

Middleton School



Assessment Policy

Reviewed- February 2024
Ratified by Governing Body - February 2024
Due for review - February 2025

'Learning for Life'

Introduction;

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of pupil assessment at Middleton School. Assessment procedures play a vital role in the teaching and learning of pupils within our school. Well informed assessments enable pupil progress and achievement as well as sound evaluation and planning of targets and goals. Effective assessment enables teachers to deliver education that best suits the needs of their pupils.

Aims;

- To enable pupils to play a central role in their education and be aware of areas of strength and areas for further development.
- To celebrate progress and achievement however great or small.
- To ensure a consistent approach to assessment across the school.
- To raise standards and improve performance for all.
- To provide information that can be used to improve teaching and learning practice.
- To provide effective feedback to pupils to assist them in developing a positive and enabling attitude to learning.
- To ensure that there is effective communication between home and school and that parents are kept well informed with regards to their child's progress.
- To give clarity with regards to methodology, systems, monitoring and recording of assessment at Middleton School.
- To assist in the planning of teaching and learning activities.
- To assist in early identification of pupils who may benefit from intervention strategies.
- To prepare pupils for the next stage in their learning journey.
- To provide all stakeholders with information that allows them to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school.

Roles and Responsibilities;

- The overall responsibility for assessment within Middleton School lies with the head teacher, who also holds the position of 'Assessment Co-ordinator'.
- Teachers hold responsibility for making informed pupil assessments and sharing this information with pupils, parents and the data analysis co-ordinator.
- Curriculum area leaders and team members are responsible for the progress made within their specific area of the curriculum and initiatives which may require implementation
- The data analysis co-ordinator holds responsibility for gathering assessment data, entering this data into 'STAR' - our assessment tracking database, and reporting outcomes to the SLT.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) holds responsibility for reviewing key outcomes and analysis of pupil assessment information. This feeds into actions on the school development plan and affects intervention strategies and classroom practice.
- The Governors hold responsibility for reviewing key assessment outcomes and asking robust and challenging questions to ensure positive performance of pupils within the school.

Implementation;

- Assessment is an essential, ongoing and continuous aspect of daily life at Middleton School.
- Since the disbandment of National Curriculum levels and then the subsequent withdrawal of P Scales, schools have been tasked with designing their own assessment schemes. Middleton School introduced a new planning and assessment package entitled the 'M Scales'. All pupils are assessed against M scale descriptors across all areas of the curriculum. The M scale descriptors range from M1 to M15. The M scale descriptors contain skills which are sequential in nature.
- Pupils are formally assessed at the end of each term within all subject areas of the curriculum (Maths, English, Science, Technology, PSHE, PE, Humanities, Creative Arts and off site learning.)
- Pupil assessments are made at each M scale level on a C, B, A graded approach. This allows pupils to celebrate all steps of progress, however small, and acknowledge progress within an M scale.
- The challenge target at Middleton School is for all pupils to make at least two sub levels of progress over an academic year. If pupils meet this target they will exceed the nationally recognised expectation that pupils make at least two **full** levels of progress between the end of KS1 and the end of KS2.
- As of February 2024 we have a full set of M scale descriptors, to assess pupils against, within the areas of Maths, English, PSHE, PE, Humanities, Off site learning and Creative Arts. We plan to complete M scale descriptors within Science and Technology by April 2024. M Scale descriptors are currently in use for three of the four strands of Science. Descriptors have been in use to assess progress within ICT for a number of years. A project to develop M scale descriptors for ICT will commence in Spring 2024 , but in the meantime, when reporting upon progress, the current descriptors are referred to as M levels.
- Pupils new to the school are baselined at the start of October if joining the school at the start of an academic year, and if mid way through the year - then three to four weeks after admission.
- Assessment at Middleton school is both **formative** and **summative** in nature.
- **Summative** assessments are made at the end of each term to inform pupils, teachers and parents so that they can evaluate the impact of teaching and learning processes and experiences. Summative assessment allows a teacher to measure a pupil's understanding against an agreed set of criteria. Summative assessments are shared with parents at consultation appointments and EHCP reviews so that they are well equipped to support their child in their learning.
- National, formalised summative assessments are also addressed at Middleton School. Pupils in Year One (and Year Two) are entered into the National Phonics Screening Check where appropriate. Pupils who are working at a level which allows them to access the national SATS tests are entered in Year Six, and also in year two where appropriate.
- Statutory assessments are also made each Summer against the teacher assessment frameworks. Information is shared centrally with both the LA and DFE as to whether pupils are working towards expected standards, at expected standards or exceeding expected standards.
- The 'Engagement Model' profiles would be used to assess pupils working below subject specific learning at Key Stage One.

- **Formative** assessments involve the ongoing monitoring of pupil's learning and acquisition of new skills. Formative assessments tend to be more informal in nature, and in some cases may not involve any written record keeping. Formative assessment is more diagnostic as opposed to the evaluative nature of summative assessment. It provides ongoing pupil feedback. It is a flexible and dynamic way of assessing pupil progress and understanding and is adopted by all staff, students and volunteers throughout the school. Formative assessment allows teachers to adapt teaching plans and extend teaching experiences for some pupils.
- Much of our formative assessment opportunities are centred around observations of pupils during practical learning experiences. This means that physical written evidence of pupil attainment may not always be readily available. For this reason, there is much use of photographic, descriptive and video evidence of pupil attainment and achievement.
- The pupils themselves always remain at the heart of assessment procedures at Middleton School. Pupils are consulted upon their progress and their opinions feed into target setting documentation and progress reviews.
- Pupils are set targets which are reviewed at least termly. Parental and pupil views feed into the setting and review of these targets.
- Targets set for pupils correlate to longer term targets identified within a child's EHCP.
- Pupils attend the beginning of their EHCP review and share photographic evidence with their families to demonstrate achievements they are proud of.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in peer to peer assessments and evaluations.
- Learning Objectives are shared with pupils at the start of a lesson and pupils often assist in the creation of success criteria statements. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective during and at the end of lessons and to pass comment upon how successful they have been in their learning.
- Time is allocated within teacher planning to allow for re-visiting of key concepts and bodies of knowledge to ensure over- learning and the acquisition into long term memory. Mastery Learning is encouraged before moving onto the next level of attainment. It is also important that pupils transfer knowledge and skills across a range of contexts and apply what they know to cross curricular experiences.
- Not all pupils make progress in a linear pattern. Pupils with SEND may plateau in their learning at times, require remodelling of a teaching approach or greater time allowed for the acquisition of a specific skill. Progress charts for pupils with SEND are very personalised and do not always follow a trend or expectation.
- Parents and carers receive a written report at least once a year. This report is generated by STAR (Student Tracking, Assessing and Reporting) from the data that teachers have submitted. Teachers then add to this report with anecdotal evidence.
- Parents and carers are invited to at least three parent consultation meetings throughout the academic year and are welcome to contact the school at any point if they wish to discuss their child's progress.
- As pupils transition, either internally or externally to a differing provision, time is allocated for effective communication and sharing of current pupil attainment.
- At Middleton School we value the importance of measuring all aspects of progress and not simply those elements which relate to the National Curriculum. We believe that assessment should encompass a holistic approach to recognising and celebrating achievements of all shapes and sizes!

EYFS;

- Assessment within the EYFS follows two principles. Practitioners who teach pupils in the EYFS use the Development matters and Early Learning Goals as part of their daily observations, assessments and planning.
- Pupils within the EYFS at Middleton are also assessed against the M Scale descriptors in all areas of the curriculum.
- Ongoing formative assessment is an essential component of Early Years practice.
- Evidence of attainment is collected and displayed in a 'Learning Journal' for pupils within the EYFS.
- Practitioners in the EYFS attend moderation meetings locally to be confident in the attainment judgements made.

Feedback and Marking;

- When we use the term 'Marking' it is used as a generic term for giving feedback to students and staff in a variety of ways, enabling them to use this information to reflect and then make the next step forward with support.
- In line with our school values we believe that pupils respond best to praise and positive reinforcement. Staff then demonstrate, model and guide pupils as to how they can improve on their attempts and learn from mistakes. By using positive supporting approaches our pupils grow in confidence, ambition, independence, inspiration, and success thus empowering and inspiring them to achieve their goals.
- Feedback and marking can take many different forms/methods of interaction such as body language, touch, the spoken or signed (Makaton) word, symbolic representation, or written annotation. Often it will include a combination of these.
- Support staff and teachers may at times be required to feedback verbally or to mark work in written format with the pupils' participation so that they may understand progress within their learning and be involved in decisions about their next step or target. This is supported by our bespoke assessment tool, The M scales.
- Feedback and marking is an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements and progress of our pupils. It is therefore probable that feedback and marking may take place in the corridor, at lunchtime, on trips into the community or assemblies as well as formally in the classroom environment. Feedback and marking is an integral part of learning and can be offered whenever pupils are learning and require feedback.

Monitoring and Moderation;

- Pupils at Middleton School enjoy a wide range of learning experiences alongside multiple adults. We therefore value the contribution of all staff, students and volunteers when considering progress made and attainment of each individual pupil. Both formative and summative assessment procedures are carried out by multiple members of the team each pupil works with.
- Each half term the staff teaching team come together to moderate the judgements made upon attainment on a key area of the curriculum. Teachers provide written evidence to support their judgements and the whole school teaching team engage in a professional dialogue in order to moderate these judgements.

- Teachers attend external moderation meetings – both with other SEND provision and also schools within the locality.
- A growing selection of local schools have invested in the M Scale Framework written by Middleton School. We regularly invite these schools to participate in moderation exercises - exemplifying pupil attainment against the M Scale descriptors.
- Regular analysis of pupil attainment identifies areas of strength and areas for development. It also identifies areas where an intervention strategy may be required and which pupils this is applicable to.
- Teachers frequently visit other classes within the school, for both monitoring, training and coaching purposes.
- With an established Outreach provision in the school, practitioners frequently have the opportunity to visit pupils in a range of schools and moderate judgements against those made by peers in alternative provisions.
- Lesson Observations are carried out by members of the Senior Leadership Team and judgements made are monitored and reviewed.
- The school is partnered with a 'Hertfordshire Improvement Partner' who advises the school as well as monitoring performance and effectiveness.