

# Stepping Stones

Assessment without levels.



## Principles of Stepping Stones Assessment at the West Dartmoor Federation.

“Underpinning of effective assessment systems...”DfE April 2014

The principles of ‘Assessment without levels’ at Cranfield Church of England Academy are based upon extensive research of new systems, attendance at professional study groups, comparisons to other new systems used in local schools, professional conversations and national guidance from the DfE. Decisions on our new system of assessment have been made to ensure that the Cranfield Curriculum is assessed accurately, productively to aid teaching and learning and ensures judgements on attainment and progress. Our new assessment system is tailored in a ‘one size fits all’ approach – it is suitable and useful for professionals, parents and pupils!

### Underlying Principles of Assessment

Summary of Guidance & Research on Principles of Assessment.	The West Dartmoor Federation’s Approach and Responses
The system must show mastery of subject!	All judgements within the Stepping Stones assessment materials are based on a child’s <u>independent</u> and <u>embedded</u> use of each skill within Reading, Writing and Mathematics pathways.
The system must be a model of assessment of key objectives.	‘I Can’ statements for each year group are embedded in the stepping stones. Effective assessment will be embedded in the delivery of the new curriculum.
The system must monitor the progress of all groups of learners and provide information used by all leaders of learning to create next steps for pupils learning.	Analysis of assessment information will take place termly and will monitor all groups of learners in terms of both <u>attainment</u> and <u>progress</u> . Information gained will feed directly into whole school data analysis, key stage data analysis, class data analysis, groups of learners analysis and will be communicated through regular progress meetings. This will impact upon lesson planning, intervention and booster planning and the whole school development plan. Assessment and its analysis takes place within a continuous cycle.
The system allows access to the following year’s curriculum.	At the West Dartmoor Federation, when a child has gained a mastery of a given subject, the following year group’s curriculum targets are made available through <u>high quality first teaching</u> . These decisions will be demonstrated through the pathway above that which is ‘expected’ for their year group. These children will be considered as ‘exceeding plus’. Similarly, children who are not attaining at the ‘age related expectation’ will be provided with the appropriate pathway to aid their learning and ensure <u>individualised</u> next steps for each child.
Analysis of data must drive improvement.	Stepping Stones assessment provides both qualitative and quantitative assessment. Analysis of data is owned by all leaders of learning at the West Dartmoor Federation. An ongoing cycle of analysis of data ensures swift reaction to the needs of all individual pupils. Equally, whole school data analysis feeds into our yearly cycle of whole school improvement.

### Pupil Needs:

Summary of Guidance & Research on Principles of Assessment.	The West Dartmoor Federation's Approach and Responses
<p>Pupils need to know what they can already do, what they need to do next and how they will achieve this.</p>	<p>Our new assessment system is tailored in a 'one size fits all' approach – it is suitable and useful for professionals, parents and pupils! Pupils will access the relevant pathways and related resources (made in conjunction with the Cranfield Pathways only) and utilise these independently and with support to aid their learning. Children at Cranfield are given half-termly individualised targets which are taken directly from the child's current 'next steps' in their given pathway. Children access these in lessons, in the front of their books and look to 'tickle their target pink' regularly! Furthermore, the Pathways which the child is currently learning within are also sent home termly in the Home School Links!</p> <p>At Cranfield, children receive high quality and daily feedback to aid their next steps in learning. Feedback is both oral and written and aims to provide useful next steps. Please see our marking and feedback policy for more information.</p>

### Teacher Needs:

Summary of Guidance & Research on Principles of Assessment.	The West Dartmoor Federation's Approach and Responses
<p>Teachers must know the assessment system and be able to use it effectively.</p>	<p>Staff training will ensure that staff feel confident in using the assessment system. SLT monitoring of assessment and collaborative staff INSET sessions will similarly look to continuously scrutinise, develop and embed our new assessment system to the enhancement of teaching and learning.</p>
<p>Teachers must be able to effectively track each child's progress and attainment.</p>	<p>Staff training on the Stepping Stones assessment and the analysis data grids will allow highly effective tracking of progress and attainment, both for individuals and for all groups of learners. Effective use of the assessment system will allow staff and senior leaders to quickly identify current levels of attainment, progress made and progress to expected end of year targets. Stepping Stone Assessment grids will also highlight clearly a child's next steps.</p>
<p>Teachers must have the ability to quickly identify where pupils are not progressing as quickly as their peers, and also identify those who are exceeding expectations.</p>	<p>Stepping Stones Assessment is not merely a tool for summative assessment. High quality first teaching and rigorous assessment will support our teaching staff in identifying those children who are not making progress expected. On a senior level, analysis of data will include identifying individuals whose progress is limited for them as individuals. We aspire to provide the very best for all of our children. Similarly, our clear guidelines for the use of stepping stones allow staff to provide challenge, next steps and identify those children who are considered as exceeding expectations – detailed as achieving 20% and above of the Pathway above that which is considered as age-expected.</p>

### Parent Needs:

Summary of Guidance & Research on Principles of Assessment.	The West Dartmoor Federation's Approach and Responses
<p>Parents need to know what their child can already do, what they need to do next and how they will achieve this.</p>	<p>Our new assessment system is tailored in a 'one size fits all' approach – it is suitable and useful for professionals, parents and pupils. Parents will have access to the relevant pathways and related resources and can utilise these to support their understanding of their child's learning and their progress. Children at Cranfield are given half-termly individualised targets which are taken directly from the child's current 'next steps' in their given pathway and parents are encouraged to enquire about and access these. Information on these is shared at parent evenings in the Autumn and Spring term. The Pathways which the child is currently learning within are also sent home termly.</p>

	At the West Dartmoor Federation, children receive high quality and daily feedback to aid their next steps in learning. Feedback is both oral and written and aims to provide useful next steps. Please see our marking and feedback policy for more information.
Parents need to know their child's attainment related to age expected 'norms'.	The definitions of 'emerging', 'expected', 'exceeding' and 'exceeding plus' are defined clearly for Parents during workshops, parent consultations and in our end of year academic reports. At the West Dartmoor Federation, children's attainment for all core subjects and foundation subjects is reported.
Parents need to know progress against key objectives.	Our new assessment system is tailored in a 'one size fits all' approach – it is suitable and useful for professionals, parents and pupils! Parents will have access to the relevant pathways and related resources and can utilise these to support their understanding of their child's learning and their progress. The child's specific pathway, which is used to monitor assessment in core subjects, will be shared during Parent consultations allowing parents to see very clearly the progress against key objectives. A highlighting system, which uses orange for Autumn achievement, green for Spring achievement and yellow for Summer achievement demonstrates clearly how the child's learning journey within a pathway is progressing. In school, the total number of stepping stones achieved at given 'progress weeks' in the year. Appointments with parents will also make clear 'next steps'. We take great pride in ensuring our parents are very clear on a child's next steps.
Parents need simple, but effective reports which show attainment and progress.	How this is achieved is explained clearly above.
Parents require the opportunity to have training in the new assessment system the school adopts.	A parent workshop to explain the new West Dartmoor Federation system for assessment will support parents in their understanding of the new assessment system. Also, information provided on the Federation website will provide parents with the facility to access and understand these pathways.

### SLT Needs:

Summary of Guidance & Research on Principles of Assessment.	The West Dartmoor Federation's Approach and Responses
SLT need accurate and timely assessment which feeds into data tracking.	Analysis grids of the stepping stones material provides comprehensive information about both children's progress and attainment. The data generated simply provides this information for all groups of learners. Such information is converted into comprehensive and articulate feedback to staff – both written and verbal – to impact on our teaching, booster and intervention programmes.
SLT need to understand the importance of tracking all groups of learners.	See above. We strongly agree and take high precedence on ensuring we track all groups of learners – including those who are exceeding above expectations.
SLT need to be reassured that the system identifies those children who are making slower progress than the rest.	At the very earliest stages of our new assessment system, the Senior Leadership Team will explore regularly the progress being made by children to ascertain an understanding of what 'slower progress than the rest' may be in a quantifiable form. However, our precedence on 'High Quality First Teaching' aims to consistently ensure that all children make exceptional progress in our classrooms – we are very proud of this. In our regular progress meetings, staff INSET, Pupil Progress is a key point of discussion – staff will similarly be able to use their experience to identify children who are not progressing at the speed in which we may expect. Booster, intervention and in-class work will look to rectify this swiftly.
SLT need to be reassured that the system of assessment allows comparison with national standards and national benchmarks.	The principles of assessment detailed above have been developed through a commitment to ensuring children at the West Dartmoor Federation are provided with the very best. This research, discussion, debate and analysis as 'assessment without levels' develops will continue to be led by the Senior Leadership team with rigour and enthusiasm. In doing so, assessment comparisons of standards and benchmarks will be developed and scrutinised effectively.