

Thorns Primary School

Underpinning principles for assessment

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The following principles set out our agenda for the development of assessment at Thorns Primary School.

- 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 for 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.
 - d. providing assessment data which must justify the time spent;
 - e. school leaders and governors in planning and allocating resources; and
 - f. 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.**

Our approach to assessment

- 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.
- We have a senior leader who is responsible for assessment.

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.
- Assessment criteria are derived from the school curriculum, which is composed of the National Curriculum.
- 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 year.
- The achievement of each pupil is assessed against all the relevant criteria at appropriate times of the school 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 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.

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.