



Assessment Policy

Principles and Aims

Pupils' progress is closely monitored at GHF so that we can provide the best possible opportunities and most appropriate levels of support for all pupils. All assessment activities aim to ensure that our pupils are able to make excellent progress in their learning whilst taking into account the needs of individual pupils.

The aims and objectives of assessment at GHF are:

- to enable our pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work;
- to allow our teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each child;
- to help our pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their work;
- to provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning;
- to contribute towards accountability data;
- and to help leaders evaluate and continually improve on the quality of provision for all pupils.

While designing our approach to assessment, we have kept in mind the problems with the previous 'Levels' approach in order to ensure these do not reoccur. A key principle of our assessment system is that it should inform teaching and learning and not fundamentally be a means to recording and measuring progress.

'Assessment is a good servant but a terrible master' (Dylan Wiliam)

Most of all, learning will come first in our approach: assessment will support it, not get in its way. Assessment will be focussed on the content of our curriculum but it will not be the driver of it. Our curriculum is driven by the aims set out in our Curriculum Policy.

The GHF Approach to Assessment

Staff at GHF have worked together to develop an assessment system that takes into account the criteria of the new National Curriculum, whilst providing a greater focus on mastery. Assessment takes into account pupils' strengths as well as areas where they need support. It consists of mainly formative strategies and a range of recording methods. We use three main forms of assessment: in-school formative, in-school summative, and national standardised summative assessment.

Daily, in-school, formative assessments

A mastery approach is when pupils need to demonstrate mastery of a topic/key idea before moving on. This requires, for example, looking at concepts in detail using a variety of representations and contexts and committing key facts (such as times tables and spelling rules) to memory. Every pupil can achieve mastery but sometimes pupils may take longer or need more help to master key ideas. In our school all pupils (wherever possible) will have access to the whole curriculum and it is the support provided and depth of learning which teachers will differentiate, not the content covered.

Formative assessment is used across the school curriculum and is key for staff to understand pupils' performance, identifying who needs support or more depth, when pupils have mastered learning, and when they are ready to progress. There are many methods that support our on-going formative assessments and these will typically include:

- Questioning
- Ongoing observations
- Opportunities for pupils to make their learning visible (for example, on mini-whiteboards)
- Discussions between staff working with groups of pupils

- Verbal and written feedback
- Pupils' self and peer assessments

While staff will make notes for their own purposes, generally there is no particular value in keeping a formal written record of these formative assessments and what matters is that the information is acted upon quickly to improve learning; evidence of its impact will be shown in the pupils' work and lesson plans.

Throughout the Reception year, pupils will be monitored on their development and progress in all EYFS areas of development. Examples of pupil's learning, showing their individual level and stage of development are built up throughout the year as a 'Learning Journey'. Teachers will identify specific areas where achievement (or evidence of it) is limited and provision will be made for these observations and assessments through experience and play. Progress will be recorded by observing and assessing pupils either using hand written observations, staff notes or by use of iPads to record in the Tapestry program.

In-school summative assessments

We have a yearly timetable of summative assessment activities for Reading, Writing and Mathematics. These assessments will help staff to evaluate and plan pupils' learning, as well as gauge the impact of teaching.

Our school assesses pupils against agreed, objective criteria focussed on the 'big ideas' in each curriculum area. Based on a nationally recognised model, our staff have established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each year group. These are the aspects all staff feel are fundamental for pupils to sufficiently grasp, or master, at each stage of their learning, so that their learning is sustainable over time and can be built upon in subsequent years. There are a number of KPIs for each of reading, writing and maths for each year group but we have kept them to a minimum so that staff can focus on teaching and learning rather than spending all their time assessing.

For our school, mastery of the KPIs is the end of year expectation for all pupils because all pupils require sufficient depth in their learning. Throughout the year, and until a KPI is mastered, a pupil will be developing their knowledge, skills and understanding through the ongoing teaching programmes and we will say they are 'emerging' within a KPI.

It is inevitable there will be some pupils who master KPIs more quickly than others. Rather than accelerating on to new learning content, we will challenge these pupils to go deeper still in their learning and understanding until they are 'advanced' in a KPI. However, where appropriate, provision will be made for a particularly gifted pupil who has exceeded well beyond the expectations for his/her year group, to access further teaching content.

There will be a small proportion of pupils who, because of their specific special learning needs, are working below the expectations of other children their age. Those pupils will have a separate Pupil Passport and their targets may involve mastering KPIs from earlier year groups.

It is important that there is some evidence to help staff decide whether pupils have demonstrated sufficient competence within a KPI. There does not need to be recorded evidence for every KPI, but evidence will come from a variety of typical teaching activities such as marking pupils' work, observations and discussions with pupils. We will also use the following methods:

- Pupils in each year group will participate in termly tests covering content of that term's learning in Mathematics. Additionally, they have weekly Big Maths tests and their progress drives (which are recorded in an online assessment program) can help inform judgments for specific KPIs.
- Infant pupils will undertake short reading comprehension activities and tests from our Pearson Active Learn subscription. Through this we also keep records of online home reading and pupils' progress through the Book Bands.
- Each term, infant staff will assess pupils' phonics development and record in our Phonics Tracker.

- KS2 pupils may undertake short comprehension activities or tests which staff will develop using tools such as Test Base, making use of past SATs test style questions.
- In addition to evidence obtained from weekly Big Writing, each short term pupils will complete an unaided piece of writing in their Writing Portfolio and this will be assessed using the Ros Wilson Big Writing Standards.
- Generally application of punctuation, grammar and spelling will be assessed through Big Writing. Additionally, pupils will have weekly and termly spelling tests to check their ability to spell statutory National Curriculum words for their year.
- KS2 Pupils will self assess their learning against the KPIs which are recorded in their exercise books.

All of this information will be analysed closely to inform staff what pupils have mastered and what they need to learn next. Each term staff will update their judgements of pupils' attainment of the KPIs on our KPI Tracking spreadsheets and they can then plan the next cycle of learning for their class.

Leaders will monitor progress towards KPIs and tests outcomes and hold termly Pupil Progress meetings with staff. They will also talk to pupils and scrutinise work in their books. This will help them to monitor the performance of different cohorts and groups of pupils and they will work with staff to ensure that pupils of all ages are making sufficient progress. Where necessary, they will work with staff to put interventions in place for both those who need some extra help or those who need to be challenged further.

At the end of each academic year, staff will finalise their assessment of each pupils' KPIs and, taking into account all evidence, they will make a judgement of their overall attainment in reading, writing and maths. For each of these areas, staff will determine if a pupil is working below, towards, securely at or at an advanced level of what is expected for their age. This overall judgement will be reported to parents and recorded in the school's assessment database. Leaders will use it to monitor standards of attainment and help check pupils' progress. The KPI Trackers will be maintained throughout each cohort's time in school and, as they move to the next year group, their new teachers will use them to plan for their learning, quickly addressing fundamental areas they have yet to master.

Reception/ Early Years

As pupils start school, Reception teachers will use their professional judgement to assess the age band they are working 'within' across the EYFS 17 areas of learning. Their judgement will be informed by records of assessment received from pre-school settings, evidence from parents (through completion of a school designed assessment form) and pupils' response to the NFER Baseline Assessment, which they will take within their first 6 weeks.

Around the end of each term, Reception teachers will use their professional judgment to evaluate the evidence in pupils' Tapestry Learning Journeys and books and make a summary judgement for each of the EYFS 17 areas of learning. The data will be recorded in our ELG Tracker. The EYFS leader and senior leaders will monitor pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals, triangulating the Tracker with evidence of individual pupil's or specific groups of pupils' learning.

Assessment across the curriculum

While most of in-school summative assessment covers English and Mathematics, we are establishing approaches in other subjects, such as Science and PE.

- Science - we use the Collins Snap Science Scheme of Work and pupils will complete assessment activities and tasks at the end of each science topic. We will use the Snap Science online tracking system, which matches pupils' attainment against national expectations.
- PE – we use the REAL PE scheme of work which provides an integrated assessment framework. Staff and pupils will use the framework to track individual pupil's skill development.

National standardised summative assessments

At different points in primary school, pupils are subject to statutory assessments, which are outlined below:

- Foundation Stage Profile - Assessment is ongoing throughout the EYFS but the official EYFS Profile for each pupil will be completed in the final term of Reception. The assessment takes place through teacher observation of children's learning and development as they take part in everyday activities and planned observations where teachers spend time on a specific task with an individual child or small group. The outcomes will be reported to parents in July using the three separate achievement levels within each Development Matters age band: Expected (working at the level expected); Emerging (working below the expected level); and Exceeding (working above the expected level).
- Year 1 Phonics Screening - Towards the end of Year 1, pupils will take this simple word reading test with a teacher to determine if they have met the set threshold in their phonetic knowledge. The overall outcome will be communicated to parents in their child's end of year report. Where pupils do not meet the threshold in Year 1, they will receive further support in Year 2 and will retake the test again at the end of the year.
- End of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Assessments - During May of Year 2, pupils will take tests in Reading, English Punctuation, Grammar & Spelling and Mathematics. These tests will be delivered and marked by class teachers and will be used to support the class teacher's existing knowledge of the pupil's learning in order to make a statutory end of key stage teacher assessment in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science. Teacher assessments are based on externally set criteria and the attainment level will be reported to parents in July.
- End of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Assessments - Around the second week of May in Year 6, pupils will take tests in English punctuation, grammar and spelling test, Reading and Mathematics (commonly referred to as 'SATs'). These tests are set and marked externally and school will usually receive the results in July. In addition, class teachers will also make a statutory end of key stage teacher assessments in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science. Teacher assessments are based on externally set criteria and, while both teacher assessment and test attainment will be reported to parents, it is predominately the outcomes of the Reading and Maths tests and the teacher assessment of Writing that will be considered by secondary schools or in any external performance measure of the school.

In addition to the statutory standardised assessments, pupils in Years 3-5 will take standardised tests in Reading and Maths towards the end of the school year and spelling tests over the 3 terms of the school year. These tests provide a benchmark against pupils' attainment nationally; they will support staff in making their end of year summative judgements of individual pupils' attainment and support leaders in ensuring the accuracy of judgements at GHF. For this purpose, we will use NFER optional tests which are research based and provide comparisons with a large sample of children.

At GHF we consider that the results of any summative assessment, statutory or otherwise, should be used formatively to guide improvements in teaching and learning and, subsequently, overall outcomes. Therefore senior and middle leaders will carefully analyse the results of all standardised summative assessments and will use Question Level Analysis of tests (benchmarked against a national data set) to identify trends for cohorts and specific groups of pupils and also areas of strength and for development in terms of the performance in the curriculum.

Accuracy of Assessment and Moderation

Assessment is not a lone venture and staff will work in teams, in discussion with leaders, when they update their KPI trackers. To support staff with their assessment, there will be regular staff development activities. Additionally, we will collectively moderate samples of writing across school each term.

As there is no national definitive of the expectations for each year group other than those subject to statutory assessment, we feel it is important to establish this in conjunction with other schools. We based

our KPI approach on the nationally recognised model devised by the NAHT in order to achieve some level of consistency and provide the ability to make comparisons against other school. Using the NFER nationally standardised optional tests adds further robustness to our judgements.

Each term we will cross moderate and standardise samples of pupils' work with nine other schools, collectively known as our Peer Group Cluster. There will be one meeting for each year group and for each of reading, writing and maths over the year. The cluster will cross check their individual school assessments, using one common tool; for e.g., we use the Ros Wilson Standards for writing.

Like all schools, we are subject to statutory moderation in each of Early Years, Year 2 and Year 6, although this is not every year. For these year groups, staff will attend all moderation events organised by the local authority.

Working with Parents and Carers

All communications with parents and carers will provide a clear sense of where their child is in terms of their learning and how parents and carers can support their children.

We have two formal Parents' Evenings in the Autumn and Spring term where we will discuss curriculum expectations, current attainment (in relation to the expectation) and progress. We will also discuss key areas to improve (targets) and how parents and carers can help.

Reception parents will be able to view their child's Tapestry Learning Journey and contribute at any time. They will also be provided with a copy (on CD-ROM) at the end of the year.

At the end of each year, families will receive a full report detailing progress, achievements and strengths across the curriculum. The report will be based on summative observations by the teaching team and will make clear individual pupil's attainment compared with the expectation for their age, dedicating general areas for improvement. Reports will include the perspective of pupils as they will also contribute to the report. Parents and Carers will have the opportunity to discuss the report with teachers and will be encouraged to provide feedback to the school.

Inclusion

GHF is an inclusive school and we work hard to meet the needs of all our pupils. Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class. High quality teaching is available to all pupils, including those with additional needs. We work hard as a school to ensure that all additional support in the classroom is deployed effectively. Where a child is not making the expected progress the class teacher will work alongside the SENCo, Subject Leaders, parents and external agencies (where appropriate) to plan tailored support. We follow the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle to ensure all pupils are monitored closely and make progress. We use individual learning plans (known as Pupil Passports), where appropriate, which are reviewed with the child and parents termly. We do not label any child by so called 'ability'. All pupils are encouraged to achieve their best and become confident individuals living fulfilling lives. See our separate SEND Policy for more information.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Feedback and Marking Policy
- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND policy

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on a yearly basis.

This policy was reviewed and updated in **September 2016**.

Next review date: **September 2017**.