



ASSESSMENT POLICY

Effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. The use of data from assessment allows teachers to take account of the individual needs of the pupils in their planning. Pupils need detailed and constructive feedback in order to understand how they can improve their work. Parents are given regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, pupils and parents are all working together to raise standards and ensure that each pupil achieves his or her potential.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of assessment in the school are:

- to allow teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each pupil
- to enable pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work
- to help pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their work
- to provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning
- to help parents make informed decisions when selecting senior schools
- to provide the headmaster with information that allows him to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school

Assessment procedures

1. Standardised testing

All pupils entering the school in Pre-prep are assessed using the Lucid CoPS cognitive profiling system. In the Middle and Upper Schools, pupils are assessed in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 using the nfer Nelson Cognitive Abilities Tests. The data from these standardised tests are used to highlight individual needs, inform decision-making with regards to setting/streaming and referral for Learning Support, by the headmaster when providing advice to parents on future schooling and by members of staff when planning for differentiation within the classroom.

2. Summative assessment

School examinations are held annually from Year 3. In Middle School (Years 3 and 4), these focus on English and mathematics, with exams in other subjects being introduced in Year 5. The results of these exams provide information about the progress of individual pupils and a particular cohort, which can be used by teachers to inform planning. It is also used to assess pupils' progress towards the Common Entrance and scholarship exams to senior schools.

3. Formative assessment

Through formative assessment pupils are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Lessons are planned with clear objectives and these are communicated to the pupils, who are encouraged to consider whether they have met the objectives by the end of the lesson.

Pupils' work is marked regularly and promptly and feedback is given to enable pupils to assess their own progress and understand how to improve. For younger pupils, verbal feedback is often most appropriate and their work is marked in class in their presence wherever possible. Written

comments are related to the learning objective for the exercise or to individual targets. Pupils are also encouraged to comment on their own work, and sometimes that of their fellow pupils. Older pupils are given opportunities to undertake self-marking of drafts in order to help them to take a more objective view of their own work.

Dialogue between teachers and pupils in the classroom is also a rich source of information, helping teachers to develop a clear understanding of the needs of each pupil. Tests and other assessment exercises are used in many subjects to provide further data that can be used to inform planning and to establish benchmarks for the pupils.

Recording

The data from the standardised testing regime is recorded on the school database so that staff have access to the information. School exam results are also recorded on the database, as are the half-termly effort and achievement grades and end-of-term reports. Subject staff are responsible for recording information from ongoing classroom observations and assessments in the way that most appropriately provides the information they need for planning and reporting. It is recognised that excessive paperwork needs to be avoided and can prove to be counterproductive. In many cases it is only necessary record those cases where a pupil's achievement exceeds or fails to match expectations.

Reporting to parents

A range of strategies is employed to keep parents fully informed of their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have queries about any aspect of their child's work and members of staff are always willing to meet parents to discuss a particular concern.

Parents' meetings are held twice yearly, providing opportunities for parents to meet their child's teachers to discuss progress and any targets that have been set. Each year group receive at least two full written reports during the year, in which individual comments are written on all subjects, including details of topics and skills covered. At other times, generally at half term, a shorter report is prepared, providing an effort grade for each subject and a brief comment on progress. For older pupils, an achievement grade may also be given.

Consistency

The data from standardised testing is by its nature as consistent as possible but we are aware of the need to ensure that consistency is maintained in effort and achievement grades and other judgements made about the pupils' work and progress. The Heads of Department are responsible for reviewing any data used within their departments and the Head of Assessment has an overall responsibility for reviewing data used on a school-wide basis.

Monitoring and review

The Head of Assessment is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy through inspection of samples of pupils' work, discussions with Heads of Department and other members of staff and observation within the classroom.

Reviewed: April 2009

Next review: April 2010