



St Michael's CE Junior School

Assessment

Without Levels

Assessment Without Levels

- The new national curriculum for England is now being taught in all maintained schools. As part of the Government's reforms, assessing using levels has now been removed and schools are expected to assess without levels.
- How Assessing Without Levels Works: Each child is assessed against the skills appropriate to their year group for each subject. A baseline assessment is carried out so that progress can be measured and to inform teachers of next steps and planning.

So why is 'Life Without Levels' a more fair and precise system of assessment?

- “Levels have detracted from real feedback and schools have found it difficult to apply them consistently – the criteria are ambiguous and require teachers to decide how to weight a huge array of factors... It will be for schools to decide how they assess pupils’ progress.”

DfE (2013)

So why is 'Life Without Levels' a more fair and precise system of assessment?

- Levels could hide gaps that pupils had in their knowledge and understanding. This led to pupils being inaccurately assessed, with misconceptions and lost learning travelling with them as they progressed through the school.
- The new system is totally personalised to each child where every single skill within each subject is taken into account when assessing – therefore empowering teachers, pupils and parents.

Skills appropriate to their year group

- The National Curriculum outlines the skills and knowledge that we should teach to each year group. These are known as Programmes of Study.
- For English and Maths the POS are split into
 - Lower Key Stage 2 (Year 3 & 4)
 - Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 & 6)

Skills appropriate to their year group

- Science POS are split into individual years.
- All other subjects have a Programme of Study Overview and then a KS2 subject content outline.

Assessment without levels

“Case studies are more useful than data in showing the progress of particular groups of children.”

“Don’t over-complicate it! Have you identified gaps? Do you and child know next steps? Are you planning for next steps?”

“It’s not the data that’s important – just a starting point. What is really important is what books show and children say.”

“You say he is making good progress. Never mind the data – show me his books. When can I talk to him and see him in class?”

Comments from Senior HMI via @BeyondLevels 17/10/2014



Back to the assessment!

- We teacher assess our children in two areas
 - Progress
(how far have they moved?)
 - Standards
(where are they linked to the skills outlined for their age?)

- We track our children in bands and steps
- There are three sections – beginning, working and secure
- The average child should reach secure by the end of the school year

It is only in exceptional circumstances that a child will go beyond this secure level.

What do teachers use to support their judgements?

- Professionalism.
- Old knowledge of levelled system linked to age expectation and to benchmark.
- Formative assessment from day to day marking (offering feedback in books)
- Summative assessment (tests, where appropriate, on entry and throughout the year)
- Moderation (In school and across our HUB)

Next steps

- We know that Year 6 will be sitting SATs tests this year...next year, who knows?
- Adapt and embed what we are doing now.
- To look at manageable ways of recording assessments for our pupils in all subjects.
- Use the freedom of the new NC to give our children learning experiences that excite and promote a love of learning.

Assessment of RE

- We are still being advised to use the old levels at this point.

Parents

- What is the information that you would like at open evening to understand your child's progress?
- How would you like it reported at the end of the school year?
- Progress/attainment??