Brine Leas School
An Academy

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING (ARR) POLICY

PREFACE

Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning. It is the means by which we know whether our teaching has resulted in learning. It is the means by which we know what children understand and can do, or what they do not yet understand and cannot yet do. Assessment, therefore, is an essential to inform teachers' planning.

The aim of assessment is to generate better information, for better decisions, for better learning. To achieve this, the information generated by assessment should be reliable, valid, purposeful and valuable.

The actions in this policy can provide: -
- a statement of current attainment;
- a record of progress;
- an acknowledgement of achievement and underachievement;
- information on students' readiness for future learning;
- information on the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed and the current scheme of work;
- detailed expectations regarding formative and summative assessment;
- consistency in ARR procedures;
- information for staff on statutory requirements;
- details of responsibilities of teams or individuals in school;
- support for involvement of parents and carers in their child's progress.

SECTION 1 - TARGETS

The School collects and uses a wide range of data to establish the attainment level and potential of each student. This includes: -

- Key Stage 2 Standardised scores and Teacher assessments (for students who sat them).
- Reading and Spelling tests (Year 7).
- Base-line assessment for students entering the school (in Year 7, Year 12 or in-year).
- Key Stage 4 qualifications.

We therefore have baseline information that is used to generate: -

- Targets for GCSE (or equivalent qualifications).
- Targets for A-levels (or equivalent qualifications).

GCSE target grades are set for all students in Year 7 – 9 but are only communicated to students and parents in the spring term of Year 9.

This is in line with the curriculum policy of the school and national expectations for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Targets are set on an individual basis (as opposed to set formulaically) to ensure that balance is achieved between suitable challenge for children.

Students in Year 12 and Year 13 are set A-level target grades (or equivalent qualification) based on GCSE scores. These are reviewed individually to consider GCSE average points score and grades in individual subjects.

It is unlikely that targets will be adjusted once set unless there are indications that there is an identifiable need to do so. If students receive predicted grades that exceed target grades, the target grade remains and the child is congratulated and provided with further challenging work. The original target remains so that the child's achievements are constantly visible but teachers must ensure work is provided to push for the next grade. Predictions that exceed target are a cause for praise and certainly not complacency.

Target grades and predicted grades (from each data collection) are made available to all staff via SMID (or other assessment package in use by the school) and Bromcom.
The Local Governing Board and the Academy Trust also use this data to monitor school performance and work with the school to achieve any improvements.

SECTION 2 – MARKING AND FEEDBACK

Feedback, which requires effective formative assessment as a prerequisite, is an integral part of the Brine Leas teaching and learning framework ('The Streamlined Classroom'). Following the identification of a 'learning gap' (something the student cannot yet do or does not yet know), the resulting feedback should be aimed at closing this gap. Students must receive feedback on a regular basis (at least once per 2 lessons). This may be verbal or written, whole-class or individual.

Whilst the pull of the generic is inevitably strong when leading a school or curriculum area, it is necessary to recognise the profound individuality of each subject in terms of its content, specific approaches and skills. Imposing a whole-school assessment and feedback policy would constitute a pyrrhic victory. As such, we only promote evidence-informed **key principles of feedback** that should be incorporated by all subject areas. Within these parameters, subjects are free to specify their own assessment and feedback plans. Teachers must adhere to the requirements of the relevant subject-specific assessment and feedback plan.

Key Principles of Feedback

Feedback should:

- **Be specific, accurate and crystal-clear to students.** *Teachers should be cautious of the 'curse of the expert' (see section 4).*

- **Look forwards, not backwards** ('feedforward'). *Feedback should aim to improve the students' work next time because the major purpose of feedback is to improve the student, not the work. For example, giving detailed feedback after a summative test is usually pretty pointless, as inevitably the unit of study has concluded and there is little the learner can do to alter the result.*

*Teachers should endeavour to give feedback regularly **during** the learning process, prior to the end of unit of study, in order to modify planning accordingly and thus better improve student attainment. Instead of a commentary on what students have done **before**, teachers may simply issue new questions informed by our reading of student work. The most effective feedback to students will signpost the next steps in their learning journey.*

- **Inform teachers' planning to secure and further students' learning**. *An integral part of the Brine Leas teaching model is to teach responsively. As such, teachers should regularly check on learning in order to know what the students know, and to uncover misconceptions. This will inform teachers' next steps. Teachers should be able to gather assessment 'data' that enables them to adjust their teaching both within and across a sequence of lessons.*

- **Place the responsibility on the student to forge their next steps.** *The most important thing about feedback is what students do with it. Students must act on feedback for it to be of benefit. However, this need not be with a contrived 'action' following a 'target'. Feedback should cause thinking and be more work for the student than the teacher. Feedback could easily be* 'on the basis of what I'm seeing, you need more practice answering questions like this'. *Thus, students may not even realise that feedback has taken place but will nevertheless be working hard to improve their outcomes. Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process.*

- **Allow students to feel pride**. *Teachers should always be encouraging and supportive, but it is also important to remember that achievement has a much larger effect on student self-concept than praise. Teachers should foster a positive and respectful climate, establish a culture of error and teach challenging content well. Students will then benefit from the pride felt by doing something intrinsically difficult, by themselves.*

It should be remembered that feedback is mainly feedback for the teacher about what to do next: "what do I need to do in response to what I've seen?" Essentially, feedback is a misnomer and should be re-named 'feedforward'.

Removing Unnecessary Workload in Assessment and Feedback

The Department for Education's (DfE) research into teacher workload has highlighted marking as being a key contributory factor to excessive workload. The DfE's Expert Group and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) recommends that effective feedback should be meaningful, manageable and motivating. A significant number of the Teachers' Standards rely on teachers implementing and using effective assessment and feedback practices.

Given that students often make the same mistakes, or develop the same misconceptions, whole-class feedback is promoted as an efficient means to provide timely, effective feedback. Whole-class feedback may also release time to spend with those students who would actually benefit from a one-to-one approach to feedback. Feedback is not synonymous with written marking and it is accepted that written comments will rarely be the most commonly used tool in the feedback toolkit.
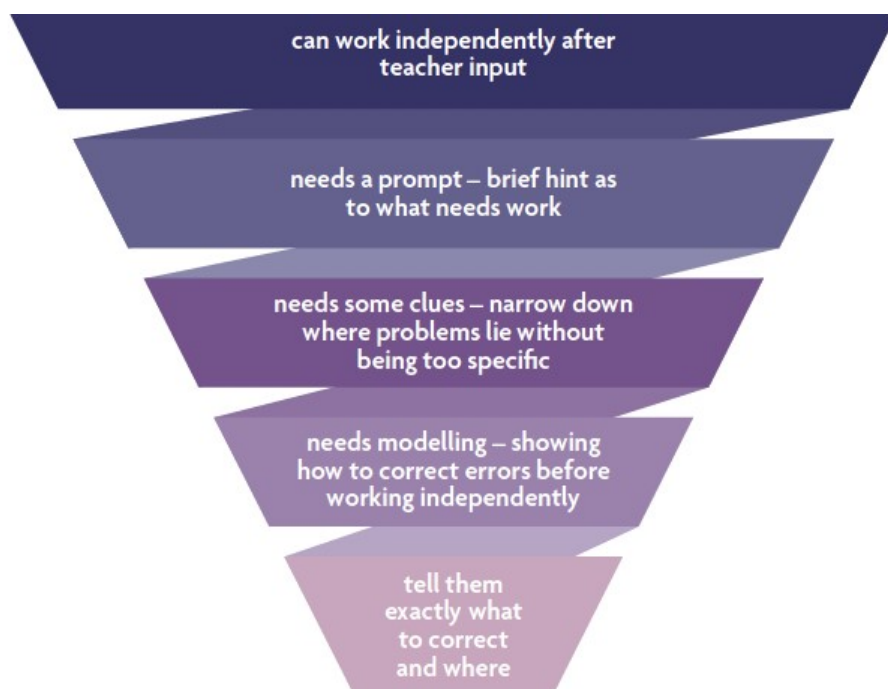
The Practice of Feedback

Feedback to students may occur at several points during the learning cycle:

1. Immediate feedback: during a lesson, as taught.

2. Summary feedback: in the next lesson.

3. Next lesson feedforward: further teaching, to enable pupils to identify and improve areas identified by the teacher after a prior lesson.

4. Summative feedback: tasks planned to provide teachers with evidence of students' secure mastery

The above broad categories of feedback may be observable in a number of ways. Observers should recognise that feedback may not leave a convenient accountability trail for adult eyes.

Feedback will ultimately guide the student towards the end goal of independence. Thus, feedback can be seen as a continuum and as such is an effective means of adapting teaching to meet the needs of all learners. The diagram[1] below illustrates this:

can work independently after teacher input

needs a prompt – brief hint as to what needs work

needs some clues – narrow down where problems lie without being too specific

needs modelling – showing how to correct errors before working independently

tell them exactly what to correct and where

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[1] Clare Sealy, whilst at St Matthias School

Justifying assessment practice and using it to best effect

When planning and implementing a form of assessment, departments and individual teachers need to ask themselves the following questions in order to both justify the particular mode of assessment and its usefulness in helping students to progress:

1. What will this assessment tell me about students' knowledge and understanding of this topic, concept or skill?

2. How will I communicate the information I gain from this assessment to students most effectively to allow them to understand and act on what they need to do to improve?

3. How will I ensure students understand the purpose and outcome of this assessment and can apply it to their own learning?

4. How will I ensure my approach to this assessment is accessible/ appropriate for students of all abilities?

5. How will I use the information that I gain from this assessment to inform my planning for future lessons? How could I improve, adapt or target my teaching as a result?

6. What follow up action should I take to now secure gaps in knowledge and understanding, to dispel misconceptions or to support progression where learning is insecure?

7. Is it necessary to record the information gained from this assessment? If so, how can this be done most efficiently?

SECTION 3 – INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Effective formative assessment must be a strong feature of almost all lessons. The mechanisms of formative assessment must be used without missed opportunity. These mechanisms will primarily entail: low-stakes quizzes, multiple-choice questioning, reading or observing children's work, questioning and breaking a complex task down into several component parts and assessing one at a time.
However, teachers are free to use alternative techniques provided that they achieve the same end point: the teacher knows, with as much immediacy as possible, what each child understands and can do, or does not yet understand and cannot yet do. The results of formative assessment must be used formatively, i.e. be incorporated into planning to directly affect teaching, learning or the curriculum.

Teachers are encouraged to harness the power of assessment as a learning tool (as well as its diagnostic benefits to inform teachers' planning), e.g. with regular low-stakes quizzes.
Summative assessments must provide information that is valid, reliable, purposeful and valuable. Departments may create their own summative assessments or evaluate and amend 'off the shelf' products. Summative tests show what a student can do, i.e. they are criterion referenced.

SECTION 4 – INFORMATION FOR DEPARTMENTS

Departments need to:

- inform Year 10 – Year 13 students of their current predicted grade and subject target (also applicable for terms 2 and 3 of Year 9);
- identify opportunities for assessment which are clearly detailed on curriculum planning documents;
- allow for different forms of assessment to be employed so that weaknesses / strengths in students' learning can be identified and improvements achieved;
- have clear and high expectations of students' performances and provide them with models of excellence (where possible) and understandable assessment criteria, so that students are clear about what they need to learn to achieve (or exceed) their subject target;
- assess consistently across classes within the same year and subject so that when judgements are made against standards there is fairness for students both within a teaching group and between teaching groups;
- incorporate exam board standards into assessment, where relevant;
- promote a common interpretation of the exam board grade descriptors which are understood by teachers and students alike;
- use exam board documentation (mark schemes, exam reports, past papers) to strive for accurate predicted grades;
- compare the performance of students from different classes on common activities;
- use SMID (or other assessment package used by the school) to compare student performance across subjects;
- benchmark and moderate with other schools where possible.

SECTION 5 – INFORMATION SHARING

The School informs parents about the assessment process in the information evenings held towards the start of each academic year. Information is also communicated via newsletter or email, to ensure all parents have access. Key Stage 2 results may be discussed between BLS staff and staff of feeder school before students transfer from primary.

SECTION 6 - RECORDING ASSESSMENTS

Statutory Requirements

Elaborate arrangements for recording assessments and retaining evidence are neither required nor necessary to satisfy OfSTED inspections.
Details provided to a student's new school will contain the teacher's latest assessment of the student's progress, typically via the 'Data Collection' report as well as any previous statutory assessments, if applicable. A report to a school leaver will contain any public examination results.

Internal requirements

Departments may have their own individual methods of recording assessments in line with their subject needs, but as a minimum provide termly data of students' progress and behaviour (see section 7 for details). Bromcom is used to collect, process and disseminate assessment data at school level.

These can be viewed by all staff as required, to inform planning, monitoring and intervention at teacher-, department- or school-level. The method of departmental recording is not prescribed due to the varying styles of assessment within different areas of the curriculum, but must provide sufficient evidence to support the school assessment programme. It is recommended that assessment data is stored electronically on the school system, to ensure data is suitably secure. Any data recorded in traditional mark-books (hard copy) must conform to GDPR.

SECTION 7 - REPORTING TO PARENTS

Statutory Requirements: Our school will provide three interim reports each year, which will provide information on progress and learning behaviours. It will be shared electronically via My Child At School. Please note that if a student is absent for a significant majority of sessions, the school may not be able to provide up to date progress data.

In Year 7, Year 8 and term 1 of Year 9, this report will include the following categories for each subject studied:

a) Progress indicator

b) Outstanding Learning Behaviour indicator
   Always / Usually / Sometimes / Rarely
   * punctual, proactive, positive and equipped
   * strive to do their best, even when work is challenging
   * complete classwork, homework and respond to feedback
   * respectful to self, peers, school staff and the school environment

c) Subject-specific 'next step' to improve outcomes (selected by class teacher)

In terms 2-3 of Year 9, in Year 10 and in Year 11, this report will include the following categories for each subject studied:

a) Target GCSE grade and predicted GCSE grade (or equivalent qualification)

b) Outstanding Learning Behaviour indicator
   Always / Usually / Sometimes / Rarely
   * punctual, proactive, positive and equipped
   * strive to do their best, even when work is challenging
   * complete classwork, homework and respond to feedback
   * respectful to self, peers, school staff and the school environment

c) Subject-specific 'next step' to improve outcomes (selected by class teacher)

In Year 12 and Year 13, this report will include the following categories for each subject studied:

a) A-level target grade and predicted A-level grade (or equivalent qualification)

b) Subject-specific 'next step' to improve outcomes (written by class teacher)

SECTION 8 – RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Academy Trust / Local Governing Board:
- To ensure the School meets its statutory duties by agreeing the School Targets.
- To determine values and goals and to link the process of target setting with the School development plan.
- To support the Headteacher and staff in working through a cycle of school improvement which concentrates on student performance, i.e. evaluate past results, make comparisons with similar schools, identify strengths and weaknesses, set fresh targets, plan and carry out necessary actions/changes.

The Role of the School:
- To monitor performance regularly through self-critical reflection and analysis of performance by comparing students' performance with their baseline level.
- To encourage individual teachers to take responsibility for checking and achieving targets.
- To compare themselves with similar schools.
- To set targets in the context of the national targets.
- To develop the partnership with parents and to encourage their participation in their child's learning
- To provide sufficient feedback to parents that will provide them with the information to enable them to have a clear understanding of how they can support their child's learning at home.
- To report on student progress to governors.
- To raise, if necessary, parental expectations of what their children can and should achieve.

The Role of the Headteacher:
- Overall management responsibility for the School's target setting policy.
- In the Autumn term, via the external challenge, agree targets to include the percentage of Key Stage 4 students attaining a strong and standard 'pass' in English & mathematics; students undertaking and also attaining the English Baccalaureate and the average Attainment 8 score.
- To work with the Leadership Group to identify those departments where underachievement is most extensive and develop appropriate targets to reduce and eliminate it.
- To work with the Senior Management Team to identify those students where underachievement is most extensive and develop appropriate intervention to reduce and eliminate it.

The Role of the Leadership Group:
- Facilitate INSET/discussion opportunities for departments or teams of teachers to discuss assessment, recording and reporting.
- Facilitate liaison opportunities with other schools related to consistency and/or continuity in assessment, recording and reporting.
- Intervene with student's learning, in response to tracking data
- Sample the work of departments to quality assure assessment procedures (including marking and feedback)

- Analyse and evaluate exam results (internal and external) and discuss implications of findings with departments with respect to future developments in teaching and assessment.

The Role of the ARR lead:
- Support, monitor and evaluate assessment, recording and reporting within the school.
- Provide oversight of departmental attainment to inform leadership discussion with departments
- To provide data that can be used to monitor and facilitate the most effective allocation of resources to support vulnerable children, i.e. those with individual student needs.
- To provide data that can be used to monitor and promote equal opportunities for all students whatever their background, gender, race or abilities so that all students experience teaching and learning to the highest possible standard.
- To provide data to enable the identification of students who are on, above or below expectation.
- Ultimately to provide data and information for teachers to work together in the classroom to raise standards for all students.
- Oversee the arrangements for public examinations and internal mock exams
- Keep up-to-date with local and national developments relating to assessment, disseminate relevant documentation to Heads of Subject and advise other colleagues when necessary.

The Role of the Head of Department:
- Monitor and evaluate teachers' marking and other assessment, recording and reporting practices within their department, e.g. they should ensure that the common grading policy is applied consistently across the department.
- Promote consistency in assessment, recording and reporting within their department.
- Ensure that their staff have access to relevant publications and are fully informed of the arrangements for public examinations.
- Use the results of assessment to inform and direct future teaching and curriculum planning in order to improve upon the quality of teaching and learning that occurs within the department.
- Undertake periodic scrutiny of students' written work. Follow-up needs to take place where standards are poor (or excellent).
- To identify students who are underachieving in their department and facilitate intervention strategies.

The Role of the Class Teacher:
- To be able to identify individual students' strengths and weaknesses and plan work accordingly.
- To ensure a range of effective assessment and teaching methods are in place.
- To provide information on students who are underachieving.
- To support intervention strategies designed to combat underachievement and raise attainment.
- To provide data for the interim reports.

Prepared/Written by: E Bentley	**Date:** January 2020
Approved by Governors: January 2020	**Review Date:** September 2020
Issue number: 2	**Date of Previous version:** September 2019