



# Curriculum and Assessment Policy

This policy is intended to ensure consistency of practice within the school's local articulation of a standards-based model, which is encapsulated in the National Curriculum for 2014.

## Curriculum

Our Curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging to empower children to manage life and find meaning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our intention is to facilitate what we consider to be the purpose of the New national curriculum *which provides an overarching statement of children's entitlement to core knowledge in which continuity and progression are built upon. Non-negotiables within the curriculum ensure that the learners' essential skills are developed alongside National Curriculum requirements.*

Using AfL strategies and pre learning tasks teachers take into account the outcomes when planning for each major area of study. Time for learners to review their learning is central to our curriculum.

The non-negotiables are designed to identify certain basics that can powerfully help pupils to access, advance and secure their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Their main purpose is to:

1. Identify the essential skills that children need to become confident with and to be able to apply independent skills in other contexts.
2. Unlock learning and progress, so that teachers can focus on the essential skills rather than coverage at the expense of progress.

Thus, teachers free to decide using AfL and effective talk strategies within the class to drive standards within a balanced and well taught broad curriculum, grounded in much more than functional literacy.

Our aims and principles are steeped in the Cambridge Primary Review Trust (CPRT) ideologies:

### The individual

1. **Well-being:** prepare children for a fulfilling future as well as attend to their present needs, hopes, interests and anxieties and promote their mental, emotional and physical welfare. Help them to develop a strong sense of self, a positive outlook and maximise their ability to learn through good, evidence-informed teaching.
2. **Engagement:** secure children's active and enthusiastic engagement in their learning.
3. **Empowerment:** excite, promote and sustain children's agency, empowering them through knowledge, understanding, skill and personal qualities to profit from their learning to discover and lead rewarding lives, and to manage life and find new meaning in a changing world.
4. **Autonomy:** enable children to establish who they are and to what they might aspire. Encourage their independence of thought and discrimination in the choices they make. Help them to see beyond fashion to what is of value.

### Self, others and the wider world

5. **Encouraging respect and reciprocity:** promote respect for self, for peers and adults, for other generations, for diversity and difference, for ideas and values, and for



common courtesy. Respect between children and adult should be mutual, for learning and human relations are built upon reciprocity.

6. **Promoting interdependence and sustainability:** develop children's understanding of humanity's dependence for well-being and survival on equitable relationships between individuals, groups, communities and nations, and on a sustainable relationship with the natural world and help children to move from understanding to positive action.
7. **Empowering local, national and global citizenship:** enable children to become active citizens by encouraging their full participation in decision-making within the classroom and school, and advancing their understanding of human rights, conflict resolution and social justice. They should develop a sense that human interdependence and the fragility of the world order require a concept of citizenship which is global as well as local and national.
8. **Celebrating culture and community:** every school should aim to become a centre of community life, culture and thought to help counter the loss of community outside the school. 'Education is a major embodiment of a culture's way of life, not just a preparation for it,' as Jerome Bruner said.

### Learning, knowing and doing

9. **Exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense:** give children the opportunity to encounter, explore and engage with the wealth of human experience and the different ways through which humans make sense of the world and act upon it.
10. **Fostering skill:** foster skill in those domains on which learning, employment and a rewarding life depend: in oracy and literacy, in mathematics, science, IT, the creative and performing arts and financial management; but also communication, creativity, invention, problem-solving, critical practice and human relations.
11. **Exciting imagination:** excite children's imagination so they can advance their understanding, extend the boundaries of their lives, contemplate worlds possible as well as actual, understand cause and consequence, develop the capacity for empathy, think about and regulate their behaviour, and explore language, ideas and arguments.
12. **Enacting dialogue:** help children grasp that understanding builds through collaboration between teacher and pupil and among pupils. Enable them to recognise that knowledge is not only transmitted but also negotiated and re-created; and that each of us in the end makes our own sense out of that knowledge. Dialogue is central to pedagogy: between self and others, between personal and collective knowledge, between present and past, between different ways of thinking.

We believe that the above aims are interdependent. *'Empowerment and autonomy are achieved in part through exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense through the development of skill and freeing up imagination, and through the power of dialogue.'* (CPRT, 2009).

### Assessment

A standards-based approach to Curriculum and Assessment should enhance learning, achievement, progress and ultimately attainment through:

- Children accessing their curriculum entitlement with time allocated to core and foundation subjects used efficiently by teachers to promote progress within a lesson, achievement across time and attainment at the end of each phase of primary education specified in the revised National Curriculum (2014). This is distinct from curriculum coverage, which does not adequately imply quality teaching and learning.



- Congruency existing between teaching, learning, assessment and standards set down in the 2014 National Curriculum programme of study for English, Mathematics and Science.
- All members of staff promote a child's academic achievement by ensuring their medium- and short-term planning for teaching and assessment practices are compatible with the nature of a standards-based curriculum.

## Procedures

(1) English, Mathematics and Science are planned by teachers using the congruency triad\* to ensure alignment between teaching, assessment and learning in a standards based curriculum.

(2) Standards are unpicked and benchmarks form the basis for devising progressive teaching sequences.

(3) Assessment, the activities and scoring guides are written before a unit of work commences. Classroom teachers ensure they collaborate to ensure each assessment is reliable and valid. A school-based short-cycle of assessment operates.

(4) Feedback is given to pupils on their strengths and areas for development.

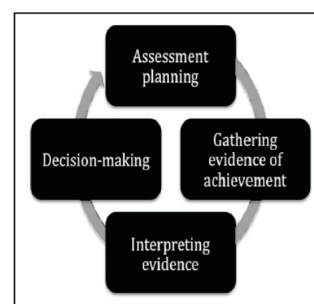
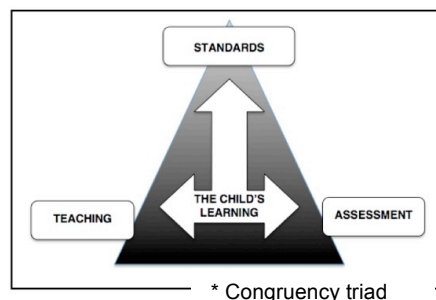
(5) School-based assessment involves task-specific, generalised rubrics, success criteria, Teacher Assessments and tests. Intrinsic, is the assessing without levels in which AfL and effective talk are integral to the process.

(6) Nursery – Pupils are assessed upon entry as a base line assessment against the Development Matters statements. Pupils are tracked termly. Additionally, observations of children's Characteristics of Effective Learning are also recorded.

- The percentage of children and the names of individuals working at Emerging, Expected and Exceeding at the end of Reception.
- Year 1. Pupils are assessed using APP and NC level descriptors, (with the exception of SEN children who will be assessed using P scales). Data is tracked each half term in the core subjects.

KS1 and KS2 will use current National Curriculum levels to record the ability of pupils. Using the Mapping attainment and progress sheets, the names of individuals are recorded. The percentage of children working at Well Below, Emerging, Expected and Exceeding will be recorded. A similar system operates for foundation subjects (albeit Bronze, Silver and Gold).

(7) Teacher Assessments will inform a major part of making judgements on the impact of teaching on learning. Achievement and progress must be considered in relation to attainment targets (or grade-level standards) in the programmes of study.



Teaching and assessment sequence

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The following mechanisms are used to determine whether a standards-based approach is being consistently implemented at Key Stage 1 and 2 and promoting achievement, progress and high levels of attainment:

- Work or assessment planning scrutiny conducted by subject leaders and/or the Senior Leadership Team.
- Moderation meetings involving colleagues within and beyond the school.
- Informal and formal observations of teaching and learning.
- Collation and analysis of data by the Curriculum and Assessment Leads- in our context, the Executive Head, Head of School, Deputy, SEN and Assessment Coordinators.
- Meetings and discussions to provide further evidence that this policy is being implemented. For example: Pupil Progress Meetings; Staff Meetings; INSET; Senior Leadership Team Meetings.
- Triangulation of the above sources of evidence is a key approach in ascertaining the success of curriculum organisation, assessment practices and their impact on learning.
- Reliable and valid school-based practices must be developed to evidence this. For example, teaching staff having a degree of autonomy to decide on the best way to capture achievement so it is appropriately matched to the nature of what has been taught. Major modes of assessment are therefore closed and short answer tasks, the use of rubrics (best described as assessment grids of sorts) and observation schedules. By operating a standards-based approach to the National Curriculum for 2014, it is these modes of school-based assessment that need to be explored by schools.
- Assessment maps are devised to ensure what is taught gets assessed and stipulates when this occurs. It can be useful to consider tracking the percentage of children meeting grade-level standards each half term (the formative element) and putting into place a summative assessment mechanism that evidences those who failed to meet expectations according to the school's pace-setting in curriculum and assessment mapping 'close the gap' before moving on to the next year group.
- Assessment for Learning (AfL) is vital for learning to be tailored to the needs of the children in each class by the teacher. TLC (Teacher Learning Communities) meetings will allow for teachers to develop and share their AfL practices. The model of 'lesson Studies' is used to allow for observations and feedback to help develop AfL strategies throughout the school. AfL questions (higher order questioning) are included in plans, which are checked by the Phase Group Leaders. Self-assessment opportunities will be given to children to develop their own understanding of their learning and learning needs. Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders will monitor this via Learning Walks.

Teaching staff have a degree of autonomy to decide on the best way to capture achievement so that assessment is appropriately matched to the nature of what has been taught. When considering assessing without levels, achievement and progress must be considered in relation to attainment targets (or grade-level standards) in the programmes of study. Major modes of assessment are therefore closed and there may be short answer tasks, the use of rubrics and observations.

The assessment of children's progress and achievement by National Curriculum sub-levels will no longer apply under the primary curriculum for 2014 (with exceptions in Upper Key Stage 2 and Year 2 until 2015/16). However, we will continue using sub levels.



Tracking progress across the academic year is not necessarily a daunting task, if curriculum and assessment maps are devised to ensure what is taught gets assessed and stipulates when this occurs. We track the percentage of children meeting grade-level standards each term (the formative element) and put into place a summative assessment mechanism that evidences those who failed to meet expectations according to the school's pace-setting in curriculum and assessment mapping, to ensure that we 'close the gap' before pupils move on to the next year group.

See Also:

Mission Statement;

Equal Opportunities Policy;

Special Educational Needs Policy;

Marking Policy;

Mathematics Policy;

English Policy;

Science Policy;

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.



## Glossary of Terms

This 'Glossary of Terms' covers key vocabulary and the shared language necessary for operating a standards-based curriculum. For further explanation, reference should be made to Towards a Standards-Based Curriculum 2014: A Toolkit for the New Primary Curriculum in England (Revised Edition).

Alignment	The direct link between standards, teaching and assessment. This also refers to the locally-articulated curriculum reflecting standards specified in the National Curriculum for 2014.
Assessment	A process by which learning is quantified, described and information on achievement gathered and analysed, so that learning is assessed in relation to standards
Assessment for Learning (AfL)	'Assessment for Learning' is an integral part of the learning and teaching philosophy at Beam. It includes ongoing formative teacher assessment during a lesson, and over a topic. Additionally, children are encouraged to take ownership of, and be involved with, their learning. It has been shown that this happens best when children have the opportunity to be involved in their learning and evaluate the outcomes afterwards
Assessing Without Levels	The observational and dialogic assessment of achievement and learning against standards; rather than describing progress in terms of abstract alpha-numerical labels.
Congruency	A core principle in a standards-based curriculum to ensure learning and assessment focuses on the attainment targets or grade-level standards specified in the National Curriculum for 2014.
Content Validity	The extent to which assessments reflect what has been taught.
Reliability	Consistency in judgements between professionals, i.e. whether the same opinion of a child's achievement would be reached on the basis of available evidence.
Rubrics	Measurement scale for scoring the quality of children's performance on a task or across an area of the curriculum.
School-Based Assessment	Criteria for assessment are taken directly from standards and their components.
Short-Cycle of Assessment	The setting of assessment tasks ahead of teaching so instruction is focused on standards that children achieve. Links to the use of <b>Assessment Plans</b>
Standards-Based Assessment	<b>See School-Based Assessment.</b>
Standards-Based Curriculum	A model where what is taught gets being assessed and what gets assessed is taught. This is in relation to skills, knowledge and understanding specified 2014 curriculum.
Validity	The extent to which an assessment measures what it is intended to or claims to.

