



Assessment, Recording and Reporting (Senior School)

Last updated by senior leaders

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POLICY FOR ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

(To be read in conjunction with policies on Marking and Feedback, Target Setting and Teaching and Learning.)

Introduction

We believe that the key purpose of assessment is to move children on in their learning and development. Continued monitoring of each child's progress gives a clear picture of what each child is doing. It is important that the teacher knows what has been remembered, what skills have been acquired and what concepts have been understood. This enables teachers to reflect on what children are doing and informs their future planning. The outcomes of our assessments will help children become involved in raising their own expectations, celebrating their own achievement and increasing their self-motivation. Our assessments also provide information for others including:

- Parents to show progress/concerns, and involve them in the teaching process
- Other teachers help them to plan and gain informed views
- Outside agencies to provide hard evidence of attainment

We use two different but complementary types of assessment: formative and summative assessments.

Formative assessment involves a judgement about what the pupil has successfully learned and what the next developmental steps in their learning should be. It therefore informs and directs the teacher's planning, and is used in the classroom to raise pupils' achievement. This type of assessments takes place on a regular basis with:

- Individual assessments
- Group assessments
- Class assessments

Through:

- Observation
- Discussion
- Hard evidence

Summative assessment involves judging pupils' learning and attainment against national standards. Teachers may make these judgements at the end of a unit of work, at the end of each term, and at the end of a key stage. Tests are a straightforward form of summative assessment, though teachers' ongoing assessments of pupils' progress in terms of National Curriculum levels, or exam boards' marking criteria, will also be mainly summative in nature. This is done through:

- Assessments for specific tasks – at the end of a topic or after teaching a specific skill or concept
- Termly assessments for curricular records

- Reports: after mini-tests, at the end of Autumn and Summer Terms for 1st to 4th Forms; 5th Form, AS and A level progress reports at the end of Autumn term, after the Mock Exams in January, in Spring Term and in Summer Term for Lower 6th.

We give our children regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to improve or to learn next. Such feedback will be both oral and written (marking). Research has shown that pupils' involvement in the process of assessing their own learning (self-assessment) raises standards and empowers pupils to take action towards improving their achievement.

Aims and objectives

The purpose of assessment in our school aims to:

- ensure a consistent and reliable approach to assessment and marking across the curriculum
- enable teachers to monitor progress in learning and identify students' strengths and weaknesses
- to enable teachers to plan work that accurately addresses the learning needs of each pupil, by ascertaining what they need to learn next;
- to enable teachers to record the attainment and progress of pupils;
- to increase pupils' motivation by celebrating their learning achievements and enabling them to understand what they have learned and what they need to learn next;
- provide quality, meaningful feedback to students, with advice on next steps for improvement that they respond to;
- to help pupils recognise the standards they are aiming for, and to understand the criteria of effective learning and achievement;
- enable students to assess their own work and progress and become reflective learners;
- to enable teachers to provide regular information for parents and carers about their child's progress in learning and enable them to support their child's education;
- to provide the Headteacher with information that allows them to make judgements about the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school.

Planning for assessment

As teachers plan their lessons, so they should plan for assessment opportunities. These will occur at key points in the lesson and will be based on pupils' response to the learning task in question and, more specifically, to the teacher's use of focused questions, designed to assess learning. This might be through discussion or observation with notes taken, children's work. Teachers will also, of course, plan to assess pupils' understanding more formally through the use of tests.

These assessment materials then help the teacher to determine what knowledge; skills or understanding a pupil needs in order to progress to the next level. It is very important that such teacher assessments are based on a

range of work in different contexts, over time, and not solely on one or two pieces of work.

We use our school's curriculum plan to guide our teaching. Teachers understand the age-related expectations of the National Curriculum, GCSE and A level exam specifications, and will plan their lessons to enable the maximum number of pupils to be working at age-related expectations or above. For those pupils working slightly below age-related expectations, teachers will plan additional support.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We base these upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each child. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's ability. Our lesson plans make clear the expected outcomes for each lesson. At St. John's Senior School we provide for differing abilities and strengths through the use of a variety of activities and materials. We provide learning experiences which accommodate a variety of learning and teaching styles.

Teachers always share the lesson's learning objective with the children as the lesson begins. They also indicate the way in which the activity is linked to the learning objective, and the criteria against which the work will be judged.

Teachers ask well phrased and carefully directed questions and analyse pupils' responses to find out what they know, understand and can do, and to reveal any misunderstandings, which they can then plan to address.

Methods of Assessment

In our school the methods of assessment are:

- Winter and Summer end of year exams
- Mini-tests
- Mock exam practice and mock exam week for GCSE and A levels
- Use of KS3 optional tests in English, Maths and Science for Summer end of year exams.
- Standardised tests in the Autumn and Summer Terms &
- CAT4 tests in the Autumn and Summer Terms

Target-setting

We set targets in all subjects for each year group. We discuss individual targets where necessary, and communicate these to parents. If the child does not make enough progress, he/she will be placed on Head teacher's report to monitor the child's achievement and homework. Pupils' progress towards their target is discussed in Departmental meetings and reviewed by Heads of Departments and the Deputy Head for Academics, and targets revised where necessary. We also review the progress of each child at the end of the academic year and communicate individual levels of attainment in the end of year report, and set revised targets for the next academic year. KS4 and KS5 students will have specific targets based on their own strengths and weaknesses.

Differentiation

Differentiation is a planned process of intervention in the classroom to maximise potential based on individual needs.

At St. John's Senior School we actively involve children in as wide range of activities as possible to develop flexibility in their own learning approaches. We are aware that there are a range of differences between children, not just 'ability', and build on what individual children know and can do.

Evidence

Evidence is information that supports a judgement:

- To support the judgements of staff for formative and summative assessments
- To evaluate curriculum provision and learning experiences
- Information for other staff in school
- Information for other users such as parents, transfer documents, support staff, referrals

Keeping Evidence

A wide range of evidence is kept in the form of:

- Assessment records and exam results for each individual child and each class
- Children's books
- Teachers' notes of observations
- Test results
- Self-assessments

Assessments of children's work are linked to our school Marking and Feedback policy, which is an agreed policy on why, what and how we should mark. (See Policy for Marking and Feedback for details).

For Evaluation

Our assessments also help teachers evaluate curriculum provision and learning experiences for individuals, groups, classes, year groups.

Evaluations are carried out weekly through our short-term planning and topic evaluations at the end of each term or half-term. This information helps each teacher plan the next stage forward.

Recording

We recognise various methods of assessing a child's learning. The type of assessment that we make varies from subject to subject. We keep a formal record of all these assessments either in the mark book, in the yellow report cards or on the school system for internal exams; Recording needs to be

ongoing, manageable and useful, not just completed to be handed in. At St. John's Senior School the purpose of recording is to:

- Help teachers monitor children's progress – many of our records, for example reading, daily work, are shared with the children. The sharing of these records helps motivate the children
- Recognise achievement and celebrate this with each child. This is achieved through:
 - Response policy – a positive approach to marking.
 - Use of house points, smiley faces, certificates etc.
 - Note strengths and weaknesses
 - Form a basis for reporting to:
 - Children
 - Parents
 - Other schools
 - Government
- Provide a summary for discussion, and informs verbal and written reports

What do we record?

At St. John's Senior School we record:

- Children's progress in all National Curriculum subjects– these are recorded in the teachers mark books and on the children's reports in the Autumn and Summer Term.
- Strengths and weaknesses – appropriate comments are made on the child's report.
- Qualities, skills and achievements– these are recorded in the final school report at the end of the Summer Term.
- Individual needs are identified through individual assessments

Records are kept of:

- Help and support needed
- Identification of SEN
- Individual programmes of work.

Care should be taken not to judge progress over a short period. While we make such on-going assessments at least termly, one term is too short a period to judge progress in terms of National Curriculum sub-levels, though teachers will record whether pupils are 'on track' to meet challenging sub-level targets, based on an aspiration of good progress. At the end of each year, each teacher shares and discusses this information with the pupils' next teacher. GCSE and A level students' progress are closely monitored by subject teachers, Head of Departments, Form teachers and the Senior management team to maintain high achievements for each individual. There is a close collaboration and communication among the staff in case of any issue or concern. There is also a system of mentors, where teachers volunteer to help or guide particular

students to improve their academic performance, organisation skills or deal with exam pressure/ homework workload.

Reporting to parents

We have a range of strategies that keep parents fully informed of their child's progress in school either at Parents' evenings or in our six week report Card. We encourage parents to contact the school if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's work.

During the Spring (for GCSE and A levels Students) or Summer Term for 1st to 4th Forms and the Lower 6th, we give all parents a written report of their child's progress and achievements during the year. In this report, we also identify target areas for the next school year. We write individual comments on all subjects taught.

Between staff

It is important that reporting takes place between teachers, both formally at curriculum and staff meetings, and informally.

Feedback to pupils

We believe that feedback to pupils is very important, as it tells them how well they have done, and what they need to do next in order to improve their work. Teachers follow an agreed code for marking according to their departmental marking policy and the children learn to understand it.

We give children verbal feedback on their work whenever possible. We usually do this when the children are working during the lesson, although we sometimes give feedback on a particular lesson at the beginning of the next one. When lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, we write comments on the children's work during marking. We give written comments to children of all ages. We do not always aim these comments at the children; quite often we write something that is useful to both parents and teachers.

When we give written feedback to a child, we relate this to the learning objectives for the lesson. We make clear whether the objectives have been met, and we produce evidence to support our judgement. If we consider that the objective has not been met, we make clear why we think so. In either case, we identify what the child needs to do in order to produce (even) better work in the future.

Teachers give pupils feedback which confirms they are on the right track, and which encourages them to make an improvement. Teachers give pupils suggestions as guidance but they recognise that pupils gain most when they think things through for themselves. Pupils will be expected to act on teachers' guidance or feedback. Teachers will monitor the situation, if there is no improvement, they will have a meeting with the student to resolve the problem. If there is still no improvement, students can be referred to Heads of Departments, the Head of Year for 4th and 5th Forms, the Deputy Head for Academics and finally the Head. Parents will be informed of the lack of progress.

Having children assess their own or each other's work can be very effective, because it enables them to clarify their ideas on progressing to the next step, but this must be carefully managed, to avoid unhelpful comparisons. Teachers always mark the work themselves afterwards.

We allow time at the beginning of each lesson for the children to absorb any comments written on their work, to answer any questions written on it by the teacher, and also to ask any questions of their own. There may also be improvements they can work on during this time. We start the lesson in this way in order to ensure that the time our teachers spend on marking really has an impact. We believe that learning is maximised when children enter into a dialogue about their work.

Inclusion and assessment for learning

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. Although our school is a selective school, whereby children are assessed on entry, we do operate a sibling policy and we actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils.

We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, by monitoring data, and through asking ourselves questions about the performance of these individuals and groups of pupils. In this way we make judgements about how successful we are being at promoting racial and gender equality, and including pupils with disabilities or special educational needs.

Moderation of Standards

All subject leaders study examples of children's work within their subject area. By doing this we ensure that we make consistent judgements about standards in the school. The Academic Deputy Head or the Head Teacher can sample children's work in any department to monitor standards.

It is each subject leader's responsibility to ensure that the samples that they monitor of children's work reflect the full range of ability within each subject.

Monitoring and review

Our Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy, which is reviewed regularly.