



ST MARGARET'S PREP  
CALNE

**Assessment & Marking Policy**

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# ST MARGARET'S PREP

## CALNE

### **Assessment & Marking Policy**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for assessment and marking at St Margaret's Preparatory School. Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. It is a continuous process involving all pupils, teachers and parents with the aim that each pupil develops to their full potential. Assessment should, therefore, both recognise pupils' achievement and effort and inform planning for their learning. It should be fair, accurate and consistent.

The school values a range of strategies to collect evidence from everyday informal discussions and exam results to digital testing. From the data collected, it should be possible to make a value-added evaluation of the curriculum we provide which in turn will enable us to become an even more efficient and enjoyable school.

A range of data is collected in each year group from Nursery through to Year 6. There is a cohesive approach, from EYFS to Year 6, that allows data to be compared within and between years and is used throughout the transition process within the school and in association with Senior School's entry processes. It allows for identification and follows on intervention to support individuals whether that is curriculum enrichment or modification.

Data generated is recorded through iSAMS together with additional data generated from school examinations and termly subject assessments in reading, writing and maths. This summative information provides further tracking at individual, class, year group and whole school level. This data allows for whole school evaluation of value added, individual progress, whole school progression and generally monitors the effectiveness of the teaching and learning.

#### **Assessment:**

This policy is for pupils in the EYFS (Nursery and Reception) to Year 6. Assessment as an educational practice for all teaching staff working at our school includes the processes of generating, collecting, interpreting, recording and using information about our pupils' responses to all the work they are engaged in. Assessment is one of our key tasks and underpins one of our school's stated aims, which is to develop in our pupils the desire to achieve their full academic potential.

In order to support our pupils' progress through our schemes of work, assessment operates in two distinct but inter-related ways:

1. It provides information about our pupils' progress that teachers can use as a basis for decisions about the next steps in their learning. (**Formative assessment**)

2. It also provides information to parents and others about the progress and levels of attainment reached by children, especially at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1 and 2, and about the progress made since the last reported assessment. (**Summative assessment**)

### **Early Years Foundation Stage:**

The statutory framework (2023) states 'Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting on those observations'.

In the EYFS, we use an online system called Tapestry to record and store all observations and assessments relating to each child. This is a safe and secure system and one that enables parents and carers to access their child's learning journey at any time. They can share it with their child, family and friends at home and also post any comments and photographs of their own, helping to create a fully holistic view of the child and strengthen the parent partnership.

Tapestry records ongoing assessment of the pupils in the seven areas of learning:

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive art and design

All seven areas are inter-connected, and assessments are based on observations of what the pupils are doing on a day-to-day basis. In the final term of the year in which the pupil reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each pupil. The Profile provides a well-rounded picture of a pupil's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected level, and their readiness for Year 1. Each pupil's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals, and practitioners must indicate whether pupils are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

### **Years 1-6:**

**Reading** in Reception and Year 1 is assessed X 6 times a year through the online success for All Phonics scheme adopted in September 2022. From year 3 onwards, (with some exceptions for exceeding year 1/2 children in the summer term), STAR assessments are carried out 4 times a year. The STAR Reading test is used to pinpoint pupils' strengths and deficiencies in reading and offers specific insight into which areas need improvement. Data from this

assessment is also used to inform instruction, gauge pupils' progress, and identify whether or not they are meeting the expected standards in reading. It is also used to help select pupils for the Accelerated Reader program.

Accelerated Reader is a computer program that helps teachers and librarians manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. The child picks a book at their own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, the child takes a short quiz on the computer, (passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read.) Accelerated Reader gives children, teachers, and librarians feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help the child set goals and direct ongoing reading practice.

Children using Accelerated Reader choose their own books to read, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they can choose books that are interesting to them.

Teachers and librarians help the child choose books at an appropriate readability level that are challenging without being frustrating, ensuring that the child can pass the quiz and experience success.

**Writing** is levelled termly according to National Curriculum descriptors alongside the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale (OWCS). The OWCS is designed to enable accurate, objective summative assessment of writing and to identify the next steps for a child in order for them to make progress.

The OWCS is organised into a series of Standards that map to the primary year groups, from Standard 1 (Reception) through to Standard 7 (Year 6).

Each Standard sets out a number of criteria against which children are assessed. The strands of writing that the criteria are assessing are:

- features of text type/genre
- handwriting
- spelling
- grammar
- punctuation
- writer's voice

**Spellings** are taught weekly in class. Where appropriate, higher achieving pupils in year 2 are set topic related spellings or words based on Appendix 1 of the National Curriculum and children are encouraged to learn the spelling of them as well as exploring definitions for them.

### **Maths**

In maths, short-term informal assessment is an ongoing process during lessons as teachers assess pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills from their written work and verbal answers to questions. Teachers constantly feedback to pupils about their individual progress in Mathematics and give guidance/set targets for future progress.

Assessment tasks set at regular intervals can focus on the progress children are making over time, in relation to the key objectives. Data and assessment is stored on the online Maths Tracker *in Insight* which measures each pupil's achievement against the National Curriculum objectives for that year group.

Classroom activities to improve times tables and mental arithmetic are used throughout the week. Graded number bond badges test recall of addition and subtraction skills and graded tables badges test recall and application of multiplication and division skills.

In formative assessment processes, the terminology of 'emerging', 'expected' and 'exceeding' is used to map pupils' progress against age related expectations.

### **Children who are not making expected progress**

Children who are not making the expected progress are monitored and assessed according to the guidelines laid down in the SEND Policy. Parents will be kept informed of the child's difficulties. These children may be placed on the Special Needs register and will have a Provision Map prepared by the Learning Support Department alongside the class teacher. The Provision Map is shared with parents and reviewed termly.

### **Formal Programme of Assessment:**

Reception – 'Base' is completed in the first term and then later in the academic year. The Base assessment is an interactive and practical assessment of a child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin Reception, using materials that most children of that age will be familiar with. The Base assessment is not about judging or labelling a child or putting them under any pressure. The child cannot 'pass' or 'fail' the assessment. Its main purpose is to create a starting point to measure the progress children make in their Reception year before moving on to Year 1.

Years 1 - 6 – 'InCAS' assessments are carried out in the Spring Term. InCAS stands for interactive computerised assessment system, and is a type of test devised by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) at the University of Durham. The computer-based tests are designed to help monitor children's progress, from Year 1 to Year 6.

The tests cover six key areas of learning:

- **Reading:** word recognition, decoding and comprehension.
- **Spelling**
- **Maths:** counting, place value, fractions, problem-solving, measures, shape, space and data handling.
- **Mental maths:** addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- **Developing ability:** a measure of learning potential, based on language and non-verbal skills.
- **Attitudes** towards reading, Maths and school life.

The tests are intended to help teachers pinpoint each child's strengths, weaknesses and learning needs, compare their performance over time, and identify where interventions are needed, including in the case of children with special educational needs.

'Progress Tests in English' (PTE) and 'Progress Tests in Mathematics' (PTM) take place in the Summer term. PTE assesses a pupil's reading and writing ability, while PTM assesses a pupil's mathematical skills and concepts. Both are suitable for children from age 6 years. The age range that the assessments cover enable us to gauge children's performance and progress from their first days in primary school so that a solid baseline can be established.

Year 5 Autumn Term – in addition to the above, children will also carry out internal examinations in maths, English & science.

Year 6 Autumn term – in addition to the above, children will also carry out internal examinations in verbal/non-verbal reasoning. Later in the term, they will then sit 11+ Mocks in English and maths in preparation for secondary school examinations in the Spring term.

### **Reporting to Parents:**

We employ a range of strategies to ensure parents are fully informed of their child's progress at school. We encourage and welcome parents to discuss their child's progress at any reasonable time with class/subject teachers. It is possible to speak to staff before and after school about immediate concerns; however, for longer discussions about progress and performance it is far better for appointments to be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

In the Autumn and Spring terms we offer the opportunity for parents to meet with their child's Class Teacher to discuss progress to date. At the end of the academic year, parents receive a comprehensive written report on their child's progress and attainment in all subjects.

### **Marking:**

#### **Aims**

Whenever possible, marking should emphasise the positive aspects of a child's work.

Marking should typically:

- offer encouragement and support to aid progress when tackling the next piece of work
- include a key point/target/next step as appropriate, this may highlight something the pupil has done well and should look to repeat
- be clear but not obtrusive
- be prompt
- indicate where verbal feedback has been given and/or a discussion has taken place

Rec – Y2 marking is generally done with the child during or soon after the lesson.

Y3 – 6 written marking should be handed back before the next lesson. Extended feedback may take place either as collective or on an individual basis as appropriate.

Y6 Practice 11+ Papers given for revision in the Christmas holiday will not be marked in school and should form the basis of a discussion between pupils and their parents.

Verbal feedback is a key element of our marking strategy and is effective because it is often given during, or very quickly following, the learning or task. It offers more opportunity for dialogue between the teacher and the pupil, ensuring that they understand the feedback, enabling them to respond to it and to action the feedback straight away.

Self-assessment is another strategy employed by teaching staff. Self-assessment is a way of encouraging children to evaluate and assess their own learning. The advantage of teaching children how to self-assess their work is that they have to think about what they've done well and what they could do better next time. It is extremely useful for children because it allows them to reflect on their own work in order to improve and develop it further. Self-assessment encourages pupils to reflect and look at where they went wrong in order to help them improve for the future.

Similarly, peer-assessment is promoted which enables children to give each other valuable feedback so they learn from and support each other. It supports learning and having the opportunity to talk, discuss, explain and challenge enables children to often achieve more than they would unaided.

Work generated in Learning Support lessons is generally collaborative so will not follow this guidance but may contain a comment.

### **Methods of Marking**

In Reception it may be appropriate to use a pencil. However, in other classes, where it may be necessary to identify areas of work needing further attention, a green pen is advisable.

### **Written Work**

As a guide, spellings are taught from Y1 so mistakes of words learnt as spellings would be expected to be corrected from that year group upwards.

Sentence structure is taught from Y1, so similarly work would be corrected for syntax errors from Y1 upwards. (This may be developed in R)

In extreme cases it may be appropriate to ask a child to re-write the exercise if work is poorly presented or incomplete, this should be done out of class time.

The following abbreviations/markings should be used to identify mistakes from Y1 upwards:

**SP** (in the margin) for a spelling error and word to be underlined (words to be identified should be in accordance with the individual child's learning needs). The correct spelling may be placed above the mistake, in the margin or at the end of the piece of work. This may be done by the teacher, or if appropriate, by the child when self-correcting. Words given as corrections should be re-written three times and learnt using the **LOOK, SAY, COVER, WRITE, CHECK** method.

Punctuation errors should be clearly marked on the text with a **P**. At Y5/6 **C** (capital letter), **F** (full stop) may also be marked in the margin.

// (in the appropriate place on the text) for a new paragraph (from Y3, once introduced).

\_\_\_\_\_ ? (in the appropriate place on the text) for all other mistakes.

## **Maths**

○ to be marked around/beside the incorrect figure, the whole sum or the sum number. The appropriate variation depends on the type of work, the age and ability of the child.

## **Additional Comments**

**X** should not be used under any circumstances a • may be used to identify an incorrect answer.

Corrections in all subjects must be done before any new work is covered.

It is unnecessary to mark all work out of a total expressed as a fraction. However, this method may be used when it is deemed to be the most appropriate.

Children marking/editing their own or others' work should be taught to use the same abbreviations and marks.

## **Positive Encouragement**

Housepoints and occasionally stickers at the end of an improved or excellent piece of work provide visible recognition of a child's effort.

Housepoints should be awarded for effort or the standard of work. In most cases one is sufficient, although there may be times when more are appropriate. Up to a maximum of five Housepoints may be awarded for project work.

Special 'Excellent' awards may be given by the Headmaster to a child who deserves special recognition. Children may be sent at any time to share their work with the Headmaster, Head of Prep or Head of Pre-Prep (or other evidence if appropriate).

Commendation Certificates may also be awarded for exceptional work or effort. These are generated through the Reward & Conduct module on iSAMS. The Deputy Heads maintain a broad overview of these achievements.

## **Monitoring**

For our marking to be effective and understood by the children it is important that all staff are consistent in their application of the policy's aims and methods.



In order to ensure this, marking needs to be monitored. This needn't be onerous but should be a corporate responsibility and regular book-looks with SLT and subject leaders take place to monitor consistency and quality of marking.

### **Ongoing**

- Individual members of staff should ensure that they follow the marking policy

### **Every term**

- Class teachers in parallel classes to work together and ensure that they are applying the methods of marking in a similar manner and rewarding different levels of effort/attainment appropriately
- Core Subject Leaders moderate books within their subject at least annually and review every child's work to ensure that the Marking Policy is followed
- Subject Leaders take a random sample of books in their subject and check that marking offers appropriate guidance.
- Members of the SLT monitor marking across the curriculum
- Marking will continue to form an integral part of Staff Professional Review process

AH September 24

### Review

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Senior Leadership Team.**

### Effective Date

**This policy was last reviewed in September 2024**

### Review Date

**Autumn 2025**