

# **Ladybrook Primary School**

## **Policy for Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

### **Rationale**

At Ladybrook Primary School we recognise all children as unique individuals who develop and learn in different ways and at different times. Our assessment systems are based on a shared understanding of how learners learn. We use assessment as a tool by which we are able to reflect upon and refine our plans for children's needs and next steps in all areas of their development. Our assessment systems have been adopted in recognition of every child's individual learning journey and consequently we consider there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Assessment is therefore too important to be the sole preserve of national tests and assessments. In good education, assessment is of the progress of the whole pupil throughout their educational journey.

Assessment is the means used by good teachers to evaluate that progress and diagnose the needs of the pupil. It informs the teaching and learning cycle. True assessment is neither wholly formative nor wholly summative; it is embedded in the classroom rather than an activity of reflection outside the classroom.

Assessment helps pupils engage in their own learning and development. A pupil responds better to new challenges if they grasp what is necessary for progress and why. Through verbal feedback and dialogue, children are involved in the assessment process.

At Ladybrook we focus on high-quality, in-depth teaching and learning, supported by in-class formative assessment. Our assessment system is designed to support learning and not get in its way. We want to make the important measurable and avoid making the measurable important.

### **Aims**

- To identify what children know and what they need to learn next.
- To inform planning (school/class/group/individual), target setting, information for parents and governors and class organisation.

- To measure individual/ group progress.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods and interventions.
- To motivate and activate students as owners of their own learning.
- To provide feedback that moves learners forward.
- To comply with statutory requirements and extrinsic demands.

### **Types of assessment**

There are three main forms of assessment: **in-school formative assessment**, which is used by teachers to evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding on a daily basis and to tailor teaching accordingly; **in-school summative assessment** which enables schools to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of a teaching period; and **nationally standardised summative assessment** which is used for whole school accountability.

### **Practice at Ladybrook**

We have a cross-curricular, thematic approach to engaging learners which cements our practice. Teachers assess through observation and professional judgement together with regular dialogue-based feedback with learners, starting from nursery through to Year 6. At Ladybrook good teaching and assessment continually reinforce each other and generate continuous improvement through a circle of teaching and assessment. Teacher assessment leads to the identification of gaps, which in turn informs planning and prompts teachers to reflect upon, evaluate and adapt their own teaching methods to improve pupils' understanding and learning. **Formative assessment** or **Assessment for learning** is at the heart of high quality teaching and learning. The children are helped to know and understand their next steps in learning through marking and feedback, open learning conversations and positive relationships between adults and children. Assessment for Learning enables teachers to act as reflective practitioners; evaluating what is working well in our teaching and what we need to adapt. For parents, Assessment for Learning provides us with rich, constructive information to report to parents verbally or written, providing them with a broad picture of their child's strengths and areas for improvement.

**In-school summative assessments** contribute to our understanding of children's learning. Teachers can evaluate pupil learning and the impact of their teaching of

different concepts and skills. All of this information supports the planning of future teaching and learning. The Senior Leadership Team use the information to monitor the progress and attainment of individuals, classes, year groups and other groups within the school. The analysis of this information enables Senior Leaders to redeploy resources as required to close gaps and encourage mastery in learning for all of our pupils.

**Nationally standardised summative assessments** at the end of Key Stages enable teachers to make comparisons with other schools locally and nationally. They provide information for parents, senior and middle leaders, governors, the local Authority, the government and Ofsted. We recognise that learning does not take place in isolation and no 'sit down' test can accurately capture the complexity of a learner's progress.

To fulfil the assessment needs of our school we have introduced **Learning Ladders** as a system which should satisfy all of these intrinsic and extrinsic needs, whilst maintaining our whole school ethos regarding teaching and learning. **Ladybrook Learning Ladders** have been devised by our staff, incorporating best practice in current international research focusing on 'learning to learn', effective formative assessment and how intelligence can be grown.

For the key areas of Learning Characteristics (including speaking and listening) as well as literacy and numeracy, our learning ladders are used to formalise the relationship between planning, teaching, learning, recording and reporting:

- Teachers establish a baseline through their assessment of learning.
- Teachers plan from the key learning objectives found on the 'rungs' of each ladder.
- As children develop skills in articulating their own learning they use learning ladders themselves in their dialogue about their own learning strengths and needs.
- Parents and carers access the ongoing record of their child's learning in these areas.

Whilst we comply with statutory expectations, we resist the temptation to replace sub-levels with alternative labelling. Teachers are required to draw evidence for their judgements from the wealth available within the learning experience, critically from

their relationship with each child. This is not straightforward. It would be easier to use 'tick lists' and test results as the basis for summative judgements, but in doing so we know that we would only be 'scratching the surface' of a child's rich learning journey.

We have shared with parents our commitment to talk about their children using words rather than numbers and letters.

**Progress** is identified through:

- Accumulation of evidence achieved over time (professional judgement, discussion, moderation with colleagues and physical evidence e.g books, photos, behaviour, what children say).
- The learning ladders themselves are evidence of progress.
- Discussion with parents- twice per year (Autumn and Spring)
- Parental access to Learning Ladders- progress transparent through home access
- Reporting to parents three times per year- including 'next steps' in learning.
- Within the Learning Ladders software, whole class and groups can be followed in terms of percentages of attainment such as the percentage of pupils each term on track/above/below expectations. Numerical attainment and progress is measured from the start of year baseline, through each term across the school year.
- The development of this software at source will support our evidence and rich evaluation of progress and attainment into the future.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The head teacher and senior leadership team aim to create a learning community with high aspirations and expectations for all. The progress of all children is monitored and evaluated by senior leaders. Classroom teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of all pupils learning and progress. Subject Leaders monitor progress, achievement and provision within their own subject areas. Governors monitor progress and achievement with the support of the Head teacher and Deputy Head.