



**George Mitchell School**

**ASSESSMENT POLICY**

# **CONTENTS**

**1 RATIONALE AND AIMS**

**2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

**3 PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT**

**4 ASSESSMENT APPROACHES**

**5 WHEN ARE STUDENTS ASSESSED**

**6 DESIGNING ASSESSMENTS**

**7 TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESS**

**8 DATA ENTRY**

**9 REPORTING ON STUDENT PROGRESS**

## 1 RATIONALE AND AIMS

At George Mitchell School, we believe promoting engaging and dynamic student learning experiences is essential in securing successful outcomes for learners of all abilities. Key to this process is our assessment approach which is creative, adaptive and vibrant. It allows teachers to actively use assessment to guide learners on their journey.

All learners, teachers and parents use our assessment, recording and reporting to gain a fuller understanding of each individual's progress, attainment and achievement.

The school recognises the essential role of the parent/ carer in maximising pupil potential and so we strive to utilise every opportunity to share with parents information about our assessment processes and how they support individual pupil progress.

## 2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is guided by the requirements of the National Curriculum found in the programmes of study across the key stages. The policy enables all departments to construct their own department assessment policy based on the guidelines in this document.

## 3 PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Effective assessment, reporting and recording will involve all learners, teachers, parents and carers in the learning process, in line with the PRIDE values and approaches adopted by George Mitchell School.

### AIMS OF OUR ASSESSMENT is to:

- **Identify** specific achievement and allow for its recognition and reward.
- **Inform** planning (school/class/cohort/group/individual), target setting process and enable targets to be set for learners for the end of all key stages.
- **Enable** tracking of pupil and group progress.
- **Diagnose** specific strengths and weaknesses through various modes of assessment.
- **Evaluate** effectiveness of teaching methods and interventions.
- **Provide** information in formative and summative terms to learners, other staff, parents, colleges, other schools and the government.
- **Motivate** learners and provide information on what individual student knows, understands and is able to do.
- **Comply** with statutory requirements: align school with national standards and aim to exceed them
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## 4 ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

There are three main types of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment; in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

#### 4.1 In-school formative assessment – Assessment for Learning

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The purpose of assessment for learning should always be to support learner's learning. Any activity that provides evidence that can be used to help modify the teaching and learning is considered to be assessment for learning (AFL).

*'Formative assessment is an integral part of AFL, this is the use of information for ongoing assessment of what learners currently know and understand to support learning to inform future teaching'* Black and William 1998

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

**Learners** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve

**Teachers** to identify how learners are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons

**Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

#### 4.2 In-school summative assessment and testing

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**Summative assessments** are used to determine learner's knowledge and understanding at the end of a specified period of study. This is often for the purpose of reporting and accountability.

Effective in-school summative assessments enables:

**Learners** 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.

**Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching

**Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

**School leaders** to support and verify judgements made through formative assessment. To assist in monitoring the progress and attainment of individuals, classes, year groups and other identified groups within the school. To use this analysis to redeploy resources as required to close attainment and progress gaps.

Examples of in-school summative assessments:

- Christmas and end of year exams
- Short end of topic or unit tests (half termly assessments)
- Mock examinations
- Reviews for learners with SEN and disabilities

### 4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

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Assessment frameworks at KS1, KS2 and KS4 are underpinned by end of Key Stage, GCSE and A Level/ BTEC criteria. They enable:

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

### 4.4 KS3 Assessing Without Levels

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Following the removal of National Curriculum levels and the implementation of the New National Curriculum Programmes of study, (2014) the DfE published guidance on assessment principles to help schools implement new arrangements for assessing learners' progress.

The guidance outlines three principles of effective assessment systems. It says such systems should:

- Give reliable information to parents about how their child and their child's school is performing
- Help drive improvement for learners and teachers
- Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation

*The assessment framework should be built into the school curriculum, so that schools can check what learners have learned and whether they are on track to meet expectations at the end of the KS. (DfE 2014)*

## 5. WHEN ARE STUDENTS ASSESSED

### EYFS

Students in EYFS are formally assessed at the end of each term.

Students in Reception take part in the Reception Baseline Assessments at the start of the year and are assessed for the EYFS Profile at the end of the year.

### Key Stages 1 and 2

Students in Years 1-6 are assessed on their bookband and phonics knowledge each half term. Assessments in all core and foundation subjects take place at the end of each term.

Students in Year 1 sit the Year 1 Phonics Screening in May.

Students in Year 2 sit End of Key Stage 1 SATS assessments in Reading, Writing, Maths and Science in May.

Students in Year 4 take the Times Tables Screening in June.

Students in Year 6 sit the Key Stage 2 SATS assessments in Reading, Writing, Maths and GPS in May.

### Key Stage 3

- i. Students are **formally** assessed, feeding into the summative assessment cycle, once per term (3 times per year). By the end of each full term, students will have sat one formal summative assessment per subject.
- ii. For key stage 3 students grades awarded will be derived from one of the subject end of year progression thresholds (signifiers of success) using the 'best fit model'.

When are students assessed at KS3?						
	TERM 1		TERM 2		TERM 3	
Year	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
7	Attitude to Learning PRIDE values			Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade
8		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade
9		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade

### Key Stage 4

- iii. KS4 students are **formally** assessed once per term (3 times per year). Students grades awarded will be derived from subject exam board specifications.

When are students assessed at KS4?						
	TERM 1		TERM 2		TERM 3	
Year	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
10			Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade	Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade
11	Current Grade KS4 Target Grade	Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		Attitude to Learning PRIDE values Current Grade KS4 Target Grade		

## 6. DESIGNING ASSESSMENTS

### EYFS

Students in EYFS are regularly observed and assessed according to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

### Key Stages 1 and 2

- i. Assessment for Learning forms an important part of the structure of each lesson
- ii. Teachers employ a range of summative and formative assessments throughout and at the end of each unit of study
- iii. Maths and Reading are assessed termly using PIRA and PUMA standardised assessments
- iv. Writing is assessed using grade descriptors based on the National Curriculum and End of Key Stage frameworks
- v. Science and foundation subjects are assessed by teacher assessment based on end of unit objectives and exit tasks

### Key Stage 3

- i. Departments design a range of summative assessments across KS3 which allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the curriculum they have been taught.
- ii. All summative assessments for years 7-9 are based on the core and vital knowledge and skills (content) that has been covered.
- iii. Summative assessments should include an increasing amount of cumulative prior content as the students move through the terms. As an example:
  - Assessment 1 – would assess 100% of the knowledge and skills taught during the Autumn term
  - Assessment 2 – would assess 35% of the knowledge and skills taught during the Autumn term and 66% of the knowledge and skills taught Spring term
  - Assessment 3 – would assess 25% of Autumn term, 25% of the spring term and 50% of summer term.
- iv. The content of each summative assessment should reflect the knowledge and skills as identified within progress maps, to enable all students to access the highest threshold.
- v. Cumulative assessments are used to generate a valid current progress threshold, for teacher and student reflection and reporting purposes.
- vi. Assessments are not designed to be in the style of GCSE questions.

### Key Stage 4

- i. All summative assessments for years 10 - 11 must be based on the examination assessment criteria for that subject for the knowledge and skills (content) covered to date.
- ii. Summative assessments must be designed to allow students the opportunity to access the full grade range, so that assessments are not capped.

## 7. TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESS

### EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

- i. Assessments are tracked and analysed each half term using Sonar Tracker

### Key Stages 3 and 4

- i. Target setting is used to express our expectations of achievement and progress. Information on prior attainment and assessment is used to inform lesson planning and help classroom teachers, Subject Leaders, Learning Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team set targets for students.
- ii. Students will have a target grade set using FFT benchmarks for each subject generated from prior external assessment data. This prior attainment will be the KS2 SATs average points score for students in years 7-11. Student Value added for GCSE and vocational courses will be measured from these baselines.
- iii. KS3 students current and target grades awarded will be derived from one of the subject end of year progression thresholds (signifiers of success).
- iv. Subject leaders use their subject expertise to organise of the nature of assessment, create a mark scheme for each assessment and grade boundaries for these mark schemes.
- v. Standardisation and moderation of each summative assessment is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

### Key Stage 3

- i. Summative assessment in years 7 - 9 is based on six progression thresholds

Descriptor	Description	Potential GCSE Grade
<b>Advanced</b>	a student has an excellent grasp of skills, knowledge and understanding for a subject. This means they could achieve the highest possible GCSE grades.	<b>9</b>
<b>Mastery</b>	a student has a very strong grasp of skills, knowledge and understanding. This means that they should get top grades at GCSE.	<b>8/7</b>
<b>Secure</b>	a student is confident in the skills, knowledge and understanding needed. This means they could get good GCSE passes (or equivalents)	<b>6/5</b>
<b>Developing</b>	a student is able to grasp the main skills, knowledge and understanding needed. This means they could get 'passes' at GCSE and equivalents.	<b>4</b>
<b>Emerging</b>	a student is able to engage with main ideas and teaching of the curriculum and is beginning to grasp some of the main skills, knowledge and understanding.	<b>3</b>
<b>Accessing</b>	a student is beginning to engage with the main ideas and teaching of the curriculum although their progress might be restricted	<b>2</b>
<b>Not Accessing</b>	a student is not yet able to engage with the main ideas and teaching of the curriculum	<b>1</b>

<b>Alternative</b>	a student is not accessing the ideas and teaching of a standard curriculum, instead they engage in a suitable alternative.	<b>U</b>
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- ii. Students summative grades awarded will be derived from one of the subject progress thresholds.
- iii. For practical and creative subjects when awarding a current grade staff can enter the grade that is based on the work that has been completed. For academic subjects when awarding a current grade staff should enter the grade that is based on the most recent summative assessment.
- iv. The end of KS3 target is based on students SATS data from Key Stage 2. We use this data to set aspirational targets for where students should be at the end of KS3. Students' expected progress thresholds at the end of year, and the GCSE grades they should therefore be working towards, are based on the following table:

Primary Thresholds	KS2 levels	KS3 Thresholds	GCSE Levels
<b>Excellent</b>	116-120	<b>Advanced</b>	9
<b>Greater depth</b>	110-115	<b>Mastery</b>	7 - 8
<b>Expected</b>	100-109	<b>Secure</b>	5 - 6
<b>Working towards</b>	92 - 99	<b>Developing</b>	4
	85 - 91	<b>Emerging</b>	3
	80 - 84	<b>Accessing</b>	2
	Below 80	<b>Not accessing</b>	1
		<b>Alternative</b>	U

- v. Each subject is responsible for deciding on the criteria for assigning students to a progress threshold. Criteria (signifiers of success) is based on the expected acquisition of core and vital knowledge and skills at each of the 5 KS3 thresholds. Core and vital knowledge and skills, at each of the 6 thresholds, are mapped onto a Progress map for each subject. Subject Progress maps are available to parents on the school website.
- vi. Standardisation and moderation of assessments, by the Subject Leader, will allow each subject to get close to this grade profile.
- vii. Students will be given progress indicators (colours) on the following criteria in their full report:

<b>Colours</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	Working above Target Grade
	Working at Target Grade
	Working slightly below Target Grade
	Working significantly below Target Grade

#### Key Stage 4

- i. Summative assessment in years 10 – 11 is based on exam board grading criteria. Summative assessment grades in years 10 – 11 should reflect the department's assessment of the grade a given student is most likely to achieve, were they to sit the full assessment:
- **For practical, creative subjects and vocational subjects** when awarding a **current grade** staff should enter the grade that is based on the work that has been completed. For **academic subjects** when awarding a **current grade** staff should enter the grade that is based on the

most recent summative assessment and/or previous assessment if based on another component (e.g. Paper 2 was the most recent assessment completed and paper 1 was assessed in a previous term) and coursework grade. It does not account for the work that has not been completed yet.

- When awarding a **predicted grade** staff should enter the grade that students are most likely to get when they sit their terminal examinations and have completed NEA/coursework components. This grade should consider the extent to which they are likely to improve based on previous cohort outcomes and their predicted performance on any content not yet covered, intervention and student engagement.
- Students predicted grade should not be limited by the stage of the course that you are at or the amount of content covered.

## 8. DATA ENTRY

- i. The deadline for the submission of fully checked data will be calendared for each assessment. These dates are fixed in line with Parents' Evenings and published reports.

### Key Stage 3

- ii. Teachers are required to input the following information into SIMS for full reports:
  - Target grade
  - Current working at grade
  - Prediction
  - Attitude to Learning
  - PRIDE values
- iii. A student's attitude to learning and PRIDE values must adhere to the following criteria:
  - 1 – Outstanding
  - 2 – Good effort
  - 3 – Satisfactory
  - 4 – Requires improvement
  - 5 – Serious concerns

### Key Stage 4

- i. Teachers are required to input the following information into SIMS for full reports:
  - Target grade
  - Current working at grade
  - Prediction
  - Attitude to Learning
  - PRIDE values
- ii. See KS3 for a student's attitude to learning and PRIDE values grades criteria
- iii.

## 9 REPORTING ON STUDENTS PROGRESS

- i. The Deputy Headteacher (Assessment) is responsible for the collation of data for each year group and publishing termly reports showing student attainment and progress. This information is used through the line-management system and department meetings to monitor academic progress, identify underachievement and setting targets.

- ii. Teachers should also use this information to monitor the progress of students within their teaching group, to inform lesson planning, to set appropriate targets for students as part of ongoing teaching and learning.
- iii. Parents/carers will be informed on three occasions during the academic year as to the levels of students' progress.
- iv. One of these reports will be a full report, containing detailed assessment, which is distributed at different points during the academic year for different year groups, fulfilling statutory requirements.
- v. Reports will be delivered to parents by post. The school's Data Manager is responsible for overseeing the creation of the reports. Form tutors and HOHs are responsible for ensuring reports are read by parents or carers.
- vi. Reports will be sent with a 'Report Information' document to help parents/carers understand the information they are given.
- vii. Parents should attend Parents' Evenings, Open Evenings and Options days. They are encouraged to enquire about the progress of their children at any time by contacting the student's Learning Leader.