



Assessment Policy

Date Reviewed:	July 2026
Reviewed by:	Education & Standards
Ratified by:	Executive Team
Next Review:	As required

The review date is a guide and the policy remains in place until such time as it has been reviewed or superseded by updated relevant statutory guidance.

Linked documents

1. Quality of Education Strategy

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on the approach to summative assessment and reporting for schools within the Children First Academy Trust (CFAT)
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to the DCEO and Trustees.

2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment. This policy refers to the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels. It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

3. Principles of assessment

This policy supports the CFAT's ethos of working collaboratively but not identically by establishing a core set of assessments to be reported to the DCEO three times per year, whilst allowing flexibility in how schools come to these assessments.

This policy is for the recording and reporting of summative assessments. Formative Assessment practices are carried out entirely in line with the pedagogical approach of each school. In utilising a common approach to recording assessments, the Trust is mindful of its commitment to not add unnecessarily to teacher workload.

Summative assessment is to describe pupil attainment and comparatively evaluate the performance of individual pupils and pupil groups both within individual schools and across the trust. Such evaluations will be used to allocate resources effectively.

Assessments will be robust and thorough and allow the identification of pivotal pupils within schools to ensure no pupil is coasting through their learning journey. As a Trust, we will be aspirational for all of our children.

4. Assessment approaches

CFAT views assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment:

1. day-to-day in-school formative assessment
2. in-school summative assessment
3. nationally standardised summative assessment.

Children First schools support the principles that any assessment data produced must serve a purpose and impact on pupils' learning, and that data should be collected once and used in multiple ways to avoid unnecessary workload for staff.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- Teachers to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- Pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- Teachers to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching
- Parents stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Assessments will take two interlinked forms:

Teacher assessment will utilise internal assessment processes, which will vary between schools, to judge where a pupil is attaining in their classwork in relation to what might be expected of a pupil at that point in their school journey.

Standardised testing will use commercially produced and nationally standardised tests in reading and maths in order to compare the attainment of our pupils with those nationally as well as to promote alignment of teacher judgements across and within the different schools of the trust.

All schools in Children First complete Testbase reading and maths papers in Spring 2 and Summer 2. Outcomes from these are reported on Insight.

Schools should use the results of these assessments to identify and tackle gaps in pupil learning to inform future teaching.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- Teachers to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- Pupils and parents to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Two-year-old progress check
- Reception Baseline Assessment (at the start of the reception year)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- Optional National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 (year 2)
- Multiplication - Times Tables Check for year 4
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6)

5. Collecting and using data

5.1 Parameters

Schools following Read Write Inc, will record phonics data on the RWI portal half-termly via online assessments. Schools following other phonics programmes will submit data to the Trust half-termly.

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 - % on track	Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 - % on track	Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 - % on track
	February - Predictions for Year 1 phonics screening check	Year 1 - phonics screening check results
		Year 2 - phonics screening check results - retake.

Schools will enter assessments onto Insight at the end of each of the autumn, spring and summer terms for reading, writing and mathematics for pupils above Reception.

Teachers will use the Trust Writing Criteria documents (Evidence Gathering Grids) for each year group to support their shared understanding of the quality of writing which represents Secure (ARE) and Greater Depth (GDS).

Schools will also enter Year 4 MTC scores for the autumn, spring and summer terms on Insight. Schools report on the different bands, (0-5, 6-10, 11-14, 15-19, 20-25), average marks scored, and percentage of pupils scoring full marks (25)

5.2 Interpretation of data

Standardised tests allow us to draw conclusions about how our pupils are performing in relation to their peers nationally, and to compare different cohorts of pupils. Care must be taken when drawing conclusions however: on the individual level they can suggest unreliable conclusions since pupils may over or under perform on the test. Where a pupil's test score and teacher assessed attainment level are not in line, this discrepancy should form the basis of a discussion to examine the reasons for this.

When looking at the performance of groups of pupils, care should be taken to avoid over-interpreting instances where trends or conclusions are based on small groups. In such instances, disparity between the performance of the pupil attribute group and the general cohort may better prompt discussion than describe firm conclusions about the performance of a school.

5.3 Levels of assessment

Schools will use the following levels of possible assessment, each defined in relation to the attainment that might be typically expected of a pupil at that stage in their learning. In EYFS the schools use 4 levels, Currently 'well below' 'below' 'at' 'above'.

In years 1 to 6, schools use – Below, Working towards the expected standard, Cusp, Secure, Greater Depth

Each level is defined as follows:

Below (B) – this category is used for EAL pupils arriving within that term with little or no knowledge of English, for some pupils with identified special educational needs and for pupils who are working significantly behind their peers. Most pupils will not remain in this category for long as swift progress is expected of EAL pupils and other pupils will be assessed quickly for appropriate and effective intervention.

Working towards the expected standard (WTS) – pupils are yet to be secure in what has been taught.

Cusp (CUSP) – pupils have achieved success with most of the objectives taught but not all. This becomes a targeted group and the expectation would be that most pupils in this group at the start of the year would move towards secure by the end of the year.

Secure (SEC) – pupils have achieved success in the vast majority of objectives taught in class and are on track to achieve age related expectations by the end of the year.

Greater Depth (GDS) – pupils are secure in what has been taught and are applying their knowledge to solve challenges and broaden their understanding, confidently and independently.

Each grade is to be allocated on the basis of how well a teacher judges the pupil has performed in classwork across the term. The judgement is not made against end of year expectations, but against the general expectations that have been asked of the pupil in the year to date.

5.4 Pupils working below their year group curriculum

Where pupils are assessed as Below, where relevant, these pupils should be referred to the SENDCo for further assessment as they might have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age. Schools must therefore “use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need.”

Whilst a pupil assessed as Below will be recorded as such on the data systems that form each school’s summative assessment system, schools will be expected to have additional information on such pupils using systems such as the Birmingham Toolkit so that they can identify broadly which year group curriculum the pupil is accessing.

In this way such pupils are assessed in line with other pupils, with a focus on what general level the pupil has achieved as opposed to what they cannot yet access. For pupils operating below key stage 1 but engaged in subject-specific learning, schools must record the pupil’s level of attainment using the Birmingham Toolkit.

5.5 EYFS assessment

The way in which formative, developmental assessments within the Early Years Framework are made is devolved to individual schools.

Reception:

Schools will assess all ELG strands at **baseline** when children start Reception at the beginning of the autumn term. In the **spring** term (February) schools assess and report on selected (GLD based) ELG strands - speaking, reading, writing, and number. Judgements are made in relation to the ‘Development Matters’ guidance.

In the **summer** term, schools will report on all ELGs. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

These summative assessments will be recorded on Insight.

Nursery and two-year-old provision:

Assessment points are as reception (above). ELG strands assessed on are focused on the prime areas. These assessments are recorded on Insight.

5.6 Year 6

Schools across the trust will assess pupils in year 6 at the end of each half term (Autumn 1 – Spring 2) using past National Curriculum tests for Reading, English Grammar Spelling and Punctuation and Maths. The order (year) in which the past papers will be completed, will be agreed with assessment leads at the beginning of the academic year.

Test outcomes will be recorded on Insight.

For writing, teacher assessment (using TAF) will be used. Autumn 2 writing data for year 6 will be a prediction for the end of the year, based on the evidence produced for independent writing in the term.

5.7 The Headteacher's Report

Please see the Quality of Education Strategy for details on this report.

5.8 Pupil Progress Meetings

Please see the Quality of Education Strategy for a model of best practise

5.9 Reporting to the Trust Board

All data will be compiled into a Trust level report. Autumn term – Year 2 and Y6. Spring and summer term, all year groups. Reception data will be compiled into a Trust level report at baseline and in the spring and summer terms. This will be completed by the Trust's Assessment Leader.

The DCEO will report this data, alongside a Headteacher's Report Summary to the Education & Standards committee.

5.10 Dates

In order to meet these requirements, schools will administer their standardised assessments (SATs) at the end of the year in time to leave two weeks for tests to be marked and for data to be input to the system. A timetable will be sent out to Headteachers at the start of every academic year.