



Hexham Middle School

Assessment and Reporting

2025-26

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Introduction

In 2014, a new national curriculum was published and new forms of statutory assessment were developed to align with its contents and principles. A number of key points emerged from this, not least that from September 2015 national curriculum levels were no longer used to assess attainment and schools were asked to design their own systems of assessment. At HMS, the approach that we have implemented assesses pupils holistically: taking into account a child's learning over time and using a wide range of assessment approaches to best reach a judgement on attainment and progress in relation to age-related curriculum expectations.

Fundamental values at Hexham Middle School

Our curriculum and assessment system aims to promote a strong security of learning. We also aim to enhance the development of literacy skills in every curriculum subject. Teachers and support staff all have a role in instilling the highest expectations for all pupils by promoting the development of reading, writing, spelling and communication. Fostering high expectations is a priority for all staff at Hexham Middle, and pupils are encouraged to develop resilience which allows them to approach learning with a systematic attitude leading to ongoing improvement. Our curriculum and assessment system also embeds a strong promotion of British Values as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities, underpinned by a desire to broaden our pupils' cultural learning experiences. Teachers' assessment judgements are informed continuously by their ongoing, day-to-day teaching and interaction with pupils. One test does not define a teacher's judgement of a pupil's learning; our system works on a holistic approach to assessment.

Supporting your child to fulfil their potential

We thank you for supporting your child in being organised for school with the equipment that they require for learning. We also appreciate the support you give your child with their home learning tasks and for encouraging a sense of pride and independence in learning activities. Homework is set by teachers to further promote pupil progress and should give you an insight into the curriculum content your child is covering and the standard they are working at and aiming for. There is an abundance of support and curriculum information available via our school's website which is updated regularly by curriculum leaders and class teachers.

Feedback

“Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on achievement.” (J Hattie)

At HMS, we ask that teachers: understand and use a wide range of feedback strategies; clarify and share learning objectives and success criteria with the pupils they teach; plan for feedback opportunities in every lesson; adhere to the school’s marking and feedback policy when marking pupils’ work and actively seek feedback from their pupils. In return, pupils are expected to: engage with the success criteria they are given; seek feedback from teachers and supporting staff; act on feedback they are given; understand that everyone can give and receive feedback and use it to seek improvement and further challenge their learning.

Our approach of Taking Learning Forward (TLF) is discussed at various points throughout this information booklet. A TLF action will be added to a pupil’s work or assessment to indicate a specific task the pupil should complete to move their learning forward. Teachers may also use a coding system to indicate where a pupil needs to make corrections to spelling, punctuation and grammar and, where possible, pupils will be expected to self-regulate their improvements using resources such as dictionaries. Teachers will refer to the ‘non-negotiables’ of Hexham Middle – a bank of six rules that all pupils must adhere to in their learning. Details of the non-negotiables can be found in pupil planners and in the front of all exercise books.

Formative Assessment

At Hexham Middle School, we firmly believe in the importance of ongoing, day-to-day teacher assessment in the classroom; this formative assessment shapes pupils’ learning. It is this continuous assessment that really impacts on pupil achievement and progress. Teachers will use low-stakes quizzes, questioning, marking and feedback (among other strategies) to understand how pupils are progressing and to determine how best to move their learning further forward. Pupils themselves play a key role in formative assessment and are actively encouraged to reflect on their progress as to ensure they understand how they can move forward. Pupils will understand the intention of lessons and what success looks like so that they can achieve their full potential.

How does the assessment system work?

- We aim for high quality teaching and learning with effective assessment at its core. We use a range of assessment types including: summative, formative and national standardised.
- Twice throughout the school year pupils are assessed in all subjects as either: Foundations, Working Towards, Expected Standard or Greater Depth (FO, WT, EX, GD).
- Each overall grade is further broken down into three fine-grades: 3, 2, 1.
- For example: ‘GD3’ would indicate that a pupil has just moved into the ‘greater depth’ grade, ‘GD2’ would indicate that a pupil is firmly within the depth grade.
- At each assessment point, teachers judge whether a pupil’s rate of progress is rapid and sustained, good or requiring improvement (more detail below). This allows parents and pupils to reflect on how the child has developed in a particular subject from their starting point. Teachers will also indicate the ‘quality of work’ and ‘attitude to learning’.

The tables below give more detail to explain the meaning of each definition used in our assessment system.

Overall assessment definitions	
Greater Depth (GD)	The pupil is showing greater depth in their learning. They have mastered the age-related expectations and consistently demonstrate the learning qualities of this grade. They can make links across the curriculum and show proficiency, independence and depth in their learning.
Expected Standard (EX)	The pupil has demonstrated a secure understanding of the age-related expectations and consistently demonstrates the learning qualities of this grade. They can work independently and have shown age-appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding of the curriculum objectives covered.
Working Towards (WT)	The pupil has demonstrated that they are secure in a growing number of the age-related expectations and consistently demonstrates the learning qualities of this grade. The pupil is not yet secure in the age-related content, but their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing .
Foundations (FO)	The pupil is not yet secure in the age-related expectations. The pupil is working on curriculum content from below their chronological age range. Parents will be regularly updated on the progress and support for their child. The pupil is beginning to secure some of the age-related expectations from the curriculum content.

Fine grade definitions	
1	The pupil is firmly within the assessment grade and is demonstrating some of the knowledge and skills to progress to the next grade. All of their work can be assessed as this grade.
2	The pupil is firmly within the assessment grade. Most of their work can be assessed as this grade.
3	The pupil has moved into the assessment grade. Some of their work can be assessed as this grade.

Teachers will also report on how a pupil is progressing from their starting point and on what their attitude to learning is like in the classroom. Details of both can be found below.

Rate of Progress

1	Progress has been rapid and sustained over time. The pupil is progressing at a higher than predicted rate and it is anticipated they will achieve or exceed their target.
2	Progress over time is good. The pupil is progressing at the predicted rate from their starting point.
3	Progress requires improvement. The pupil is progressing at a slower than predicted rate from their starting point.

Attitude to Learning

1	Pupil has a consistently outstanding attitude and approach to learning.
2	Pupil has a good attitude and approach to learning.
3	Pupil has an inconsistent attitude and approach to learning which requires improvement.
4	Generally, the pupil does not demonstrate a positive attitude or approach to learning.

Quality of work

1	All work/ learning is completed to a very high standard.
2	All work/ learning is completed to a good standard.
3	The quality of work/ learning has been inconsistent.
4	The quality of work/ learning has been a concern.

How do we set targets for our pupils?

- At Hexham Middle, pupils are set a target for reading, writing, mathematics and all other subjects.
- Pupils are set aspirational targets to promote rapid progress over time.
- The minimum target set for a pupil is 'EX3' i.e. that all pupils should at least have moved into the Expected Standard. Pupils with additional learning needs will be supported in school to ensure they can make sustained progress over time. Targets may be established differently based on a pupil's individual needs.
- The minimum expectation for all pupils at Hexham Middle is that they will reach 'expected standard' in the age-related curriculum expectations by the end of the academic year. Some pupils will demonstrate a proficiency in particular subjects and they will be set an end of year target of 'greater depth'.
- In Key Stage 2 (years 5 and 6), pupil targets are based on data from first schools, as well as baseline data collected in September of year 5.
- In Key Stage 3 (years 7 and 8), pupil targets are based on outcomes at Key Stage 2.

Setting targets for our Year 6 pupils

- In year 6, we use the national scaled score system (more information below) to track the progress of individuals and groups.
- We have taken the decision to mirror the national system in the hope that we are enabling parents to understand the progress their child is making towards national expectations and to interpret the end of key stage results which will be reported in the same format.
- Pupils in year 6 are set a target for reading, writing, mathematics and all other subjects just like the other year groups. These targets are established based on in-house data gathered, as well as data transferred from First Schools.
- Throughout year 6, pupils will be assessed regularly in English and maths. Scores from these assessments are converted to a scaled score. A scaled score of 100 or more indicates a child has reached the expected standard; a score of 110 or more indicates a child is working at greater depth.
- In writing, teachers will assess pupils through closely moderating independent written work gathered over the course of the year. Pupils will be assessed as either: working towards expected standard (WTS), expected standard (EXS) or greater depth within the expected standard (GDS).

How do pupils find out how they're progressing?

- Teachers continually assess pupils in lessons through ongoing formative assessment.
- Teachers set assessments at key points throughout the year – these may be standardised tests or written/spoken assessments in class.
- When teachers assess pupils' work, assessments will be marked against given age-related criteria (end points) and pupils will be aware of the success criteria they are working towards achieving.
- Pupils will be set a specific 'TLF' (Taking Learning Forward) task to action in accordance with the school's marking policy.
- Teachers assess pupils' work throughout lessons using a number of strategies including deep questioning, short topic reviews and by marking written outcomes once completed. Ongoing teacher assessments inform teachers' planning and pupils receive 'TLF' actions throughout lessons to inform them of the next steps in their learning.

When do we assess pupils?

- Teachers in every subject area, across Key Stages 2 and 3, will enter summative assessment data twice a year (January and June); pupil progress will be closely monitored throughout the year.
- Teachers in Year 6 English (reading, EGPS, writing) and maths will assess pupils every half term and closely track the progress of individuals and groups.
- In Year 5, pupils will sit baseline assessments on entry to the school to establish their current level in English and mathematics, allowing us to challenge and support our pupils as necessary. They will sit termly English and maths assessments as well as end of year assessments to establish their progress and attainment before moving into year 6.
- Ongoing formative teacher assessment takes place throughout every lesson, with calendared assessment points planned in advance. The use of high-quality, standardised assessment materials allows teachers to moderate judgements (in cross-department teams) and move learning forward effectively.
- Teachers will assess pupils against their end of year target. Parents will be provided with updates through the tracking pages in the pupil planners.

How do parents find out about their child's progress?

- Pupils will record outcomes from their assessments on the yellow assessment pages in their planners. They may also bring assessments or class books home.
- Parents will receive an update of pupil progress, attainment and attitude twice a year (February and July).
- The report will detail a child's attainment (their current grade in each subject) and from this we will indicate the rate of progress your child is making from their own starting point.
- Parents will receive an end of year written report including end of year outcomes and detailed comments from class teachers.
- Parents will be invited to attend Parents' Evenings (one per year group throughout the academic year).
- We encourage pupils to bring their class work home regularly so that parents can see work their children are completing on a day-to-day basis and use this to support home learning.
- If you are concerned or have any questions about your child's progress, contact your child's class teacher via the planner or school correspondence email in the first instance. If necessary, you can also contact the relevant Curriculum Leader to discuss matters further.

How do we assess learning in each subject?

In conjunction with ongoing teacher assessment in the classroom, teachers in every subject schedule regular assessments which lead to judgements on a child's attainment and progress being reached. These judgements are then moderated, both by teachers in school and with colleagues from other schools, so that our assessment system is validated and robust. At Hexham Middle, we have a calendar of moderation where teachers discuss the progress of pupils and compare their work to reach an assessment judgement. Pupils in all year groups will complete standardised assessments in English, maths and science throughout the school year.

The table on the following pages provides more detailed information as to how we assess our pupils at HMS in all curriculum subjects.

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW</u>
MATHS	KS3 • Pupils complete a topic test after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Assessments include opportunities to revisit prior learning to develop memory and retention. • Every term (in line with the data calendar), pupils in KS3 complete standardised assessments. • Pupils in KS3 complete arithmetic assessments monthly to further promote their fluency skills. • Pupils complete review to remember session monthly to revisit prior learning and develop memory and retention. KS2 • Pupils complete arithmetic tests in class fortnightly to further promote rapid recall and fluency. • Pupils complete topic assessments in class to identify strengths, areas of improvement and next steps of learning. • Pupils complete fortnightly review to remember sessions to revisit prior learning and develop memory and retention. • Pupils complete summative assessments every half term (year 6) and termly (year 5) and the outcomes are closely tracked against their individual targets. • Teachers will use age-related tracking grids and as their own record to identify gaps in knowledge which will be bridged through rapid teacher intervention.

ENGLISH <i>(one grade for reading, one for writing and one for EGPS in KS2 only)</i>	KS3 • Pupils complete assessed written tasks twice per half-term; assessed using age-related expectations and criteria. • Reading comprehension is assessed through verbal and extended written responses regularly in exercise books, based on texts being studied in class. • Standardised reading tests twice per year. • EGPS assessments regularly inform of progress building upon KS2. This focuses on the retention of key vocabulary. • Regular multi-choice quizzes test topic-based retention. • Weekly spelling tests based on subject-specific vocabulary. KS2 • Pupils complete a weekly spelling test to further develop their knowledge of the statutory words list and high-frequency vocabulary including spelling rules (building on phonics learning from KS1). • Pupils complete regular reading comprehensions and EGPS assessments in class and at home as test practice. • Pupils complete summative assessments every term in year 5 and half term in year 6. • Teachers will use writing tracking grids in books as their own record to identify progress and also gaps in knowledge
SCIENCE	KS3 • Pupils complete topic tests after each topic; pupils are given their score and a grade. • Pupils have opportunities to complete complex exam style questions several times per term • Pupils' working scientifically knowledge is assessed through well-planned investigations and scientific write ups. • For each of these types of summative assessment, pupils are able to act on feedback given and take their learning forward by completing a 'TLF' task which will seek to address gaps in knowledge or deepening learning. KS2 • Pupils complete topic tests after each topic; pupils are given their score and a grade. • Pupils' working scientifically knowledge is assessed through well-planned investigations and scientific write ups. • For both of these types of summative assessment, pupils are able to act on feedback given and take their learning forward by completing a 'TLF' task which will seek to address gaps in knowledge or deepening learning.

HISTORY	KS3 • Pupils have opportunities to complete complex questions throughout the topic which will be self, peer or teacher assessed with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework to be set per topic which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete a written assessment after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning. • Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner. KS2 • Pupils have opportunities to explore deep learning questions throughout the topic which will be self, peer or teacher assessed with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework will be set per topic which is marked against success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete a written assessment after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning. • Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner.
GEOGRAPHY	KS3 • Pupils have opportunities to complete complex questions throughout the topic which will be self, peer or teacher assessed with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework to be set per topic which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete a written assessment after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning. • Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner. KS2 • Pupils have opportunities to explore deep learning questions throughout the topic which will be self, peer or teacher assessed with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework will be set per topic which is marked against success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete a written assessment after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning.

	Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner.
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COMPUTING	KS2 and KS3 - Pupils complete topics with ongoing self and peer assessment throughout; this is recorded online via Google Classroom where instruction and feedback are given. - Teachers assess learning and skills throughout the topic with grades awarded through observation and online marking/ feedback provision. - Low-stakes quizzing continues throughout learning to develop memory and retention. - Age-related success criteria are used for each topic and 'TLF' tasks set from this.
RE	KS2 and KS3 - Pupils have opportunities to explore deep learning questions throughout the topic which will be self, peer or teacher assessed with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. - One piece of homework to be set per topic which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. - Pupils complete a written assessment after every unit of learning or every six weeks; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY	KS3 • Pupils in KS3 evaluate each dish they cook against the success criteria; this is good evidence of the progress they are making in practical lessons. • Pupils complete end of topic review questions/assessments towards the end of each term. • Checklists used and TLF tasks are set in books. Assessment grades are given for written and practical work. They are assessed on hygiene, safety, independence, planning, cookery skills and presentation. Written feedback and assessment grades are given.
	KS2 • Pupils in KS2 evaluate each dish they cook against the success criteria; this is good evidence of the progress they are making in practical lessons. • Pupils complete end of topic review questions/assessments towards the end of each term. • Checklists used and TLF tasks are set in books. Assessment grades are given for written and practical work. They are assessed on hygiene, safety, independence, planning, cookery skills and presentation. Written feedback and assessment grades are given.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY	KS2/3: • Benchmarking booklets used throughout the rotation to build up skills and knowledge. • Regular knowledge quizzing takes place to identify strengths and areas to further develop – this support pupils to remember more. • Year 5 complete a separate assessment during their first lesson which tests design skills, analysis and evaluation skills. These are then built on throughout the teaching. • Pupils’ attainment and progress is assessed based on their practical and evaluative work throughout topics.
ART	KS2/3: • Pupils’ development will be tracked through observations, teacher dialogue and peer/self-assessment opportunities throughout a unit of learning. • Pupils are given feedback throughout a unit to progress towards the final piece. • Teachers assess pupils based on age-related success criteria; pupils’ final pieces are assessed as well as their work in sketch books and work in developing towards their final pieces. • A moderation sample is taken from each year group in conjunction with the Curriculum Leader. • Low-stake quizzes are incorporated throughout topics to develop memory and retention.
MUSIC	KS2/3: • Pupils complete an ongoing learning log of activities to track their development of key skills and understanding. • Pupils plan and perform pieces of music (in groups or individually) which are assessed against an age-related criteria. • Pupils learn to evaluate music and learn to appreciate influential pieces of music and the work of musicians to support their own learning and these skills are assessed using a mix of peer, self and teacher assessment.

PE	KS3: • Pupils will complete ongoing peer and self-assessment throughout each assessment throughout each unit of work. • Teachers will complete a formative assessment on individual skills. • Pupils will be assessed on their decision making and physical skills in game situations. • Pupils' progress will be tracked and moderated throughout KS3. • Teachers will assess pupils at the end of each unit to set targets to inform improvements for future performance. KS2 • Year 5 pupils are benchmarked using observations of their fundamental motor skills and using formative assessment while playing generic invasion games. • Pupils will be self, peer or teacher assessed on their physical and technical competence, decision making and social skills across a variety of sporting activities. • Pupils and teachers may use ICT technology to record and analyse performance, to moderate and to set targets to inform improvements for future performance.
FRENCH and SPANISH	KS3 • Pupils will be self, peer or teacher assessed on their reading, written, verbal and listening skills throughout the topic with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • Two pieces of homework to be set per half-term which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. This is in addition to regular spelling homework and testing. • Pupils complete an assessment after every unit of learning which will incorporate at least two of the above mentioned language skills; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning. • Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner. Pupils will be self, peer or teacher assessed on their written, verbal and listening skills throughout the topic with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework to be set per topic which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete a written, verbal and listening assessment after every unit of learning; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an overall grade for the unit of learning. • Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner.

	KS2 • Pupils will be self, peer or teacher assessed on their reading, written, verbal and listening skills throughout the topic with 'TLF' actions being set where applicable. • One piece of homework to be set per topic which is marked against the success criteria using age-related expectations. • Pupils complete an assessment after every unit of learning which will incorporate at least two of the above mentioned language skills; teachers use age-related tracking sheets and set a 'TLF' action from this. Pupils receive an assessment grade for the unit of learning. Individual targets and scores from written assessments are communicated in the child's planner.
DRAMA	KS3 • Pupils in year 7 and 8 follow the same assessment structure as below, however, year 8 is set at a higher level. • Pupils are assessed in the following areas in their drama lessons: Team working skills, performance skills, peer and self-evaluation, and evaluating live theatre. • Teachers continually assess each lesson and provide ongoing verbal feedback and encouragement, but formal assessment takes place termly as follows; At the end of each term, pupils are set homework to revise the theory, then complete a knowledge quiz, short performances in groups, peer /self-evaluation. • Pupils complete a different focus each term, beginning with Devising which encourages team working skill development and exploring response to various stimuli and basic performance skills. • Pupils' second focus is exploring Scripts, examining key features and performing various extracts in groups. Pupils' final term is based around technical theatre and watching and evaluating Live Theatre. This involves practical workshops based on lighting, set and costume design, as well as watching live theatre (online) and evaluating key moments in the production.