



To care, inspire and excel

The School's Aims are:

To serve our children, parents, staff and local community by building and maintaining an excellent school where all pupils have the opportunity of the best possible education. Dartmouth Academy aims to provide a secure, caring environment which will maximise each child's potential and promote his/her personal development. The school places an equal emphasis on the pastoral care and academic progress.

To achieve our aims we must:

- To value and recognise the uniqueness and achievement of every member of our school family.
- To promote British and Co-operative Values and attitudes of care, tolerance, trust and respect within the school and wider communities.
- To nurture and support all abilities, helping every child to achieve his/her potential in all areas of learning - intellectual, emotional, physical, social, moral, spiritual and cultural.
- To ensure excellence in teaching and learning within a high quality learning environment, through leadership and within all aspects of school life.
- To equip children with the resilience and perseverance to become creative and independent thinkers and to become learners for life within an ever-changing world.
- To provide the full breadth of the National Curriculum with emphasis on the basic skills of English, Mathematics, Science and Computing.

- To develop learning activities which stimulate positive models of enquiry, reflection, challenge and innovation.
- To teach children the role of stewardship of the world in which we live.

We believe that: HAPPY CHILDREN LEARN

We keep our Mission Statement and Aims at the heart of all that we do, including our Governors' policies and our School Development Plan.

Curriculum Provision at Dartmouth Academy

Our curriculum is underpinned by the National Curriculum (2014), we enhance this with planned opportunities that make up the wider school curriculum. Learning is always exciting and in a meaningful context for children. Where commonality exists between subjects and aspects learning is linked and lessons taught using a cross-curricular approach. Where this is not achievable subjects are taught discretely. The rehearsal and application of basic skills learned in the core curriculum is a driver for the entire curriculum.

We place a strong emphasis on the development of the basic skills necessary to be confident independent learners and successful adults. Children rapidly begin to read in our Reception class by following a programme called '*Read Write Inc.*' All children engage in a daily literacy skills session where they develop their reading and comprehension skills in addition to developing a command of all aspects of the English language. In addition, all children take part in a daily English and Mathematics lesson.

At Dartmouth Academy children develop a strong sense of moral purpose in addition to a respect and understanding of people who have different characteristics to themselves, whether that be age, disability, gender, race or sexuality. A rigorous, well planned curriculum, delivered by excellent staff in an ethos of care, love and support enables our pupils to be well rounded, empathetic young people who have a thirst for learning and respect for all around them.

The National Curriculum is delivered using the Chris Quigley Framework as a basis to ensure coverage and progression throughout the school. Milestones at the end of Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 ensure that children are meeting expectations in their learning. The more able are challenged further in their learning and children who find aspects of their learning more difficult are appropriately supported so that they too are enabled to experience success. National requirements and school requirements are mapped out as a whole school and then individual year groups plan the curriculum for their pupils accordingly.

The curriculum at Dartmouth Academy aims to:

- Inspire children to develop a love of learning.
- Embed skills to prepare children for further learning and productive adulthood.
- Take learning beyond the classroom.
- Develop children to become reflective learners who have a sense of responsibility for their own learning and development.
- Build confidence and motivation within our children.
- Grow children who understand the importance of perseverance, resilience and tolerance.
- Enable children to use their acquired skills and knowledge to observe, question and think.
- Learn to value others, their views, cultures and beliefs
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OUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS TRACKING IN THE NEW CURRICULUM

In April 2014 the Department for Education released 'Assessment Principles', a document outlining the core values all effective assessment systems should implement as part of the changes introduced with the 2014 National Curriculum. As the *'Government will not impose a single system for ongoing assessment'*, it is up to schools to implement a system that can: *'Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child's school, is performing, help drive improvement for pupils and teachers and make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation.'*

Over the past year, taking inspiration from our successful EYFS model, we have been developing an effective assessment system that will meet the needs of all school stakeholders and support the school in embedding the DfE 'Assessment Principles' referenced above.

This has been developed to ensure that the useful elements of the outgoing levels system are retained, ensuring data from school to pupil level is presented and recorded with clarity and consistency, while removing the more confusing elements and opportunities for bad practice, for example the inconsistent APS system.

OUR PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment should have a purpose at every level for everyone involved:

- Pupils should be given appropriate feedback on their learning from the formative assessments carried out by class teachers.
- Class teachers should be able to use formative assessment to support planning and implementation of a curriculum designed to meet the needs of learners.
- Teachers and school leaders should be able to use assessment to help ensure that the pupils who need specified intervention are quickly identified, appropriately supported and monitored so that all can fully achieve their potential and no one is left to struggle behind.
- School Leaders should be able to use summative assessment as a tool for monitoring the progress and attainment pupils make, to ensure the school is helping pupils achieve their potential.
- Parents should be able to get a clear and accurate sense of their child's achievement and progress as well as areas where they can support development.
- Governors should be able to use data to ensure the school is supporting pupils learning effectively.
- Schools can provide data for inspection teams to show how children are performing.

OUR ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Our assessment system has been developed carefully to meet DfE guidance and Our Philosophy of Assessment.

TRACKING ATTAINMENT WITH STATEMENTS

At its heart, any assessment tool must have Assessment for Learning and this is the fundamental building block on which any more expansive data must sit.

The new National Curriculum has set out clear expectations for what children should achieve by the end of each key stage and, for English, Maths and Science, has provided guidance as to when in each phase this content should be covered. The programme of study expected end of year outcomes have been adapted to help support practitioners in making their step judgements over each academic year. These formative statements may be shared with pupils to help define and guide next steps in learning. As a key time saving element the Target Tracker software has been designed to allow group assessment entry and reports to get a quick and visual snapshot of pupil achievement.

TRACKING ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS WITH STEPS

To track pupil attainment we have devised a system of steps. This performs the function of communicating progression and attainment in a simple format that may be aggregated to produce reports of overall and average progress. This is based on a carefully considered logical approach to assessment and follows on from the assessment system we have introduced in EYFS.

The terminology has been selected for consistency and clarity but also to avoid any suggested judgement when describing the attainment of pupils working below the expected band for their year group.

Each year band has been broken down into steps: beginning, working within and secure.

The three broader sections may be thought of in these terms-

Beginning - Pupil learning is chiefly focussed on the criteria for the band. There may be minimal elements of the previous band still to gain complete confidence in.

Working Within - Pupil learning is fully focussed on the criteria for the band. This is a teacher best fit decision but could be informed by statement assessments between around 40% and 70% achieved.

Secure - Confidence in all of the criteria for the band. There may be pupil learning still focussed on gaining thorough confidence in some minimal elements but the broad expectations for the band have been met.

Where the sections have been broken down into steps this is designed to allow the practitioner to represent and report progress for a pupil where they may not feel that the best fit is within the next section. For example, a pupil may be assessed as Band 2 Beginning in the Autumn term in year 2. The next time the practitioner records a summative assessment they may not feel that the pupil has progressed to Working Within, but the pupil has made progress. An assessment of Beginning + allows that progress to be represented and will feed through to overall class and key stage reporting. The inability to record smaller progress measures was a frustrating issue with the outgoing levels (and points) system.

At appropriate termly or half termly intervals, practitioners select a step to show where each pupil is working. Lower and high achieving pupils may be working at a band outside of their current year, and can be recorded as such.

Practitioners may assess steps in core and foundation subjects:

To allow for the tracking and analysis of progress in a statistical context we have adopted a one point scale. The numbers below each step reference the equivalent scale point.

This means it will be easy for schools to monitor pupil attainment in the context of age related expectation and progress over time to help children reach the new secondary ready standard.

SETTING TARGETS FOR PROGRESS

Target Setting is an emotive and, potentially, controversial method when misused. When taken as another part of the holistic 'tool box' of assessment practice it can help identify and focus learning for pupils falling behind or showing potential for accelerated progress. The DfE refer to 'sufficient progress' as a way to represent progress over the key stage or Primary phase. While this has yet to be clarified it may be assumed that the equivalent progress to the content for a single academic year would be considered sufficient.