



WESTONZOYLAND

Community Primary School and Pre-school

EYFS

Assessment Policy

January 2025

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to describe our assessment procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in Early Years. Our accurate assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well. To this end, we gather information from a range of sources including observations of the children engaged within child-led/independent learning as well as during adult-led activities. We also do this through discussions with parents and carers and by talking to the children.

We use the following key documents to underpin our practice in the Early Years:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2021),
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile handbook (DfE, 2016)
- Development Matters (Early Education, 2012)

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Assessment calendar

Early Years staff observe and assess on a daily basis. This information is used to inform summative judgements on whether children are on track to achieve Early Learning Goals at the end of the academic year. This data is collated on a termly basis and forms the foundation for Pupil Progress meetings held each term. From these meetings teachers and SLT work together to form actions to work on with the children in their class.

Baseline assessment for all 'Pre-School' children

Within the first 6 weeks of Autumn 1 half term, an initial baseline assessment is made on all new children to the setting by their keyworkers. Children are assessed in each area (working in line with age expectations, working above age expectations, and working below age expectations).

Reception baseline assessment

Reception children are assessed in all areas of the for an accurate baseline once they are settled within school and within the first 6 weeks. Children also partake in the Government's national baseline assessment which focuses on Communication and Language and maths. See 'How assessments are completed' and 'Expected levels in EYFS' for more information.

Assessment throughout the year

Each term, keyworkers assess children against the different areas of development. Staff in Pre-School focus on specific children each week to collect information on progress. Teachers identify aspects of learning where attainment is particularly termly through gap-analysis. These aspects are then targeted through systematic precision teaching and interventions. Information of children on track/not on track is also used as a tool to direct focused activities to specific children. This information is also collated for whole school data purposes in writing, reading and maths.

Expected attainment and progress in EYFS

We use the online system 'Tapestry', which is linked to Development Matters to collect observations to aid in tracking progress as well as sharing with parents. Development Matters splits children's first five years into three broad phases of development which overlap. Development Matters identifies these broad phases of development as 'pathways' with indicators for where the child lies within that 'pathway' (Birth to three years old, 3 and 4 year olds, children in reception).

Best-fit model

A 'best fit' model is used to determine children's levels of development each term. Staff are aware that children develop at their own rates and in their own ways. Staff read the statements in each broad phase of development and then reflect on their knowledge of the child and any evidence they have from children's books, writing samples, observations, parental contributions etc. They then make a professional judgement about which age and stage best describes the child (best fit). Concerns are raised if a child is not achieving what they should be according to each phase of development.

Pre-School expected attainment

On entering Pre-School, children who are 3 years old should be beginning to work within the Development Matters band for '3 and 4 year olds', having shown they have met the majority of the criteria for the 'Birth to 3 years old' phase.

Upon leaving Pre-School, most children will be 4 years old so should be beginning to work within the Development Matters band for 'Children in reception'. Their expected level on exiting Pre-School is working within the '3 and 4 year olds' phase and beyond.

Reception expected attainment

On entering Reception, children are 4 years old so should be beginning to work within the Development Matters band for 'Reception aged children'. Our school 'expected' level on entry to Reception is having achieved most of the '3 and 4 year olds' bands. This means the children should have met all or most of the statements in this section and also begun achieving some elements of the 'Reception aged children' bands (approximately 10%).

Upon leaving Reception, most children will be 5 years old so should have met the Early Learning Goals. The class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals and comments on whether their development is either 'emerging' or 'expected'. This information is reported to the Local Authority and to parents.

The teacher also completes a brief summary of the child's Characteristics of Effective Learning.

How assessments are completed

Staff predominantly use their significant knowledge of children's abilities and understanding gained from their group lesson times and from interacting with them during continuous provision to assess children. If children have attended a previous setting key adults will look through the information and use this to help inform their assessments. Evidence from a range of sources may be used to make judgements of children's levels including: observations, Literacy/Maths books, samples of work, (e.g. purposeful writing samples) staff recordings of children's understanding documented through objective-led planning grids and In the moment planning grids as well as information from parents.

Observations

Keyworkers/ Reception staff use Tapestry to make significant observations of children using Ipad. This is now secondary to quality interactions with children by adults so that children's thinking processes and knowledge is developed.

However, this is dependent on the children and key people taking opportunities to observe significant learning experiences when they arise. Informal observations are made, while supporting independent learners, to note any significant achievements towards next steps and understanding. Children's language is recorded whenever possible as this gives insight into a child's thinking, understanding and language development.

Children's books and focus jobs

Children complete focus jobs which are led by either a keyworker, teacher or teaching assistant. They will usually take place in small groups depending on the type of activity and the children's abilities.

In Reception children complete both a Literacy and Maths focus job each week. This will build up to 3 times a week by the end of the year. They also complete at least one other focus job which could be recorded using observations or in a file/tick sheet. Focus jobs can take indoors or outdoors. Some children may complete more focus jobs than others depending on their ability, but all will complete at least the minimum requirement.

Moderating assessment judgements in EYFS

Internal moderation:

We have a scheduled internal moderation process and key adults meet regularly to ensure validity of assessments. Staff have formal opportunities to agree assessment judgements with others; in addition to daily informal conversations.

During moderation meetings we discuss the development of an individual child, or group of children, in relation to the broad phases of developing. The discussion also includes reference to the three Characteristics of Effective Learning (Playing and exploring - engagement, Active learning - motivation, Creating and thinking critically - thinking).

Our internal moderation timetable is as follows:

- Pre-School - termly moderation
- Reception - Termly pupil progress meeting/moderation with Foundation Stage lead & SLT
- Pre-School/Reception - moderate together at least 2 times per year
- Reception/Year 1 - discuss Early Learning Goals towards the end of the year

Cluster moderation:

At times throughout the year we aim to have a cluster writing moderation. We meet with the EYFS teachers from other schools and moderate pieces of writing which are then added to a central school file. We may also meet to moderate one or two other identified areas of learning.

External moderation:

We continue to participate in local moderation meetings where specific areas are discussed and moderated with Reception teachers and County Early Years Leads. These remain a useful indication of our judgements against the Early Years Goals. We will continue to arrange external moderations

where possible in order to validate our data which could take place at any point during the school year.

Parental engagement in observation and assessment procedures

We have an open-door policy with parents/carers and staff are available at the end of each day for informal discussions with key staff. Parents can also make appointments with staff at any time to discuss their progress. We regularly keep parents informed of children's assessments in many ways including:

- Parents' evenings twice per year
- Each child has a 'Focus week' at least three times a year
- End of year reports sent out during Summer term reporting on levels & characteristics of effective learning
- Termly reports or parent's evening in Reception
- Electronic observations

We value the contribution of parents and encourage them to share information on their child's learning and development. Parents are invited to contribute to their child's online Tapestry profile. Key workers use this information to inform assessments.

Reception teachers share children's Individual targets with parents each term and offer advice on how they can support their children at home. Pre-School keyworkers share targets on a more informal basis each day when they see the parents and also at parents' evening.

For more information on how we encourage parental engagement please see our Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy (2025)