

Juniper Hill School

Assessment Policy



Kindness Enjoyment Achievement

Document control:

First written	May 2020
Latest review	Feb 2026
Shared with Juniper Team	
Shared with Juniper Families via website	
Agreed by the Governing Body	
Review date	Feb 2028

Reviewed by John Ginzler-Ring (Assistant Head – Standards & Attainment)

Introduction/Background

In 2015, the Department for Education removed National Curriculum levels as the principal measure of attainment and the way progress and attainment were described over time. Alongside the introduction of the new National Curriculum in 2014, schools were given the autonomy to develop their own approaches to on-going assessment.

Since then, Juniper Hill School has continued to refine its assessment systems to ensure they are purposeful, reliable and manageable, supporting high-quality teaching and meaningful pupil progress.

The purpose of this document is to outline our approach to assessment without levels, explaining how we assess attainment and progress in a way that is clear, consistent and focused on improving outcomes for all pupils.






The Principles of Assessment



Juniper Hill School is committed to embedding assessment for learning at the heart of teaching and pupil achievement whilst remaining mindful of teacher and pupil workload and wellbeing. Our assessment procedures are designed to be fit for purpose and manageable: accurate and informative (both reliable and valid) so that acting upon its outcomes maximises learning, without being overly burdensome for staff or pupils. Assessment is framed positively for pupils, encouraging them to challenge themselves, demonstrate what they are capable of, and strive to do their very best.

At Juniper, we view accurate assessment as a vital tool to guide and strengthen learning. It enables us to identify where children have excelled, where they require additional support, and where they are ready for greater depth and challenge. In doing so, assessment informs responsive planning, the design of targeted interventions, and the provision of appropriate challenge for pupils at all levels — particularly those who are high attaining — ensuring that every child is stretched to achieve their full potential.

Through this approach, we create meaningful opportunities for children to demonstrate progress over time, raise standards, accelerate learning, and report attainment and progress clearly to parents and governors.

Aims of Assessment

-  To provide reliable and credible information to staff and parents on a child's attainment and progress.
-  To identify strengths and areas of difficulty in learning so as to inform responsive planning and guide teaching. In doing so, to enable targeted support (interventions) and appropriate challenge for all pupils.
-  To build familiarity and confidence ahead of end of KS2 national assessments – to engage pupils with materials that reflect the style and challenge of the national curriculum tests.
-  To provide children with the opportunity to challenge themselves and demonstrate what they are capable of.
-  To enable termly benchmarking of attainment against national outcomes and facilitate accurate comparisons between pupils and groups of pupils within Juniper Hill School.

-  To provide feedback to children on their learning and help them understand what they need to do next to improve their work and demonstrate further progress.
-  To contribute towards accountability data as required.







Different types of Assessment

Within school, we use a range of forms of assessment to ensure we have sufficient information to make informed and reliable judgements. There are three main forms of assessment used:

(i) Formative

Formative assessment is an integral part of daily teaching and learning. It enables teachers to continually (day-to-day basis) evaluate pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, providing regular insight into attainment and progress. This ensures that teaching can be adapted in a timely manner to address misconceptions, provide additional support where needed, and extend learning—particularly for higher-attaining pupils—through appropriate challenge.

At Juniper we do this through:

-  targeted questioning and high-quality dialogue during lessons
-  careful observation of pupils working independently or collaboratively
-  marking and feedback - both written and verbal - during and after lessons (see Marking and Feedback Policy)
-  informal learning and progress checks such as “now try’s” and quizzes
-  weekly spellings and times tables tests
-  on-entry assessment of new pupils to ensure immediate and appropriate grouping, provision and challenge



This ongoing process ensures that learning is continuously reviewed, refined and strengthened for all pupils.

(ii) In-School Summative Assessment

In-school summative assessment enables teachers to evaluate what a pupil has learned and secured at the end of a defined period of teaching or unit of work. It provides a clear summary of attainment at a specific point in time and offers a structured measure against agreed curriculum expectations.

As such, it is a key indicator for tracking progress over time, identifying trends for individuals and groups, and informing final teacher judgements and statutory assessments.

At Juniper Hill School, summative assessment is carried out through a range of measures designed to provide reliable attainment information:

-  **Termly NFER assessments** in Reading and Mathematics at KS1, and in Reading, Mathematics and SPaG at KS2. These provide standardised scores for benchmarking and tracking progress over time. They also closely mirror the format and expectations of the Year 2 (optional from 2024) and Year 6 statutory assessments, helping to build pupils' familiarity, resilience and confidence ahead of end-of-key-stage national tests.
-  **Termly Writing assessments**, which are based upon a collection of work using the “I’m a Clever Writer“ termly skills checklists which enable judgements to be made

based upon where a given child is expected to be at the end of any given term. This differs for Y2 and Y6 once they start assessing against the actual statutory writing TAFs in the Spring Term, at which point judgements are made as to where a child's writing is against year-end expectations

- 🏠 **Teacher assessments in the foundation subjects**, made at the end of each topic against clearly defined knowledge and skills descriptors (TAFs) for working at age related expectations and linked with the subject skills progression maps
- 🏠 **End of topic assessments** such as the Headstart Tests for assessing subject knowledge in Science
- 🏠 **Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)** in Year 5 (administered in the Spring Term), which provide an indication of pupils' underlying academic potential – often used to support 11+ appeals
- 🏠 **End of EYFS assessment**, through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), which provides the statutory assessment of children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year. Outcomes indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development and contribute to the national data set, as well as informing transition into Year 1 and future curriculum planning.

Together, these summative measures ensure a comprehensive, reliable picture of attainment and progress.

(ii) National Standardised Summative Assessment

National standardised assessments are statutory measures set up by the Department for Education. They are used to hold schools to account but also provide externally marked/moderated assessment data that is used to show achievement and progress over time against national benchmarks.

At Juniper Hill School, these include:

🏠 **National curriculum assessments (commonly referred to as SATs) in year 2 at the end of KS1.**

Whilst now optional, these tests are taken at any time through May in Maths, Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. Whilst marked internally by class teachers, we can be subject to local authority moderation as a means of ensuring consistency and accuracy of judgement.

SATs outcomes are reported as scaled scores – a pupil's raw score (the actual number of marks achieved) is converted into a scaled score to enable comparison against national standards and over time. A scaled score of **100** represents attainment at the expected (age-related) standard; a score below 100 indicates working towards the expected standard; and a score above 100 reflects performance at a higher standard within the expected standard.

They are accompanied by a statutory teacher assessment (TA) in writing and science using the new English writing and Science framework.

🏠 **National curriculum assessments (SATs) in year 6 at the end of KS2.**

Taken according to a mandatory timetable over one week in May, there are tests in Reading, Maths and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS). These tests are externally marked. As above, to reach the expected standard in each test subject, a

pupil must achieve a scaled score of 100 or more. They are accompanied by a statutory TA in Writing and Science with writing potentially subject to external moderation.

 **Year 1 phonics screening check.**

A statutory assessment to confirm whether or not all the children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. Children who have not reached this level will receive extra support to ensure they can improve their decoding skills, and will then have the opportunity to retake the phonics screening check in Year 2

 **The statutory multiplication tables check (MTC) - Year 4**

A statutory online assessment of multiplication facts up to 12 x 12 is intended to determine whether pupils can fluently recall their times tables, which is essential for future success in Maths. It is also intended to help identify pupils who may need additional support.

These assessments ensure alignment with national expectations while contributing to the school's comprehensive understanding of pupil attainment and progress.

The purpose/nature of each form of Assessment

(i) Formative Assessment

Formative assessment, often referred to as assessment for learning, is an ongoing process embedded within daily lessons. It provides vital feedback to teachers about pupils' understanding and to pupils themselves about their learning progress.

Effective teacher marking and feedback remains an important part of the process of educating children at Juniper Hill. It provides a way of acknowledging pupils' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and pupils need to do next, with the primary aim of driving pupil progress. Effective feedback does not require extensive written comments, and teachers are not expected to mark every piece of work after every lesson. Further guidance on marking and feedback can be found in the school's Marking and Feedback Policy.

Due to its unobtrusive nature and given the age of the pupils, Formative Assessment is the main means of monitoring and assessing learning in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage). Throughout their time in EYFS, the teaching staff will watch, listen to and interact with the children as they take part not just in formal learning, but also as they play and go about their daily activities like getting ready for home, eating their lunch or getting changed for PE. Some observations will be planned – for instance, the teacher might spend an unbroken period of time with a particular child on a set activity – but others will be child led. When evidence of a child meeting an ELG (Early Learning Goal) is witnessed, a record of it will be made; this could be by making a brief note on a Post-It, taking a photo or just making a mental note to write down later. Over time, therefore, a bank of evidence is gathered to show whether or not a given child is consistently and independently showing evidence of fulfilling each ELG. Classroom activities will be planned to make sure children can demonstrate as many of the ELGs as possible.

(ii) In-school Summative Assessment

At Juniper Hill, summative assessment is used to evaluate pupils learning and progress at the end of a period of teaching, normally meaning at the end of term or on completion of a unit of work. It therefore provides valuable information as to how a given child or group of children have acquired and developed their knowledge and skills over time or across a whole topic as opposed to an individual learning objective.






That said, further detailed analysis of performance in summative tests can provide a measure of achievement against particular learning objectives for the purpose of gap analysis and intervention.

End of term teacher assessment

At Juniper Hill, the children are formally assessed at the end of each term in Reading, Writing and Maths for Years 1 and 2 with the addition of SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) for KS2. Teacher judgements are recorded according to the following performance descriptors:

- Working Below
- Working Towards
- Working at Age Related Expectation
- Working at Greater Depth

In Reading, SPaG and Mathematics, these judgements are informed by the use of termly NFER standardised assessments. Raw scores are converted into standardised scores, providing a reliable and nationally benchmarked measure of attainment. These assessments support teacher judgement but also offer several other benefits:

-  they provide termly benchmarking of pupil performance against national performance data
-  they provide for accurate and objective comparisons between individuals and groups of pupils within the school; they therefore provide a firm foundation for parent consultations and reporting data to governors
-  the summer term assessments provide a reliable indicator against year-end, age-related expectations.
-  their format closely mirrors that of the National Curriculum tests, helping to familiarise pupils with test structure and presentation, thereby building confidence and reducing potential anxiety
-  NFER's on-line analysis tool can, when required, enable teachers to undertake a question level analysis report which gives a more granular breakdown of results by question on a child-by-child basis and therefore facilitates gap analysis and responsive teaching and intervention

Assessments are recorded on the Insight pupil tracking system which is used to track, compare and report pupil progress and achievement. This information is shared with parents both in writing and during parents evenings

Writing

Termly writing assessments are made using the “I’m a Clever Writer” termly skills checklists which provides three key standards (Entering, Developing and Secure). Each key standard, contains a number of “pupil can statements” appropriate to the expectations for each year group. To judge that a pupil is working at a particular standard, teachers need to have evidence (across a collection of work) that not only demonstrates that a pupil’s writing carries an appropriate sense of purpose and meets the needs of the audience from a composition and effect perspective, but also that it meets the vast majority of “pupil can statements” within a given standard. A child is considered to be working at the expected standard, if they meet the following standards in the following terms:

Autumn – Entering

Spring – Developing

Summer – Secure

Superseding this, at the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils in these year groups are assessed against the national English writing framework which provides the three key standards (Working Towards, Working at ARE and Working at Greater Depth). In a similar fashion to the “I’m a Clever Writer” assessments, each standard contains a number of “pupil can statements” appropriate to year-end-expectations for each year group. To judge that a pupil is working at a particular standard, teachers must have evidence (across a collection of work) that they meet all of “pupil can statements” within a given standard but, most importantly, that their writing carries an appropriate sense of purpose and meets the needs of the audience from a composition and effect perspective. Whilst, as stated above, a pupil’s writing should meet all of the “pupil can statements”, as these represent the key elements of the national curriculum, teachers can use their discretion to ensure a particular weakness does not prevent an accurate judgement being made of the pupil’s overall attainment in writing. Exemplification materials are available to support such judgements and provide examples of pupil’s work which illustrate how “pupil can” statements in the frameworks can be met.

A pupil’s writing, which teachers use to make judgements, must be produced independently whilst answers to specific questions in classroom tests (e.g. dictation to support spellings) may provide additional evidence in support that they have met certain statements. In terms of independent writing, writing assessed should be part of their normal classroom practice and there is no need for “cold tasks” – exam condition-style experiences - in which there has been no real stimulus for the writing or discussion. Discussion of possible content/ideas and “immersion in vocabulary” is considered all part of good teaching and in no way disqualifies the writing produced from being part of the evidence base. The writing should have been produced following a unit of teaching about a particular text type and can emerge from the study of a text, topic etc. Success criteria might have been generated as part of the teaching process and these can still be on show on the “Working Wall” as children are writing. However, writing is not independent if it has been modelled or heavily scaffolded or if the expected outcome is simply a re-write of what has already been shared or worked upon – an independent piece must enable a writer to use their own ideas and provides an element of choice; writing from the different perspective of a character of their choice would be acceptable. The key point about independence is that children are making their own choices about how to apply the things they have been taught and the ideas discussed. Use of dictionaries, word banks and working walls is fine, as this is part of normal classroom practice and the child still has to make the decision to refer to the resource and how they make use of it. Crafting and making improvements to writing are a key part of the National Curriculum and should therefore be part of the writing being

assessed. This includes responding to feedback (teacher or peer), as long as it's not too direct. For example, if a teacher had said to a child "have a think about the adjectives you have used" and the child went on to identify some areas to improve, that would be acceptable. But "change the word 'nice' to something more interesting" would be too direct.

Science

Scientific knowledge, whilst continually being assessed on a lesson-by-lesson basis, is principally assessed at the end of each topic using the Headstart topic tests which provide a standardised score. These translate into a judgement of Working Towards, Working at ARE or Greater Depth using pre-determined thresholds held on the INSIGHT tracking system.

Scientific enquiry, however, is assessed using the TAPS (Teacher Assessment in Primary Science) focussed assessment approach which embeds assessment within classroom scientific investigation activities. For each topic taught, there are plans that have a particular focus on the assessment of working scientifically, such as close observation or using results to form conclusions. Assessment indicators provide suggestions about what the children might do or say to demonstrate their understanding or knowledge in the context of the given classroom activity/investigation and, as such, support teacher judgements. Taking one focus at a time, and giving teachers the discretion to judge either the whole or, in some instances, a part of the class in any given enquiry, means that assessing scientific enquiry becomes more manageable and, yet, over time, still ensures that the full range of enquiry skills can still be observed and assessed.

At the end of the year, teachers use both the Headstart topic test data along with TAPS and any day-to-day formative assessment to arrive at an overall judgement (Main Assessment) which will determine whether a given child has met the age-related expectation for the year.

Foundation subjects

The foundation subjects are assessed at the end of each unit of work using Teacher Assessment Frameworks (TAFs). The TAFs are carefully constructed from the content of the unit and, as such, aligned with the school's skills and knowledge progression maps, which reflect the expectations of the National Curriculum.




Teachers base their judgement on a broad range of evidence, gathered from day-to-day work in the classroom over time. This ensures that assessment reflects sustained understanding rather than isolated performance.

Each TAF contains a number of "Pupil Can Statements" which define what a pupil working at the expected standard is required to have demonstrated during the course of the unit of work. They are to be judged as to whether or not they have met the expected standard or whether or not they are working towards or beyond the expected standard (greater depth).

These assessments are recorded on a half-termly basis within Insight. This enables subject leaders to evaluate where school achievement and progress is at for their subject at any given time.

(iii) Statutory National Summative Assessment

As above, the children complete national tests during the following years:

-  Year 1 - Phonics Test
-  Year 4 – multiplication tables check
-  Year 2 (optional) and Year 6 SATs

These statutory tests provide a clear indication of how pupils are achieving in comparison to children of the same age nationally. They are used to evaluate the overall

effectiveness of the school and benchmark outcomes against other schools within our locality and nationally. It is used by the School Leadership team and governors to identify strengths, highlight priorities for development and inform strategic planning. Parents are informed of their child's test results at the end of the summer term.

(iv) Assessment in the EYFS (Reception)

Assessment at the start of EYFS – the Reception Baseline Assessment

Within the first six weeks of starting in EYFS, each child undertakes the statutory **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)**. This assessment provides a snapshot of pupils' starting points in early Mathematics and Literacy, Communication and Language. Importantly, the RBA forms the national baseline from which pupils' progress will be measured through to the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) for accountability purposes.

In addition to this statutory assessment, Juniper assesses wider areas of learning that are not covered by the RBA, including Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. This broader assessment information is shared with parents during consultation meetings and is used to inform teaching, identify next steps in learning and ensure that appropriate support, challenge or adaptations are in place to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

Assessment at the end of EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFS Profile)

The EYFS Profile is the statutory assessment undertaken during the summer term and summarises each child's attainment at the end of the EYFS. While the EYFS Profile is a summative assessment and is not intended to be used for ongoing assessment, judgements are informed by teacher's accumulated observations and their knowledge of the whole child across the year.

At Juniper, the primary purpose of the EYFS Profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of each child at the end of the EYFS. It provides:

- a judgement of the child's attainment against the 17 Early Learning Goals
- a short narrative describing the child's three Characteristics of Effective Learning:
 - **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
 - **Active Learning** – children concentrate, enjoy achievements and persevere when encountering difficulties
 - **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

Assessments are primarily based on observation of children's day-to-day learning and interactions. Particular emphasis is placed on learning that children demonstrate spontaneously, independently and consistently across a range of contexts. Accurate assessment in the EYFS draws upon a range of perspectives, including those of the child, parents and other adults who work closely with the child.

EYFS Profile data is used to:

- inform parents about their child's development in relation to the ELGs and their characteristics of learning
- support a smooth transition into Key Stage 1 by informing professional dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers
- enable Year 1 teachers to plan a responsive and appropriately challenging curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils

How we ensure that Assessment is for all Pupils

Formative assessment is appropriate for all learners and is a fundamental element of effective teaching and learning.

The majority of pupils at Juniper Hill are able to access the age-related curriculum through appropriate differentiation and targeted support. They are therefore able to make progress towards achieving the Age Related Expectations (AREs) for their year group. Consequently, most pupils will be assessed against the curriculum objectives and associated assessment materials appropriate for their age.

However, there may be a small number of children who are working significantly below the expectations of their age-related curriculum. In such cases, the class teacher may choose to assess them using assessment materials from a lower year group. For example, a pupil in Year 5 may complete assessment materials such as the Year 3 NFER tests in order to provide a more accurate measure of attainment.

Information about how assessment outcomes will be collected and used

Day to Day

All teaching staff are expected to maintain their own assessment records. These records are used to inform planning and teaching as part of day-to-day classroom practice.

Teachers have professional autonomy in determining how they record and maintain this information, provided it effectively supports the monitoring of pupil progress and informs teaching and learning.

Termly

Staff are required to input assessment data into Insight, the school's pupil tracking system, by the end of each term. Insight enables the school to monitor and compare pupil attainment and progress over time. Assessment information is shared with parents through parents' evenings, termly progress reports, and the end-of-year report.

The Assessment Lead produces a termly Data Dashboard, accompanied by analysis and commentary, which reviews attainment and progress across the school and within individual year groups in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. This information is presented to the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body to support strategic decision-making and ensure resources are effectively targeted to address areas of need.

Annual

At the end of each academic year, pupils complete statutory and school-based assessments as appropriate for their year group.

- EYFS: Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as part of the EYFS Profile.

- Years 1, 3, 4 and 5: Pupils complete end-of-year NFER assessments in Reading and Mathematics during the Summer Term. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 also complete NFER assessments in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.
- All Year Groups: Final teacher assessments are completed for Writing, Science and foundation subjects.
- Year 1: Pupils complete the statutory Phonics Screening Check.
- Year 4: Pupils complete the statutory Multiplication Tables Check (MTC).
- Year 2: Pupils undertake the optional end of Key Stage National Curriculum assessments (SATs) in the Summer Term rather than NFER assessments.
- Year 6: Pupils undertake the statutory end of Key Stage National Curriculum assessments (SATs) in the Summer Term rather than NFER assessments.

The outcomes of these assessments are shared with parents and are used by the school to monitor pupil attainment, progress and to inform future teaching and learning.

Arrangements for ensuring teachers are able to conduct assessment competently and confidently

As the school has developed its own assessment system, it is imperative that all new staff that join Juniper receive formal training in its implementation. This will enable them to understand their responsibilities in terms of assessing all pupils and what is expected. They will be trained by the Assessment Lead in co-operation with curriculum leaders as required. When they carry out their first end of term assessments, they will receive further training from either the Assessment Lead or a nominated member of their team/their mentor or tutor. It is essential that the staff are well trained and confident at assessing to ensure the school assessment data is robust.

Year group teams will be expected to moderate and standardise their end of term assessments.

Arrangements for Governance, Management and evaluation of Assessment

The Assessment Lead is responsible for maintaining the assessment policy and regularly reviewing and updating it as necessary. They work with teaching staff towards the end of each term to ensure they are confident in assessment procedures and aware of deadlines for submitting assessment data.

Monitoring

The Assessment Lead/Headteacher are ultimately responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of assessment practices in the school.

The impact of the assessment policy is monitored regularly by the Assessment Lead, Leadership Team, other staff members and Governors.

Implementation

This policy has been developed by the Assessment Lead in consultation with all staff at Juniper Hill School. Staff have contributed ideas and feedback to help create an assessment system that is practical, effective and aligned with the National Curriculum.

The system enables staff to:

- assess pupils accurately against the curriculum being taught
- track pupil progress over time
- provide clear and meaningful information to parents
- identify pupils' strengths, areas for development and next steps in learning.