastered by the end of each key point in time.
- The achievement of each pupil is assessed against all the relevant criteria at appropriate times of the school year.
- Each pupil is assessed as either 'developing', 'meeting' or 'exceeding' each relevant criterion contained in our expectations for that pupil.
- Assessment judgements are recorded and backed by a body of 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.

6 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, art and performance, behaviour, and social and emotional development.

UNCRC Reference: Articles 3, 23, 28, 29

7 References

National Association of Head Teachers – published guidelines and principles of how schools should develop their own systems for assessing. The NAHT have announced the release of their own assessment framework, details of which can be found on their website.

www.naht.org.uk/assets/assessment-commission-report.pdf

Time to use our heads, NAHT

<http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/blogs/russell-hobby-general-secretary/time-to-use-ourheads/>

Government resources:

National Curriculum and assessment from September 2014: information for schools, DfE – GOV.UK

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300743/NC_assessment_accountability_qualifications_factsheet_Mar_2014_010414.pdf

Other useful links:

<http://www.usethekey.org.uk/sample-articles/assessment-without-levels-how-are-secondary-schools-responding>

InfoMentor – planning, assessing, tracking and reporting against the new curriculum

www.infomentor.co.uk

Blog articles:

<http://thewingtoheaven.wordpress.com/2014/03/17/replacing-national-curriculum-levels/>

<http://thewingtoheaven.wordpress.com/2014/04/03/why-national-curriculum-levels-need-replacing/>

<https://classteaching.wordpress.com/assessment-without-levels/>

<http://clioetcetera.com/2014/02/17/beyond-levels-knowledge-rich-and-task-specific-mark-schemes/>

<http://clioetcetera.com/2014/02/19/beyond-levels-part-three-developing-a-mixed-constitution/>

<http://clioetcetera.com/2014/02/18/beyond-levels-part-2-summative-and-formative-assessment/>

<http://classteaching.wordpress.com/2014/05/05/assessment-without-levels-an-opportunity-for-growth/>

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