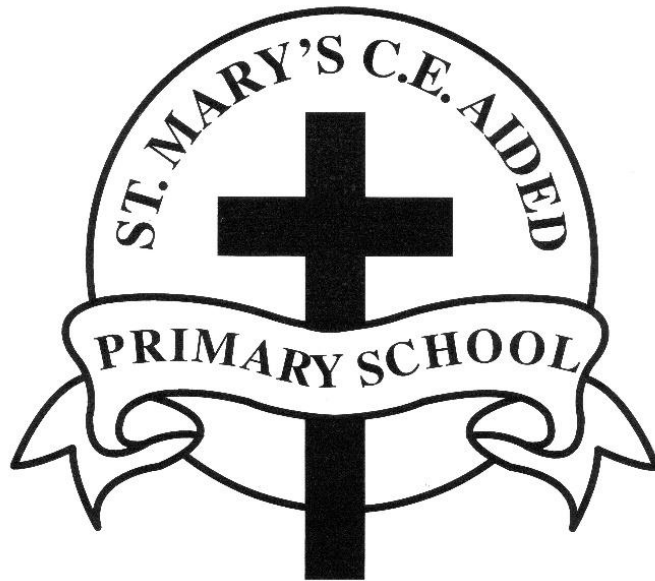




Policy:	Assessment
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Key changes/notes:
This is an updated policy following review of assessment practices

Statutory Requirement:	Yes – Department of Education
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Policy Section:	Governance

Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Luke 18:16) This policy is based upon our Christian values of thankfulness, respect, honesty, love and resilience.

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents/carers
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

2. Legislation and guidance

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the [final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#)
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in the [Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#)
- [2024 assessment and reporting arrangements \(phonics screening check\)](#)
- [2024 key stage 2 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)

3. Principles of assessment

At St Mary's, we are committed to using assessment as a meaningful and effective tool to support and enhance pupil learning. Our approach is guided by a clear sense of purpose, fairness, and a strong focus on high-quality teaching. We ensure that assessment meets the needs of all pupils, informs responsive teaching, and avoids placing unnecessary demands on staff workload.

We recognise that no single assessment can provide a complete picture of a child's progress and attainment. Therefore, we combine the outcomes of formal assessments with qualitative observations and insights gained through daily interactions with pupils. By triangulating this range of information, we build a more accurate and holistic understanding of each child's learning journey.

For pupils with additional needs, we further tailor our assessment approach by evaluating progress against personalised, small-step targets. These targets are carefully aligned with each child's developmental stage, ensuring that assessment remains meaningful, inclusive, and supportive of every learner's growth.

4. Assessment approaches

At St Mary's, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment:

- Day-to-day in-school formative assessment;
- In-school summative assessment;
- Nationally standardised summative assessment.
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4.1 In-school formative assessment (assessment for learning)

Formative assessment is an integral part of our teaching and learning process. It is used continuously in the classroom to assess pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding, and to inform and adapt teaching in real time. Our approach ensures that pupils are supported effectively, that misconceptions are addressed promptly, and that all learners are given opportunities to make sustained progress. Shirley Clarke (2008) discusses in her books how formative assessment might look in classroom practice. The key characteristics are:

- clear learning intentions, shared and discussed with pupils
- pupils understand the “success criteria” – how they will know they have achieved the learning objective, or the steps towards achieving it
- marking and feedback are related to the learning intention and success criteria, indicating the child's successes and helping them to know how to improve
- improvement is made as a direct result of the feedback
- children are actively involved in self and peer-assessment
- questioning techniques are used effectively to extend learning
- there is a belief that all children can succeed
- there is a culture where learning is celebrated, rather than performance

As part of our commitment to supporting our children's progress as life-long learners, we also promote the theory of Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset, recognising that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort and persistence. We encourage our pupils to embrace challenges, see failure as a learning opportunity, and become more resilient in the face of setbacks.

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents/carers** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Formative Assessment Techniques

- We use a range of formative assessment techniques that are embedded in everyday teaching. These include:
 - **Questioning:** Teachers use a variety of questioning strategies, including open-ended and targeted questions, to gauge understanding and encourage deeper thinking. Techniques such as 'no hands up', 'think-pair-share', and 'cold calling' ensure all pupils are engaged and can demonstrate their understanding.
 - **Marking and Feedback:** We prioritise timely and meaningful feedback, both verbal and written. Immediate, in-the-moment feedback is used to clarify learning and guide improvement. Written feedback is purposeful and manageable, highlighting successes and next steps. Where appropriate, we use 'live marking' during lessons to provide instant guidance (*see the Marking and Feedback Policy for further information*).

- **Regular Recap and Review Activities:** Short, low-stakes quizzes, ‘retrieval practice’ tasks, and activities, such as “Flashback Four”, are used regularly to consolidate prior learning and identify gaps. These help reinforce key knowledge and support long-term retention.
- **Observations:** Teachers make ongoing observational assessments throughout the day, noting pupil responses, practical work, and participation in activities. These observations feed directly into planning and differentiation.
- **Self and Peer Assessment:** Pupils are taught to reflect on their own learning and that of others. We encourage children to use success criteria, checklists, and model examples to assess work, fostering metacognition and a sense of ownership over their progress.

Using Formative Assessment to Identify Gaps and Misconceptions

Formative assessment allows teachers to identify gaps in understanding and areas where misconceptions may have formed. These are addressed promptly through targeted questioning, guided groups, pre-teaching, focused intervention and use of next steps. Teachers use ongoing assessment information to adapt lesson planning and ensure that future teaching builds securely on what pupils know and can do.

The Role of Pupils in Assessment

We believe that pupils should be active participants in their learning. By involving them in assessment, we help develop their independence, resilience, and reflective thinking. Pupils are supported to:

- Understand learning objectives and success criteria;
- Reflect on their progress through guided self-assessment;
- Provide constructive feedback to peers;
- Set and review personal learning targets with teacher support.

This shared responsibility for learning empowers pupils and supports a culture of continuous improvement across the school.

Our approach to formative assessment is designed to be purposeful, manageable, and impactful. It ensures that teaching is responsive, inclusive, and focused on helping every child succeed.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

At St Mary’s, summative assessment is used purposefully to evaluate pupil attainment at specific points throughout the academic year. These assessments provide valuable information for tracking progress, informing planning, and communicating outcomes to pupils, parents, and other stakeholders. They are also used to identify long-term learning trends and ensure that all pupils, including those with additional needs, are progressing appropriately.

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- › **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.
- › **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or topic, and the impact of their own teaching.
- › **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It is used to provide feedback on how they can improve.
- › **Parents/carers** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a time period.

Summative Assessment Methods

We use a variety of in-school summative assessment approaches, including:

- **End-of-topic or unit tests:** These are used in core subjects such as English, maths and science to assess pupils' understanding of specific content covered during a half-term or term. The results inform future curriculum planning and identify areas requiring re-teaching or consolidation.
- **Standardised Assessments:** In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils complete standardised assessments in reading, mathematics, and GPS (grammar, punctuation, and spelling) three times a year or twice a year for year 2 and year 6 who are completing SATs in Terms 5 and 6. These provide a consistent measure of attainment and enable us to monitor progress over time. For mathematics, we use the **White Rose** assessments, and for reading and GPS, we use **Headstart** materials. The school subscribes to a platform that generates standardised scores for these assessments, enabling reliable and consistent analysis of pupil performance across year groups, cohorts, and academic years. These tests provide nationally benchmarked data, allowing us to compare outcomes against age-related expectations both internally and in a broader national context. We carefully select assessments that align with our curriculum and assessment principles, ensuring they accurately reflect the knowledge, skills, and understanding we value as a school.
- **Teacher assessment frameworks:** In writing and foundation subjects, teacher assessment is used to make summative judgments based on a range of work in books, discussions, and other classroom evidence.
- **Annual pupil progress reviews for pupils with SEND:** For pupils with additional needs, progress is reviewed against individualised targets as part of their SEND Support Plans or EHCPs. These reviews are held termly and involve teachers, the SENCo, parents, and, where appropriate, the pupil. Progress is measured in relation to both academic outcomes and broader developmental goals (See *Policy of Inclusion and SEND for further information*).

Using Summative Assessment to Inform Future Learning

Summative assessment provides staff with a clear understanding of what pupils have retained, where there may be gaps, and what concepts need to be revisited. Assessment outcomes are used in pupil progress meetings to inform future teaching priorities and intervention planning. This ensures that learning remains responsive and targeted to pupil needs.

Measuring Long-Term Progress

By conducting summative assessments at regular intervals, we are able to track pupil progress over time and identify longer-term patterns in attainment and achievement. This data enables leaders and teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and curriculum delivery, and to plan strategically at both classroom and whole-school level.

Standardisation and Validation of Assessment

To ensure the accuracy and reliability of our summative assessments, we use a variety of standardisation and moderation strategies:

- **Internal moderation:** Teachers meet regularly within and across year groups to compare assessment outcomes and ensure consistency in judgement, particularly in writing and foundation subjects.
- **External moderation:** We participate in local authority moderation for EYFS, KS1, and KS2 statutory assessments as required, and work with other schools in our cluster to validate internal judgments through cross-school moderation activities.
- **Senior leader oversight:** Assessment data is reviewed by senior leaders termly, with pupil progress meetings held to discuss findings, challenge assumptions, and agree actions.

Our summative assessment approach is designed to be meaningful, manageable, and motivating. It enables us to celebrate achievement, identify areas for improvement, and ensure all pupils are making the progress they are capable of over time.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context.
- **Pupils and parents/carers** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison with pupils nationally.

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- Multiplication tables check in year 4
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6)

5. Collecting and using data

We believe that the purpose of assessment data is to support high-quality teaching and improve outcomes for all pupils. Data is only recorded when it serves a clear and useful purpose and is never collected for its own sake. Our approach is designed to ensure that data collection is manageable, meaningful, and supports teacher workload rather than increasing it.

When and How Data Is Recorded

Teachers make summative judgments based on a range of evidence, including classwork, observations, formative assessments, and, where appropriate, standardised tests. These judgments, along with teachers' formative assessments for English, Maths and Science in years 1-6 and for the seven curriculum areas in EYFS for Reception and Nursery classes are recorded on the school's assessment tracking system, Sonar, termly.

In addition, data from standardised assessments is recorded following their administration - three times a year for pupils in Years 1, 3, 4, and 5, and twice a year for pupils in Years 2 and 6, to align with statutory assessment requirements and preparation.

Data is recorded for:

- **Core subjects** (Reading, Writing, Maths) each term;
- **Foundation subjects** termly, with a focus on knowledge and skill progression;
- **SEND support and provision plans**, which are reviewed three times a year and include progress against individualised targets.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), assessment is an ongoing and integral part of daily practice, carried out through careful observation and interaction with children as they play, explore, and engage in a variety of activities. Teachers and nursery nurses collect assessment data informally over time through a mix of adult-led activities, child-initiated play (also known as continuous provision), and significant "wow" moments that highlight key developmental progress. Evidence is gathered in a range of ways, including post-it notes to capture spontaneous observations, photographs, and samples of classwork. These observations help practitioners build a comprehensive picture of each child's development and are used to plan meaningful next steps tailored to individual needs. The EYFS framework is structured around three 'prime' areas of learning: Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development, which are considered foundational in the early years. In addition, there are four 'specific' areas: Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design. Collectively, these seven areas provide a

holistic view of a child's learning journey and contribute to key assessments, such as the EYFS Profile completed at the end of the Reception year (*see EYFS Policy for further information*).

Use of Assessment Data

Assessment data is used to:

- Track individual and cohort progress over time;
- Identify pupils at risk of falling behind and plan appropriate interventions;
- Inform pupil progress meetings and strategic decision-making;
- Plan next steps of learning;
- Report to parents on their child's progress and attainment;
- Monitor the impact of teaching and curriculum design.

Who the Data Is Shared With

Assessment data is shared with:

- **Class teachers and subject leaders**, to inform teaching and planning;
- **Senior leaders**, to monitor school performance and direct resources;
- **Parents**, through termly reports and parent consultations. In EYFS, this is shared every 6 weeks (*see EYFS Policy section on Learning and Development for further information*);
- **Governing body**, in a summary format to support school evaluation and accountability;
- **External agencies**, such as the local authority or Ofsted, when required.

Ensuring Data Communication Is Effective

We ensure that assessment data is communicated clearly and appropriately to different stakeholders. Teachers receive training and guidance on using the school's assessment system, interpreting data, and using it to inform next steps in teaching. Data shared with parents is presented in a way that is accessible and focused on what their child has achieved and what they need to do next.

Minimising Workload

To reduce unnecessary workload, we limit the frequency and volume of data collection to only what is essential. Teachers are not expected to input large volumes of data or produce evidence purely for tracking purposes. We make full use of professional judgment and discussions in staff meetings and progress reviews to interpret data and plan action. Digital systems are streamlined to reduce duplication and ensure ease of use.

Our data practices are continually reviewed to ensure they remain purposeful, efficient, and aligned with our core aim: to support pupil learning and well-being.

6. Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini. St Mary's recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework

- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

7. Reporting to parents/carers

We believe that strong partnerships between school and home are key to supporting each child's academic and personal development. We are committed to keeping parents and carers well-informed about their child's progress through a range of clear and accessible reporting methods across the school year.

Ongoing Communication

Throughout the year, we provide multiple opportunities for parents and carers to receive updates on their child's learning and progress:

- **Parents' Afternoons** are held twice a year, providing a structured opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress, strengths, and next steps with the class teacher.
- **Parent Surgeries** are held on the last Tuesday of every month. This provides parents with an opportunity to come into children's classes and look at their learning as well as have an informal conversation with the class teacher. The SENCo is also available at these times.
- **EYFS** also offer parent meetings at the end of Terms 1-4 in Reception to discuss the 6 weekly reports. Paper copies are distributed termly to parents in Nursery.
- **Informal Conversations** can take place as needed before or after school or through arranged meetings with the class teacher or SENCo.
- **Meetings with the SENCo** are offered three times a year for parents and carers of children with additional needs who are school-aged and six times a year for Nursery children. These meetings provide an opportunity to review progress against personalised targets, adjust provision where necessary, and share updates from any external professionals involved in the child's support.
- **Annual Written Reports** At the end of each academic year, all parents and carers receive a **written annual report**, which includes:
 - A summary of the pupil's **achievements in core subjects and curriculum areas**, highlighting strengths and areas for development;
 - **Comments on general progress**, including behaviour, attitude to learning, and personal and social development;
 - The pupil's **attendance record**, including:
 - The total number of possible attendances,
 - The total number of unauthorised absences, expressed as a percentage (except for pupils in Reception);
 - Where applicable, the results of any **public examinations** e.g. SATs

End of Key Stage 2 Reporting

At the end of Year 6, the report will also include statutory assessment outcomes as required by the Department for Education:

- The outcomes of **teacher assessments** in **English writing** and **science**;
- The results of **National Curriculum tests** in reading and mathematics, including:
 - The **scaled score** achieved,
 - Whether the pupil has met the **expected standard**;
- Where applicable, a statement explaining why a test was not taken;
- **Comparative information**, showing how the pupil's attainment compares with:
 - Other pupils of the same age in the school,
 - National averages for pupils in the same year group in core subjects.

Use of Assessment Platforms

While we do not provide direct access to our assessment platform (e.g. Sonar) for parents, we ensure that all relevant information is clearly communicated through written reports and face-to-face discussions.

Our approach to reporting is designed to ensure transparency, clarity, and shared responsibility in supporting each child's learning journey.

8. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Assessment will be used diagnostically to support the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs, helping to determine the type and level of support or intervention required. Where necessary, more specialist assessment tools will be employed, which are administered by the SENCo, who holds the appropriate training and qualifications to use them effectively.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We have the same high expectations of all pupils, however, this accounts for the amount of effort the pupil puts in, as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties. Where the assessment platform does not reflect the small step progress made by individuals, we access tools such as the Portage profile document and PIVATS as well as pre Key-Stage Standards guidelines to track progress.

9. Training

We are committed to ensuring all teachers have a strong and up-to-date understanding of assessment and its role in supporting effective teaching and learning. We recognise that high-quality assessment practice is essential for securing good outcomes for all pupils, and we actively invest in staff development to build consistency, confidence, and competence across the school.

Ensuring a Strong Understanding of Assessment

All teachers, including early career teachers and support staff involved in pupil learning, receive clear guidance on our assessment principles, systems, and expectations. Assessment training is embedded into:

- **Induction programmes** for new staff;
- **Staff meetings and INSET days**, where assessment is regularly revisited as a core element of teaching and learning;
- **Phase or key stage meetings**, where assessment practice is discussed in the context of planning and pupil progress.

We ensure that teachers understand the purposes of different types of assessment (formative, summative, diagnostic), how to use assessment to inform teaching, and how to interpret data meaningfully without increasing workload unnecessarily.

Leadership and Responsibility

The **Assessment Team**, in collaboration with the Headteacher, is responsible for monitoring assessment practice across the school and ensuring all staff have access to relevant and timely professional development. The Assessment Team works alongside subject leaders to:

- Identify training needs;
- Share examples of effective assessment;
- Support staff with moderation, data analysis, and responsive planning.
-

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

We provide regular CPD opportunities through:

- **Internal training**, including workshops and peer-led sessions;
- **Moderation activities**, both in-school and with local cluster schools, to support accurate and consistent assessment judgements, particularly in writing and foundation subjects;
- **External CPD**, including local authority training, national conferences and training from educational consultants or external providers with expertise in assessment.

Staff are encouraged to engage in reflective practice, and peer observations or coaching are used to help teachers continuously improve how they assess and respond to pupil learning.

Staying Abreast of Good Practice

To ensure our approach remains current and research-informed, school leaders:

- Monitor developments in national policy and guidance (e.g. from the DfE, Ofsted, and the Education Endowment Foundation);
- Engage with professional networks and local assessment forums;
- Share key updates and best practice examples during staff briefings and CPD sessions.

Any changes or developments in assessment practice are introduced carefully, with staff consultation, training, and support to ensure consistency and understanding across the school.

10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems, as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data
- Monitoring that school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school

10.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessment, marking and feedback competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities

10.3 Assessment team

The assessment team is responsible for:

- Supporting the headteacher with assessment responsibilities
- Continuing professional development (CPD) for middle leaders/subject specialists on how assessment points should be planned and delivered and, for teachers, how to get pupils to the assessment points
- Tracking completed assessments and making sure they are moderated, data is collected and teachers respond to the results appropriately

10.4 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy, including for effective marking and feedback
- Creating and sharing clear mark schemes for the purposes of moderation
- Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they teach
- Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice

11. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assessment team. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The Assessment Team is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The Assessment Team will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Moderation
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Book scrutinies
- Pupil progress meetings.

12. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to our:

- Curriculum policy
- Marking and Feedback policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Inclusion and SEND policy