

# Primary Assessment Policy

## Introduction

This policy has been drawn up in the context of the new national curriculum in England, due for implementation in September 2014<sup>1</sup>, the government's consultation document *Primary assessment and accountability under the new national curriculum*<sup>2</sup>, its final report *Reforming assessment and accountability for primary schools*<sup>3</sup>, and the report of the NAHT Commission on Assessment<sup>4</sup>. It outlines Collins Learning's assessment principles, and explores how they are manifested in our flagship new curriculum programmes. It is a policy in development – we will continue to update it based on evolving government requirements for assessment and sector-driven best practice. Our new curriculum programmes will consequently evolve, and changes will be clearly communicated.

## New assessment procedures

The government outlined in the aforementioned consultation and response documents its intentions regarding the future of assessment in primary schools. The headlines are:

- National curriculum Levels will be removed and not replaced
- The new national curriculum programmes of study set out what pupils should be taught by the end of each key stage. Schools should design their own curriculum based on these parameters
- It will be up to schools to decide how they track pupils' progress and provide information to parents. There will be no prescribed system for ongoing assessment and reporting
- Detailed performance descriptors will be made available to inform teacher assessment at the end of key stages 1 and 2. These will be directly linked to the content of the new curriculum
- Statutory national curriculum tests at key stages 1 and 2 will continue. The first tests based on the new national curriculum will take place in summer 2016
- The new national curriculum tests will be more demanding, with a more ambitious expected standard and will report a scaled score at the end of key stages
- A new floor standard will be introduced, which will be based on the progress made by pupils from reception to the end of primary schools. This will be underpinned by a new reception baseline assessment. Schools will fall below the floor if pupils make poor progress and fewer than 85% of children achieve the new expected standard.

1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-national-curriculum-primary-assessment-and-accountability>

3 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-national-curriculum-primary-assessment-and-accountability>

4 <https://www.naht.org.uk/assets/assessment-commission-report.pdf>

At present, our assessment policy is primarily concerned with ongoing, formative assessment – our assessment tools check children’s understanding of the attainments targets taught within our programmes. As government requirements for summative assessment become clearer and the arrangements for statutory, end of key stage assessments unfold, we guarantee that our assessment protocols will dovetail seamlessly with statutory assessment structures.

## Timeline for change

2014

EYFS: Profile completed  
Year 1: Phonics screening check  
Year 2: SATs and Levels – current curriculum  
Year 6: SATs and Levels, GPaS test

2015

Reception baseline test taken from approved list  
Year 1: Phonics screening check  
Year 2: SATs and Levels – current curriculum  
Year 6: SATs and Levels, GPaS test

2016

Reception baseline test taken from approved list  
Year 1: Phonics screening check  
Year 2: NEW English & Maths SATs and performance indicators  
Year 6: NEW English & Maths SATs and scaled scores. NEW national sampling for Science

# Statutory assessment arrangements

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## End of EYFS assessment

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child at the end of Reception, based on cumulative evidence recorded throughout the year. Children are assessed against the early learning goals and recorded at 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' level.

**WHAT'S CHANGING?** Government will be examining the various baseline tests in existence and will produce a recommended list. Schools can use one of the tests from September 2015. Schools which choose not to use the reception baseline test from 2016 will be judged on attainment floor standards alone.

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## Year 1 phonics screening check

The phonics screening check is a statutory assessment for all Year 1 pupils in maintained schools, academies and free schools to confirm whether children have learned phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. Children are asked to decode 40 words under 1-1 test conditions with a teacher or teaching assistant. The word list contains a combination of real and 'nonsense' words, the latter being included to ensure that children are using phonic skills to decode words and not recognising words by sight. To pass, children must score at least 32 out of 40. Children who fail the test in Year 1 are required to retake it in Year 2.

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## End of KS1 assessment

Teacher assessment is the main focus for end of key stage 1 assessment and reporting. It is carried out as part of teaching and learning. The statutory national curriculum tasks and tests are administered to all eligible children who are working at Level 1 or above in reading, writing and mathematics to help inform the final teacher assessment judgement reported for each child at the end of key stage 1. Teachers determine Levels for reading, writing, and speaking and listening, an overall subject Level for mathematics; and a Level for each attainment target in science.

**WHAT'S CHANGING?** At the end of key stage 1, teacher assessment in mathematics and reading will be informed by externally-set, internally-marked tests. There will also be an externally-set test in grammar, punctuation and spelling which will help to inform the teacher assessment of writing. The tests will be updated to reflect the new national curriculum and will be expressed as a scaled score, with the new assessments first taking place in summer 2016. Teacher assessment of speaking and listening and science will continue.

In autumn 2014, new performance descriptors will be introduced to inform statutory teacher assessments at the end of key stage 1. For mathematics, reading, writing and speaking and listening, teachers will assess pupils as meeting one of several performance descriptors. For science, there will be a single performance descriptor of the new expected standard. These will be linked to the content of the new curriculum.

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## End of KS2 assessment

The national curriculum tests are designed to assess children's knowledge and understanding of specific elements of the key stage 2 programmes of study. They provide a snapshot of a child's attainment at the end of the key stage. Schools administer Level 3-5 tests in English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics. Schools can also administer Level 6 tests in English reading, English grammar and punctuation, and maths. At the end of key stage 2, teachers determine a Level for each attainment target in English, mathematics and science; an overall teacher assessment Level in each of these subjects.

Sample tests in science are used to provide national monitoring of standards. They take place every two years and involve a small number of pupils, with no individual pupil or school science attainment data being reported.

**WHAT'S CHANGING?** At the end of key stage 2, pupils will continue to sit externally-set and marked tests in mathematics, reading, and grammar, punctuation and spelling. These will be used for school performance measures from 2016 onwards. There will continue to be teacher assessment in mathematics, reading, writing and science to give a broader picture of children's attainment. In common with key stage 1, the tests and assessments will reflect the content of the new curriculum.

New performance descriptors will be introduced to inform the statutory teacher assessments at the end of key stage 2. For writing, teachers will assess pupils as meeting one of several performance descriptors. For science, reading and mathematics, there will be a single performance descriptor of the new expected standard. A sample of pupils will continue to sit tests in science to give a picture of national performance.

The results of the tests in reading, mathematics, and grammar, punctuation and spelling will be reported to pupils and parents as scaled scores. Parents will be provided with their child's score alongside the average for their school, the local area and nationally.

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## What do Collins think about assessment?

Assessment serves three distinct purposes:

- To assess what children already know about a given subject (diagnostic)
- To improve learning for every child (formative)
- To report on every child's learning in terms of progress and attainment at the end of a fixed period of time (summative)

Good assessment influences teaching and learning: the processes of teaching, learning and assessing are intimately linked. They represent an ongoing cycle in which the day-to-day assessing of children's understanding supports teachers to make informed decisions about where to focus teaching and how to pitch activities to ensure the biggest impact on children's learning. Ongoing and continual formative assessment is therefore essential, so teachers can plan, teach and encourage children to take an appropriate level of challenge in every lesson effectively. This enables every child to achieve and be challenged. The removal of level descriptors means the relationship between the knowledge and skills that children are taught and those that are assessed will be much stronger. Assessment should therefore be fully integrated with the school's curriculum.

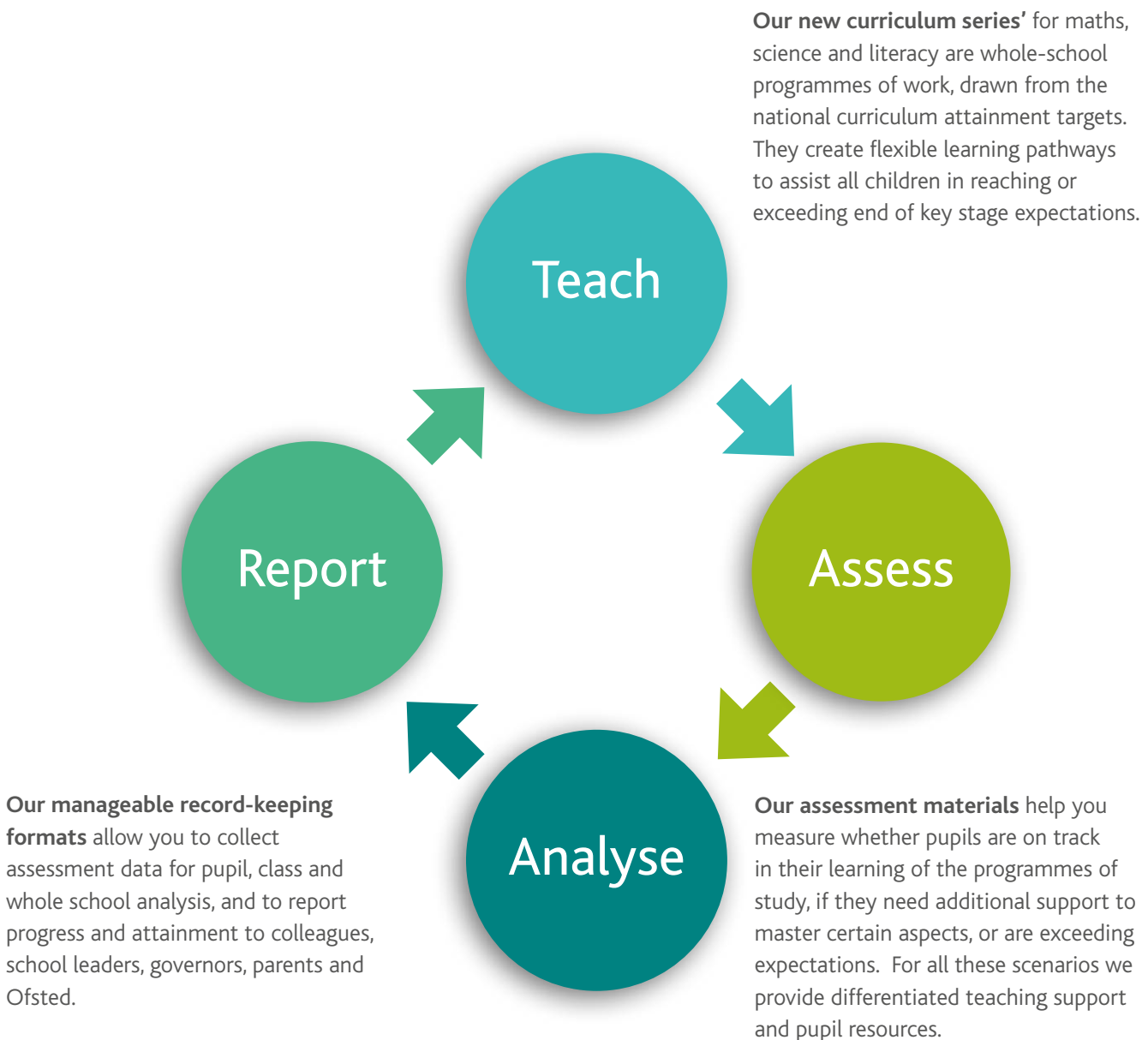
The measure of a child's attainment is their mastery of the programme of study. With an ambition for all children to master the programme of study, assessment should not

just take place at the end of a topic, but be ongoing to support intervention where needed and to help all children achieve mastery. In taking account of how different children learn, and engaging them in the assessment process, it is possible to create a learning pathway for every child that is motivational, and allows them to reach their potential.

The best means of making a rich qualitative judgement of a child's mastery of concepts, knowledge and skills is through an informed judgement by the child's teacher, who has observed their work over a period of time. Teachers must therefore be supported to make confident, accurate and rigorous summative assessment judgements. What a child says, does, draws or writes can all be used as indicators of their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Discrete assessment tasks should be used as a means of supporting, not replacing, teachers in making final summative assessment judgements. These judgements can then be shared confidently with pupils, parents, school leaders and governors, and Ofsted.

## Collins Primary assessment cycle:



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## Our assessment principles

### Collins Primary Assessment...

1. **Is at the heart and from the start** – providing a learning and progress journey for every child and ensuring that no child is left behind.
2. **Provides rigour and structure** – we assess the attainment targets in the programme of study via a range of materials, giving assessment support whenever you want it. You can follow our guidelines on the optimum frequency of assessment, or create an assessment pathway to suit your school's needs.
3. **Supports your judgement** – we provide a framework to track, analyse, evaluate and report, capturing the data to support your qualitative assessment overview of each child.
4. **Is easy to use and understand** – providing reporting formats that can be easily shared with pupils and parents, colleagues, SMT, governors and Ofsted.

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## Assessment by programme

All of our primary publishing is based on these core principles, with logical differences in execution, based on best practice and/or requirements for the core subjects. Subject and programme specific guidelines are given in the following pages.

## Busy Ant Maths

### Diagnostic assessment

**The Attainment Target Tasks** from the Busy Ant Maths Assessment Guide assist teachers in determining pupils' readiness for a particular unit of work. They are designed to yield information that will directly support and inform the teaching of individual pupils and whole-class teaching.

### Formative assessment

1. Short-term 'on-going' assessment

**Progress Check Questions** are an important feature of every Busy Ant Maths lesson and are linked to specific learning objectives. They are designed to provide immediate feedback to teachers and to gauge pupil progress in order to adapt teaching.

**Shared Success Criteria** are also provided in each lesson to assist pupils in identifying the steps required to achieve the learning objective.

**Pupil targets** are useful objectives for pupil self-assessment.

2. Medium-term 'formative' assessment

**The Attainment Target Tasks, Attainment Target Tests** and **End-of-unit Tests** from the Busy Ant Maths Assessment Guide can be used to review and record the progress of both individual pupils and the class as a whole, in relation to the National Curriculum Attainment Targets. The formative Attainment Target Tasks and Tests provide individual and/or group opportunities to identify those pupils who are not yet reaching, or who are exceeding, national expectations. They can also be used to set individual targets for pupils.

### Summative assessment

1. **End-of-unit Tests**
2. **The End of Year Class Evaluation document** shows individual pupils' attainment against national standards.

It draws upon the data gathered throughout the year including results from Attainment Target Tasks and Tests, End-of-unit Tests, performance in whole-class discussions, participation in group work, written evidence and any other supplementary notes. It is this document that forms the basis for reporting to parents and the next year's teacher. Importantly, it also helps to determine whether pupils are on track to meet expectations at the end of the key stage.



## Treasure House

Treasure House is based on the attainment targets of the programme of study for English. Both formative and summative assessment of those targets is embedded throughout Treasure House.

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### Formative assessment

Each unit in Treasure House covers a specific attainment target of the national curriculum, with a set of questions to assess mastery of that target.

The learning objective, against which the assessment takes place, is clearly stated at the beginning of and throughout each unit. After the learning objective is introduced, automarked questions provide children instant feedback so that they can assess their own progress, and allow teachers to embed assessment within the everyday teaching and learning process.

After the automarked questions, each unit then moves on to teacher-marked questions, with guidelines for teachers to assess against the curriculum objectives.

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### Summative assessment

At the end of a unit of teaching, each pupil will be classed as developing, meeting, or exceeding mastery. Treasure House includes an at-a-glance grid, so that the teacher will at any time be able to see each child's performance against each of the national curriculum attainment targets, as well as cumulative performance for each of comprehension, composition, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling strands. Teachers will be able to look at this grid at any time to plan their next steps; it can inform reporting to parents, secondary schools, and Ofsted. So, for example, a teacher will be able to see that a pupil is meeting on the suffix -ous, meeting on the patterns -gue and -que, exceeding on the suffix -ly, and that overall for spelling they are meeting expectations.



# Big Cat



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## Diagnostic assessment

Every Collins Big Cat book is banded into one of 18 book bands, so that the right book can be given to the right child. A child should be reading with 90-95% accuracy (5-10% miscue) in a guided/supported reading context to make good progress at an instructional reading level. If the miscue is more than 10% they are likely to be reading at too high a reading band. If a child reads fluently, with good comprehension, he or she can move up to the next band. Book Bands for Guided Reading (Reading Recovery UK) is the latest established guide to readability grading. The grading used within Collins Big Cat refers to Book Bands.

The Getting started feature in every Collins Big Cat book allows the teacher to check whether the level of the language (including familiarity with relevant phonemes) and subject is appropriate, before reading takes place.

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## Formative assessment

Collins Big Cat books allow formative assessment of decoding, comprehension, speaking and listening, by reading with an adult. The huge variety of plots, subject matters, illustrations, and characters allow ample opportunity for discussion and questioning.

Assessment of a child's reading begins with observations of their response to books, their knowledge of phonics, sentence structure and punctuation and their enthusiasm and interest in reading.

Before working with a book in a guided reading session, it is important to identify which learning opportunities are offered by it, and what you will be looking for in children's reading and response to the book. Collins Big Cat books have learning objectives and ideas for guided reading provided at the back of every book in the Ideas for guided reading section. When using the books with a guided reading group, you can refer to this to help you assess, for example, children's use of phonic strategies, and their understanding of the author's meaning.

Although assessment should be continuous, only significant strengths and weaknesses need to be noted for each child, related to what is being taught. Many weaknesses can be corrected immediately by good intervention from teachers.

Used systematically and analytically, Collins Big Cat assessment stimulates reading progress by focusing planning on the significant weaknesses of individual children and/or groups. Identified weaknesses can be rectified between guided reading sessions by one-to-one intervention from teachers, teaching assistants, or by homework and parental help. Intervention is essential to the assessment process. It increases children's reading confidence, and accelerates learning in the time available for guided reading.

Every Collins Big Cat book, fiction and non-fiction, includes a unique Reading Response activity at the end, for example a story map, a flow chart, a storyboard, a game or a poster. This has been designed to elicit and encourage the child's response to, and recall understanding of, what he or she has read. These pages offer an ideal opportunity to monitor children's understanding of the book just read.

At the back of every book, the Ideas for Reading section contains a series of prompts that allow the adult to assess effectively. Learning objectives are listed, with imaginative ideas about how to assess against those learning objectives. The Returning to the Book section is a means for further assessment via drama, discussion, written tasks, which can be used in the context of a lesson or guided reading sessions, or one-to-one reading.

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## Summative assessment

The checking and moving on section in every book is an extension task, which the teacher can use to assess whether the child has understood the book securely enough to use as a basis for creative work.

# Song of Sounds



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## Diagnostic assessment

Regular diagnostic assessment is a key feature of the programme and helps not only to monitor children's progress but also to identify key areas for revision. Children are diagnostically assessed on entering school, then at specific points throughout the programme (roughly halfway through each term, depending on individual schools' holiday schedules); these more formal assessments should be carried out on a one-to-one basis by a teacher or teaching assistant. The findings of these assessments help teachers to plan carefully to meet class needs and also identify any children who need further support or extension work.

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## Formative assessment

Formative assessment ideas are presented in each weekly session guide, mostly through small group observation during games and activities. Through using both diagnostic and formative assessment and having the opportunity to work with every child in a small group every week, the teacher has an accurate understanding of each child's achievements and needs.

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## Summative assessment

Song of sounds prepares children for the Year 1 phonics screening check by immersing them in decoding from their very first week in Reception class. Strong decoding and blending skills enable application to any word – real or nonsense, therefore preparing children for all reading, including the check.



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### Diagnostic assessment

Every Snap Science lesson begins with an Explore activity to enable children and their teacher to assess prior understanding and identify which level of differentiated challenge each child should take during the lesson.

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### Formative assessment

Every Snap Science lesson has a Learning intention which all children are expected to achieve or exceed, with Success criteria to exemplify what success will look like.

The Enquire part of the lesson includes a choice of three challenges which ensure all children can work appropriately towards achieving the learning intention. Differentiation in the challenges is based on a model of progression in science learning which supports children to become more independent and autonomous, systematic, precise and evaluative, and to increasingly use their scientific knowledge in their explanations.

The final stage of each lesson is a Reflect and review activity where children summarise what they have learned and use the Success criteria to assess their achievement and identify next steps.

Teachers are then supported to identify Evidence of learning in everything that children do, say, write and draw during the lesson. This enables them to regularly review progress and tailor their teaching to the needs of each child. It also helps them to collect supporting evidence of a child's learning.

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### Summative assessment

At identified points during a Snap Science module, or at the end of the module, teachers are prompted to review any observation notes on a child, their written work, their self-assessment judgements, and their answers to any additional activities. Guidance is then provided to support them to judge whether a child is working towards, has achieved, or has achieved and exceeded the expected outcomes for that part of the programme of study.

A clear matrix is provided to highlight which parts of the Snap Science programme provide suitable opportunities to assess every objective, working scientifically skill and scientific enquiry type from the national curriculum.

Discrete science assessment tasks, based on the questions used in the SAT papers, are included for each module. These can be used as an additional tool by the teacher to support their judgement-making. The assessment tasks have been developed according to the classification in Bloom's Taxonomy.