



Assessing Without Levels

As many of you will be aware, the Department of Education (DfE) has made a significant change in the way that children are assessed in schools. The levels that you were all familiar with in KS1 and KS2 (2b, 4c etc.) have now been removed. The reason the DfE did this was to ensure that children have a breadth and depth of knowledge at each year of the national curriculum. At Wessex, we have been working hard to develop a system that will enable us to track children's progress and ability.

Why do we assess children?

Staff at Wessex continually assess what the children understand and can do. This then informs the teacher's planning to ensure that lessons are planned and delivered so that all children can reach their potential. Assessing takes place in a variety of ways; through talking to the child, observing the child, marking their work and through more formal tests.

What will Wessex teachers use instead of levels?

Children will be regularly assessed against a range of key performance indicators for their year group. For example:

Y4 maths - compare and order numbers beyond 1000

Y2 reading - retelling a range of stories, fairy tales and traditional tales

Y6 writing - interweaves elements of dialogue, action, description appropriately.

Teachers will then periodically make a judgement to reflect the child's 'depth of understanding' against the year groups key performance indicators. The judgement will be made using the scale below.

Below programme of study
Emerging
Met -
Met
Met +
Deep
Beyond programme of study

What is the expectation?

	End of Autumn Term	End of Spring Term	End of Summer Term
Y1 – Y6	Emerging	Met -	Met (i.e. they are next year ready)

For children who are working below the programme of study they will be assessed against the relevant year's key performance indicators and therefore we will be able to show you the progress that your child has made.

How has the curriculum changed?

The 2014 new curriculum focuses very much on ensuring children have a breadth of understanding within the concepts and skills they learn. The application of skills and understanding across a wide range of curriculum areas is key. Rather than moving 'up' the stages, the focus is on moving 'outwards' developing a deeper understanding. For example, in Y3 maths, we would expect children to name and recognise a range of 2D and 3D shapes but a child with a deeper 'deep' understanding would be able to explain why different 3D shapes can cast the same shadow.

How will Wessex communicate your child's progress?

We will be reporting to parents more frequently on how your child is progressing, how well they are doing in relation to the standards expected, and what your child needs to do to improve. More information about the format and frequency of this information will follow once we have it agreed.

Year 2 and Year 6 Children

For the children in Year 2 and Year 6 when they take their SATs tests/assessments next summer the result will not be given as a level but as a scaled score. The DfE have not yet confirmed exactly what this will look like, but it will be a score where 100 on the scale represents the 'national standard'.

Children in Year 2 will take a spelling, punctuation and grammar test (SPAG) for the first time and the Year 6 children will no longer take a mental maths test but an arithmetic test will replace it.

The teachers will ensure that children are familiar with these new types of assessments and will be giving further information to parents in due course.

Further details can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-2016-sample-materials>

FS1 and FS2

There have been no major changes made to assessment in Nursery and Reception. On entry to both Nursery and Reception, teachers do a baseline assessment so they know where to start from with each child. From September 2016, as part of the policy to reform accountability in Primary Schools, the DfE have created the need for a summative Baseline assessment to be statutory in Reception classes. This will be used to establish a starting point to measure progress, inform accountability and provide a strong predictor of KS1 and KS2 attainment.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to ask your child's class teacher or contact Mrs Maskell who oversees assessment at Wessex.