

Curriculum Assessment Rationale

At WISE Academies we believe that assessment is one of the integral elements that form Quality First Teaching. Assessment is not a separate entity; it is central to classroom practice and interwoven into and employed at each and every lesson taught. We believe and follow the principles for assessing and monitoring pupil progress as set out by the Education Endowment Foundation.

Our model for quality first teaching presents a simple narrative:

Great teachers:

1. understand the content they are teaching and how it is learnt
2. create a supportive environment for learning
3. manage the classroom to maximise opportunity to learn
4. present content, activities and interactions that activate students' thinking

For our foundation curriculum subjects we employ a formative teacher evaluation system, this is based on continuous assessment and feedback rather than a high-stakes test. Assessment that is for learning, as opposed to merely of learning, looks forward as well as back. We assess in this way, not just to confirm and verify what students have learnt, but also to help students and teachers understand what the next steps in learning should be and how they might be attempted. We believe that it is essential that assessment has a 'formative' : it helps to shape what lies ahead rather than simply to gauge and record past achievements. Crucially, teachers then plan and adapt their teaching to respond to what assessment tells them.

We have designed clear end points (composite knowledge) and our curriculum builds towards these. It is clear what pupils need to know and be able to do to reach those end points (curriculum components). Teachers give **timely feedback on this component learning** and pupils who fall behind are identified within the lesson sequence and the AfL strategies below are employed to ensure that they catch up quickly.

The main strategies for Assessment for Learning (AfL) are:

* **Regular retrieval practice.** Learning is revisited and interleaved in order to ensure that pupils can remember the content of the curriculum. Retrieval exercises, such as low stakes quizzes, inform teachers whether content that needs to be retaught or has been mastered. Great teachers ensure that students practise until learning is fluent, automatic and secure. It gives students feedback on what they know and do not know and help allocate classroom time accordingly and students allocate their own revision time. Every lesson begins with a check that curriculum components have been remembered

* **Questioning.** Teachers use questioning for two main – and quite distinct – purposes: to promote students' thinking, and to assess it.

* **Marking & Feedback.** Information from booklets, questioning and other assessment strategies is the basis of this feedback. Tailored feedback is given to students on how to improve. There is a focus not just on their mistakes but on giving descriptive feedback centred on the quality and content of work and responses. Quality feedback around metacognitive processes contributes to the development of autonomous thinking and learning.

* **Peer and self-assessment.** The most commonly used are: *WISE Retrieval Pick & Mix strategies, self-marking, paired marking, self-evaluation, self and peer quizzing and comment-only marking.

* **Misconceptions.** Misconceptions, typical errors and types of strategies students exhibit. Student misconceptions around particular ideas are predictable and inevitable. Teachers anticipate and address these misconceptions directly and explicitly, both by exposing and challenging the misconception and by presenting the correct conception clearly and directly. If assessment identifies any misconceptions, teachers design learning activities to address them.

At the end of each unit teachers make assessments based on the knowledge and skills pupils have demonstrated throughout the unit. They identify the areas that in general have been less well understood and if there are particularly pupils who need further support on particular areas of knowledge.

Despite our well-sequenced, progressive WISE curriculum and high quality first teaching *“it is likely that a small number of pupils will require additional support—in the form of high-quality, structured, targeted interventions—to make progress in core curriculum areas”* (EEF Improving Literacy in KS1). It is essential that staff ensure that session times are rotated so that interventions do not always happen during the same lessons therefore reducing children’s access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The well-structured wider curriculum allows teachers to see what has been taught previously and what will be taught in the future. There are comprehensive curriculum documents that teachers will use to intentionally plan for retrieval so that all pupils are able to access the subject content taught so that pupils are ready to progress.