

# 3

## Web 3.1 A department's approach to assessment

Assessment has to be helpful otherwise it is merely testing. Assessment should help pupils get better at the skill, concept or topic being assessed and it should help teachers plan for this process of helping pupils get better. Assessment is also used to track pupil progress within a subject and across their whole school performance and inform parents of their child's progress at school. At Neatherd we accepted that we had to play a part in this tracking process and use national curriculum levels on a termly basis rather than the QCA recommended end of key stage requirement. At Neatherd we decided on the following to ensure assessment met our requirements as well as those of the whole school:

1. Assessments were mapped across KS3 and KS4
2. Key concepts and skills were assessed at least once in a key stage
3. A variety of learning styles was used to assess pupil learning
4. A variety of outcomes was used
5. Criteria were clear within each task
6. At KS3 levels were used and linked to our own understanding of progression rather than that of the national curriculum
7. At KS4 levels were linked directly to exam board level descriptors
8. All teachers have to complete each of the milestone assessment tasks and record the levels achieved for whole school tracking purposes
9. Targets were fed back to pupils and time allocated in lessons for reflection and to meet the targets set
10. Outcomes of assessment tasks would be used to inform next steps learning and lesson planning

This approach to assessment is relatively non-threatening to pupils and teachers and is flexible to meet the changing needs of individual pupils. It aims to fulfil the differing needs of pupils, parents, teachers and senior managers. It is collaboratively planned and constantly under review in the light of curriculum changes. Assessment for learning is at the heart of the approaches to feedback and helping pupils improve and is more important than the end result of the task set. Most of all assessment is integral to every day lessons and not bolted on at inappropriate and irregular intervals.