

## Assessing Without Levels



The DfE announced last year that there would no longer be National Curriculum levels and that schools would need to set up their own way of assessing pupils. The thinking behind this is that children will gain a greater understanding of each of the areas of the curriculum before moving forward to the next year. With the old levelled system it was found that children were moving through the levels quickly in order to achieve a higher level but not really embedding their understanding at their current year group level. They were therefore moving forward without a true depth or breadth of understanding and knowledge.

At Worlebury, we have already been using an electronic assessment and tracking system which has now been updated and adapted to use assessment without levels. Children are assessed against the outcomes from the National Curriculum for each year group – these are divided into strands so that we can track each child's progress against the expected outcome for their year group. The teacher is able to make an assessment in reading, writing, maths and science as to whether a child is:

- Working Below (accessing the previous year group curriculum)
- Emerging in the current year group curriculum
- Developing within the current year group curriculum
- Secure at the current year group curriculum
- Mastering the current year group curriculum

By the end of the school year, this will enable us to see which children have understood their curriculum and are 'secure' and which children have understood it with greater depth and breadth and are 'masters' of the curriculum for their year group.

At Worlebury, formative (ongoing assessing) is carried out consistently throughout a child's time at school and summative assessment (testing) is formally carried out three times a year. Both of these forms of assessment contribute towards building a picture of the child's understanding and knowledge of the taught curriculum for their year group.

## So what does this new language mean?

**Working Below:** children who are not accessing the year group's curriculum and need to secure the previous year.

**Emerging:** children working towards the year group's curriculum and below age related expectations.

**Developing:** children working within the year group's curriculum but are not yet secure

**Secure:** children who are secure with the taught curriculum for their year group.

**Mastery:** children who demonstrate fluency with the taught curriculum and are able to work at greater depth in a range of contexts.

### End of Key Stage Testing

#### **Key Stage One**

At the end of KS1 it is anticipated that the majority of children will reach the assessment point of Year 2 Secure, a smaller number of children will reach Year 2 Mastering and a small number will be Year 2 Working Below/Emerging/Developing.

#### **Key Stage Two**

The DfE have stated that children are expected to reach the assessment point of Year 6 Secure by the end of Key Stage Two. There will however be some children who may be Year 6 Mastering and some children who are Year 6 Working Below/Emerging/Developing.

### Progress

There is also a difference in the way we talk about children's progress at school. The old system allowed children to incrementally move through levels, so a child achieving a '3a' would be expected to move to a '4c' within a certain amount of time. This is now different. Most children will begin their new year at 'Secure' in the previous year's curriculum. We would then track each child's progress to ensure that they are secure in the strands taught in each term of their new year group. Some children (who were previously secure) will be 'developing' for longer time periods as they are understanding and embedding knowledge and skills learnt. All children that were previously secure would be expected to be secure or mastering the next year group's curriculum by the end of the year.