



ASSESSMENT POLICY

November 2023



Abstract

The staff at Madeley High School see assessment as integral to quality teaching and learning. Our assessment practice should enable teachers and pupils to recognise and value their achievements and improve and build on previous performances. This policy describes the many strands that inform assessment both in the formal and the informal curriculum. Fundamentally, the aim of any assessment is to raise the achievement of our pupils in all areas of their school experience. This policy should be considered in tandem with the Marking and Feedback Policy.

Introduction

The staff at Madeley High School see assessment as an integral part of any scheme of work. We believe that our assessment practice should enable pupils to recognise and value their achievements and to learn how to improve and build on their previous performances. We feel that it is extremely important that pupils know what is expected of them, how well they have done and how they can improve in the future. We also feel that parents can support their children by having a full knowledge of our expectations. Obviously, assessment can take many forms, including marking, written comments, reports and individual teacher and pupil discussion.

This policy, therefore, takes the above as its starting point and is firmly based on the school's "Aims and Values" statement. In addition, it is underpinned by the following principles:

- Assessment should inform adaptive teaching
- Assessment is necessary to inform pupils, parents, staff, governors etc of the progress being made by each and every pupil.
- Assessment should be formative, summative or ipsative (self-assessment) as appropriate.
- Assessment should be diagnostic and evaluative
- Assessment should help both pupils and staff with target setting. Assessment for Learning (AFL) is essential to this. Pupils need to be aware of the criteria in which they are assessed by and be part of assessing themselves against it. Such strategies used in lessons enable pupils to work alongside the teacher in setting their own targets and be motivated to achieve them.
- Assessment should reward achievement.
- Assessment should be used to increase the self-esteem of pupils.
- Assessment should not just be subject-based but should involve the monitoring of Cross-Curricular themes and skills wherever possible.
- Assessment should take various forms e.g. written and verbal feedback.
- Assessment should meet present legal requirements.
- Assessment should form an integral part of teaching and learning methodology. AfL strategies should under-pin the teaching that happens each lesson. Setting objectives, questioning, peer assessment, feedback and using success criteria should be used to maximise the achievement of all pupils.
- Assessment should be manageable for the teacher and informative for pupils and parents. Fundamentally, it should be appropriate to individual pupils, easy to understand and helpful in making them aware of what they do well and how they could improve.
- Assessment should have outcomes which can be evaluated.
- Assessment should be continuous and ongoing from one year to the next.
- The Assessment policy at Madeley School should follow a common framework but allow for variation between subjects and consistency within them. However, the Literacy across the Curriculum assessment criteria should be used consistently across all subjects.

Implementation

The following is a summary of the methods used to implement assessment at Madeley High school:

Assessed Pieces and Schemes of Work

Year 7-11 schemes of work in subject areas identify assessed pieces that need to be completed. These will cover the key knowledge and skills taught and could include: a written piece, response to a text, presentation, module test, topic test, controlled assessment, practical activity or summative test. Pupils will receive scores for these assessments, and any gaps identified from these assessed pieces should be identified and closed. These assessments should inform future teaching.

At every assessment point in KS3 (year 7,8 & 9), pupils will receive a % score, and this can be compared to the class % average score, and the cohort % average score.

At every assessment point in KS4 (Year 10 & 11), pupils will receive a working at GCSE grade. Pupils will also receive an aspirational target (created from performance at KS3 and other assessment information), and a progress judgement which shows if a pupil is on/above/below track in reaching their aspiration target.

Importantly, at every assessment point, the SWAN assessments (strengths, weaknesses and next steps) are completed and indicate which next steps are needed to be taken to improve learning further.

Staff use ongoing assessment to recognise where there is a need for intervention or scaffolding strategies to be used. Assessment for Learning involves both teacher and pupil in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information, identifying further areas for development and ways in which this can be realised lesson by lesson. Moderation of assessed pieces is completed by staff in subject areas to standardise levels across the subject or faculty.

Marking and Assessing Progress

The assessment and feedback on/of pupils' work is an extremely important part of the assessment process. It is essential that the process is formative, manageable and set against criteria which can be easily understood by staff, pupils and parents. It should also be consistent within a department. The most important part of the process is ensuring any gaps in learning are identified and then acted upon through adaptive teaching. When a pupil is absent, reasonable measures are put into place by the class teacher to support catch up.

Assessment across the years:

- Is a whole-school approach to assessing pupils' work
- Enables teachers to make judgements about pupils' progress
- Develops and refines teachers' understanding of progression in their subject
- Provides diagnostic information about the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils and groups of pupils
- Enables teachers to teach pupils' progress over time
- Informs curricular planning
- Facilitates the setting of meaningful curricular targets that can be shared with pupils and parents
- Promotes teaching that is matched to pupils' needs
- Supports the transfer of meaningful information in preparation for GCSEs

Standardisation and Moderation

Standardisation should take place regularly and inform staff of what to expect from different grades of work pupils produce. It is fundamental to go through this process if there are new members of staff in the department. It also continues to inform staff of how accurate their assessment is in relation to that of GCSE moderators.

Moderation of pupils' work is organised into Development Sessions and faculty meetings. Staff bring work to moderation and consider bands and grades that have been awarded and whether they are in-line with those produced in exemplar pieces from GCSE boards. Where there is a considerable discrepancy between bands/grades awarded and the judgement

between colleagues, the Subject Leader needs to support the CPD of his/her colleague in this area. In addition staff attend external standardisation meetings held by examination boards.

Y11 Target Setting (Aspiration Grade)

Y11 Aspiration Targets are shared with pupils in KS4. Targets are created following a review of performance at Key Stage 3 and other assessment information. Pupils and parents will be regularly informed about the academic progress compared to an aspiration target grade in KS4. Once a target is set staff and/or pupils can use this to assess progress and to judge the effectiveness of the teaching and learning and make adjustments where necessary.

Where pupils are not making the required progress, teachers will use intervention strategies to support pupils. At the different assessment points in the year, these will be discussed at Faculty meetings and through Fixed Line Management meetings.

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

In order for pupils to make progress and to be awarded bands appropriate to their ability, it is important to establish a whole-school approach to AfL and the integration of it in all lessons:

- Pupils are involved in their own learning, using self/peer assessment, success criteria and a knowledge of their bands or grades in order to consider the next steps in their learning.
- Promote pupil confidence and to recognise they can achieve regardless of their starting point.
- Help pupils to recognise the standard of work they are aiming for.
- Provide feedback that is informative and helpful to pupils in knowing what they do well and targets for the next lesson.
- Involves both teachers and pupils in the reviewing and reflecting on the learning.

Educational research demonstrates that assessment of this nature can have a significant impact on raising achievement. Indeed, there is evidence that it can improve the performance of students in GCSE examinations by between one and two grades above expectation.

Self/Peer-assessment

Self-assessment by pupils is a very powerful tool and should be made use of wherever practical. If pupils know what it is they are expected to learn or achieve by the end of a lesson or topic they can assess their own progress both during and at the end. Many subjects across the school are using a range of self/peer-assessment activities and worksheets. These are used by pupils to assess their understanding at the end of each lesson or topic. Worksheets often include a space available for pupils to add future targets where necessary and glued into exercise books.

Pupils can also use each other to help evaluate their progress. This can often be done during group or pair work and discussion sessions. Although this is usually on an informal basis, pupils are often more prepared to seek help from each other than they are from a member of staff! An example of this is 'Think, Pair, Share'. This is an activity used to allow all pupils to share with each other and the class what they have achieved. A pupil will share with their peer something they have learned in the lesson and it is their partner who articulates their success to the group. Pupils are highly positive about helping each other to celebrate and improve on their work, making positive and constructive comments. Pupils realise that peer assessment is a valuable tool for themselves and their peer. They often state that assessing other's work makes them more aware of how to critically read their own.

Oral and Aural Assessment

This is part of the formal assessment process in subjects such as English and Modern Foreign Languages. However, it can be a useful assessment tool in all subject areas. By asking appropriate questions that develop and aid cognitive ability, a great deal can be learnt about pupils' understanding of a topic in a short space of time. Question and answer and discussion sessions can also build up pupils' confidence in their own ability and are an important teaching tool. Staff are aware of the importance of questioning skills and the impact they can have on pupil responses and therefore their learning. In many subjects pupils are often asked to give talks or presentations and the assessment of these is an accurate means of testing their understanding.

Annual Reports

Year 7-11 pupils are issued with an annual report in accordance with current Government guidelines. Parents and pupils are also issued with an Inspiring Excellence Progress Update throughout the year, which highlights their % assessment scores at KS3, and GCSE working at grades at KS4. A progress judgement (above/on/below/concern) is also included for KS4 pupils. Teachers will also include any intervention strategies required to maximise progress as appropriate.

Subject-based module/unit tests

Regular tests are carried out by departments throughout the year, usually at the end of a module or unit but sometimes at the end of a term. They also allow staff and pupils to highlight areas of both strengths and weaknesses. A range of tests should be used throughout the year, including tests that are cumulative and lagged.

Internal Examinations

Internal examinations are held in the hall for all year groups throughout the year in accordance with the school assessment calendar. Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 will have two sets of examinations in the hall, and will complete mainly GCSE style exam papers.

Results are then reported to parents and pupils through the Annual Report, Progress Report and by in class feedback.

Internal examinations also have a preparatory function and should allow pupils to gain experience of the kinds of questions and conditions which they will be expected to face in external examinations at the end of Year 11. It is important that this is also taken into account when preparing them.

External Examination Results

Most pupils at Madeley High School sit GCSE examinations in at least 8 subjects but some may sit more or less depending on ability and/or interests. External examinations are taken at the end of Year 11.

The results of external examinations are monitored and evaluated in a variety of ways. These include Academy Councillors, Senior Leadership Team, Faculty/Subject Leaders and Faculty meetings. They are also discussed in detail during the Fixed Line Management meetings between the Subject Leader and their Line Manager. Results are analysed in a variety of ways but particular emphasis is placed on the comparison of Target Grades, previous examination grades, mock examination grades, predicted grades and actual grades recognising comparisons of achievement across groups of pupils e.g. Pupil Premium, etc. In addition, extensive use is made of FFTD to obtain an indication of any added value.

Used properly and with sensitivity, external examination results can allow the work of departments to be evaluated as well as providing a useful form of summative assessment for the pupils themselves. However, it is essential that they are used in the correct context and that care is taken with their interpretation at all times. Examination reports are completed by the end of September by all Subject Leaders and reported to Academy Councillors. The content of them is used to form discussion in Line Management meetings so improvements where necessary can be considered in preparation for the following academic year.

How is achievement celebrated at Madeley High School?

Class Charts

Teachers record rewards on the Class Charts system and pupils are then entered in a prize draw to celebrate and reward their efforts.

Praise Postcards

Pupils are also sent, via the post, 'Praise Postcards' to celebrate something outstanding that they have achieved. These are a very good way of communicating directly with parents and are much appreciated by the pupils who receive them.

Subject Certificates

In Years 10 and 11, Subject Certificates are given to pupils to celebrate achievement. These are awarded termly to the pupils in each class who have been judged to have made the greatest attainment or progress or showed an exceptional attitude to learning.

End of Term Assemblies

The school has a special assembly at the end of each term where pupils' achievements are recognised and celebrated. In addition, faculty assemblies take place which celebrate achievement.

Core Values Nominations

Every three weeks staff nominate pupils who they think embody the school's core values. These pupils receive a certificate, a picture in the school entrance hall and a reward such as afternoon tea or breakfast with the Principal.

Key Stage 3 Graduation

The school holds an annual key stage 3 growth mindset graduation to celebrate pupils' achievements. A variety of certificates are awarded for pupils showing a growth mindset approach.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The various strands of the assessment policy are monitored and evaluated in the following ways. Obviously some strategies are more effective to particular situations than others. Fundamentally we ask the question, "Are the strategies we employ contributing to the raising of pupil achievement?"

- Updates to the Assessment Policy and procedures in-line with government recommendations
- Regular review of assessment tools both at subject level and whole school
- Reporting to parents
- Parents' evenings and parental feedback
- Regular reports of pupil achievement to governors
- Discussions at Academy Council sub-committee meetings
- Line management link meetings
- Discussions in all staff forums
- Discussion at SLT meetings
- Statistical analysis of all internal and external examination results
- Discussions with pupils
- Monitoring of pupil target setting in class books
- Lesson Study groups and their investigative approach to the use of AfL strategies in the classroom
- Departmental reviews by SLT
- Review of the rewards system

In addition, the policy will be evaluated and reviewed regularly and any suggestions for changes passed to the Senior Leadership Team and Academy Council for their approval.

Policy Review:

Review Date: November 2026

Signed by: (Chair of Governors)