



WESTSIDE
SCHOOL

Assessment Policy

Policy Written By:
Ratified By:
Review Date:

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Headteacher
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INTRODUCTION

At Westside School, assessment is completed across a range of activities which provide teachers with the information needed to understand their students' abilities and the ability to identify any gaps in learning. The assessment also allows teachers to consistently check students' knowledge, skills, and understanding. The assessment data is then used to provide students with feedback that will support their progress, set future targets, and close any gaps that may exist.

RATIONALE

Assessment reflects the formal and informal judgements made by teachers and students about standards of work and is measured, where appropriate, against nationally agreed criteria. Formative, diagnostic assessment is used throughout the year to inform teaching and learning and identify any areas for improvement. This includes low-stakes testing where a simple test is employed to ascertain the extent to which knowledge is being retained and to establish an understanding of gaps in knowledge and/or skills of the individual and whole class level.

Summative assessment is used to evaluate learning and progress by awarding a grade of attainment to a student. We believe that this policy will enable us to assess student progress coherently and consistently and facilitate higher achievement for students across all levels of ability. Work undertaken by students deserves feedback (written or verbal) to enable them to know and understand the progress they are making and the next steps needed to inform them how they can continue to improve. It will also inform subject staff as to where there are gaps in students' knowledge and understanding.

AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment.
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents.

- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: Schedule 1

ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

At Westside School, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum. We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment, and nationally standardised summative assessment (GCSE AND BTEC Courses). We understand that it is vital to allow all students to achieve, and this is why our assessment approach is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. Our assessment approaches are individually tailored to ensure that all students are making progress and that this progress can be evidenced.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

Formative Assessment involves the ongoing monitoring of student progress that shapes future lesson planning and intervention. This is not graded, with the focus instead on positive actionable feedback to help students “close the gap” between their current and potential attainment (or challenge their learning further). Examples include, but are not

limited to: verbal feedback, questioning, self and peer-assessment, quizzes, and observations.

Recommended formative assessment strategies are identified in each subject's schemes of work.

Effective in-class formative assessment enables:

- Teachers to identify how pupils are performing continuously and use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching, and plan future lessons.
- Pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve.
- Parents to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

Summative Assessment involves designated graded assessment and often comes at the end of a unit or course, including, but not limited to: Year 8 Baseline Testing, Guided Choices Options Exams in Year 9; end of Year exams in Year 10, and formal examinations for 11. The data produced will form the basis of termly Teacher Assessment Data reports.

As per the teaching and learning policy, actionable feedback should be given on such assessments.

Summative assessments could include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- Sample examination question(s)
- Extended writing tasks
- Speaking or listening test
- Activity or project to demonstrate skills recently learned

The outcomes of these assessments inform both in-year progress and cumulative progress across the student's career, which is fed back to both students and parents. The student's grades are tracked using the school's (MIS) SYSTEM Arbor. This information is then printed and sent to parents twice in the academic year. In-school Summative Assessments are designed by heads of subjects using exam board resources that reflect each subject's scheme of work. In-school Summative Assessments are standardised and moderated internally by departments (if applicable) and the Senior Leadership Team.

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions (therapies) may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.
- Teachers to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period, and the impact of their teaching.
- Pupils to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve.
- Parents to stay informed about the achievement, progress, and wider outcomes of their child over a period.

NATIONALLY STANDARDISED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT (PUBLIC EXAMS)

Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4. When students start at Westside School, they complete CATS and Lucid testing, which informs teachers of the individual student's abilities. Once complete, teachers are given a pupil passport which provides information about the student's learning needs and helps with future planning. The outcomes of these inform responsive progress strategies in each subject and for each student.

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.
- Teachers to understand national expectations and assess their performance in the broader national context.
- Pupils and parents to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally.

WHOLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS

For Key Stage 3:

- Three Summative assessments a year in accordance with the school calendar – one per term.
- Three Formative assessments a year in accordance with the school calendar – one per half-term.

For Key Stage 4:

- Three Summative assessments a year in accordance with the school calendar – one per term.
- Three Formative assessments a year in accordance with the school calendar – one per term.

For Both Key Stages:

- Summative assessments are completed and kept until the end of the key stage and stored in a folder.
- Individual subjects may decide when assessments take place within each assessment period.
- Assessments, however, must be completed and marks recorded on Arbor ahead of scheduled data drops.
- For formative assessments completed in assessment books, Next Steps are required, which will contribute to the learning and progress of students.

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK

The minimum expectations for student feedback are as follows:

- **Formative and Summative Assessment:** Next Step comments are meaningful, individualised, and clearly state what the student needs to do to improve their learning.
- **Response:** Each student has responded to the teacher's feedback in green pen.
- **Grade:** Where appropriate, the student is aware of how each piece of work is directly contributing to their progress (or lack of progress) and target.
- **Pride & Presentation:** the student displays an awareness of the school's high expectations in relation to presentation, with teacher guidance.

After a course has been completed in Year 11, teachers may use their professional discretion in terms of assessments and the marking of students' work. Teachers should ensure that regular and precise feedback is given during final examination preparation.

COLLECTING DATA

All subjects collate data as part of the Teacher Assessment cycle. All data is recorded on the school's MIS system (Arbor). The full details of how and when data is recorded, including when it is communicated to students and parents, are detailed in the Reports, Assessment, and Exam Timetable Calendar (RAE). The staggered TA cycle and associated data collation are designed to reduce teachers' workload by spreading data collation across the academic year.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

As part of Westside School's commitment to reducing teachers' workload, full written reports will be produced in the summer term, and parents will receive a report twice a year setting out data such as grades and attitude to learning. Teachers can discuss students' progress and assessment grades at the two Parents' Day offered. At any time, parents can request to speak to teachers regarding their child's attainment.

Annual Reports will include:

- Brief details of achievements in all subjects and activities forming part of the school curriculum, highlighting strengths and areas for development.
- Comments on general progress.
- Arrangements for discussing the report with the pupil's teacher.
- The total number of possible attendances for that pupil.
- The total number of unauthorised absences for that pupil is expressed as a percentage of the possible attendances.

INCLUSION

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with SEND. Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention. We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience, and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupils' starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

TRAINING

Westside School Staff receive a rigorous CPD program across the academic year. The CPD program includes keeping staff up to date with developments in assessment practice through internal sessions, including CPD Twilight Sessions and Teaching & Learning meetings.

Activities include but are not limited to the moderation of assessments within the school, sharing of best practices, and use of Examination Board moderation resources.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

TRUSTEES

Trustees are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils.
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data.
- Monitoring that the school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school.

HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to.
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects.
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups.
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessments competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities.

TEACHERS

Teachers are responsible for:

- Following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy.
- Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they teach.
- Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice.

MONITORING

- This policy will be reviewed frequently by the Assistant Head responsible for teaching and Learning, Keighley McNeish.
- At every review, the policy will be shared with the Headteacher and the Trustees.
- All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.
- Keighley McNeish will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school through collaborative moderation, lesson observations, book scrutiny, SLT management progress meetings, Performance Management, and Pupil Progress.