**Assessment**

**Policy**

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# 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

# 2. Legislation and Guidance

2.1 Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

# 3. Principles of Assessment

3.1 Assessment should be at the heart of good teaching and learning. If we are to enable students to progress it is essential that both teacher and student understands where a student is at a particular moment in time in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skills. It is the aim of Walton-le-Dale to ensure that assessment becomes integral to the learning process.

**There are two forms of assessment:**

• Assessment **of** learning, also known as **summative** assessment.

• Assessment **for** learning, also known as **formative** assessment.

It is assessment **FOR** learning which plays the crucial role in enabling students to progress.

3.2 **Assessment of learning - Attainment**

Effective in-school 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 evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own 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 across a period

3.3 Assessment **of** learning (attainment) tends to be summative and is carried out at the end of a unit, term or year. The teacher undertakes this kind of assessment to make judgements about a student’s performance. Conclusions will be reported in relation to target GCSE grades. These are set alongside national standards, so that a student, teacher or parent can evaluate the performance of a student against that of national standards and against other students. It also provides the school and teachers with a benchmark in which to measure against other schools. The assessment data also allows the school to track progress over time.

3..4 Summative assessment needs to be rigorous because the results of this assessment are shared with other people. Furthermore since 2014 exams play an increasingly important part in the final assessment of students at 16 and it is therefore vital that we prepare students for this throughout their time at Walton le Dale. We need to ensure that our assessments are accurate and valid, requiring, for example, departments to develop standardisation and moderation procedures. There is also an important balance between making assessments that are rigorous and yet manageable.

3.5 As part of the whole school policy teachers are required to make summative judgements about student progress on a regular basis to feed into the student tracking system – Assessment Manager. Departments may vary the timing and nature of these summative assessments; however, teachers are required to make use of this data to provide judgements about student progress on a termly basis, as described below:

# 4. Assessment Approaches

**Student Tracking of Progress**

It is important that we develop a good knowledge of how our students are doing. It informs our own teaching and enables us to adjust the curriculum to meet the exact needs of our students. It provides us with a check that our students are performing as they should. It also provides a useful motivator for students and valuable information for parents.

The tracking of student progress needs to be informative but simple. It has thus been agreed that:

* Target grades are based upon prior attainment and largely based on national data and expectations about student progress. The grade will be shared with students, teachers and parents. Staff have the ability to change these target grades should they feel they are inappropriate for their subject area. These are the performance subjects where talent can determine progress, such as Music, Drama, Art, Technology and Food. Subjects such as History, Geography, RE, Science, English, Maths, ICT, German and French all use the KS2 data from Mathematics and English reading test scores to determine progress.
* We will track the progress of our students according to the assessment calendar, the dates being set in the school calendar;
* All staff will record student progress through the use of progress grades which are related to the progress ladders designed in each department area. Students will be rated as either excelling (X) making much better than expected progress, Making good progress (G), making expected progress (E) or making less than expected progress (L). Please see parents’ guide to Assessment for further clarity.

Data collected will take the form of a current grade at GCSE (Years 10 and 11 with a current grade being given for core subjects in year 9). These current grades are shared with parents along with a progress score X, G, E and L. We do not share target grades with parents.

* Teachers will also be asked to provide Attitude to learning grades. Staff will report on Effort, Behaviour, Hwk/equipment, classwork and Assessments which are graded on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is outstanding and 5 is of serious concern.
* The school aims to make effective use of technology to provide quick access to data and allow us to provide feedback for students, staff and parents. This will be achieved through the use of SIMS Assessment Manager.
* Assessment Manager will be used to provide individual reports on students, which will be sent home to parents.
* Curriculum team leaders will be required to analyse the data provided and through discussion within the department, respond to any issues arising out of the analysis for their department. This will support any intervention that is put in place within the department. Staff will record student performance and monitor their progress.
* Tutors respond to any issues relating to individual students within the tutor group. This may, for example, include congratulatory letters or parental interviews where there is cause for concern.
* A list of students will be generated to highlight the top and bottom 10 students in each year group.
* Tutors should hold discussions with students as to how they can improve on their grades. Each student in year 11 will be assigned a mentor who will monitor their progress through each stage in year 11.

At Walton-le-Dale we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

Currently all students have a mentor due to coronavirus

**4.1 In-school formative assessment**

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

* **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to 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

Assessment **for** learning is formative in nature and takes place all the time in the classroom. It is this ongoing assessment which has the greatest impact upon the progress of students because it is used by both teachers and students to inform future learning needs…….

‘***Assessment (for learning) refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.’ (Black, P. & Wiliam, D, 1998)***

***‘Assessment for learning involves:***

***• gathering and interpreting evidence about students’ learning; and, learners and their teachers using that evidence to decide where students are in their learning, where they are going and how to take the next steps.’ (QCA and the Assessment Reform Group 2001)***

Assessment for learning depends crucially on **actually using** the information gained. Gaining information about students is only valuable ifwe then go on to do something with it for the benefit of the students.

***Assessment for learning is something more than routine ongoing assessment involving marking and feeding back judgements. It is bound into next steps, looks forward as well as back, and is closely allied to forward planning. We need to ensure that the assessment is used by both student and teacher to good effect – i.e. to ensure further progress takes place. As a car driver makes use of a road atlas to check where he is and the routes he needs to take next, so we need to use formative assessment to check progress in learning and how to move learning on further.***

***Assessment for Learning involves:***

* sharing learning objectives with students;
* helping students to know and to recognise the standards they are aiming for;
* actively involving students in their own learning;
* providing feedback which leads to students recognising their next steps and how to take them;
* adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment;
* students assessing their own learning;
* considering the need for students to be able to assess themselves and to understand how to improve. Use of MAD time during lessons to check understanding.
* recognising the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self-esteem of students, both of which are crucial to learning;

Ongoing assessment needs to focus on learning and on the needs of the individual student. It needs to be based upon the learning objectives for that work, rather than on effort or presentation, for example. We need to ensure that comments do not lower the self-esteem of students by being over-critical or by comparing with other students; it should rather concentrate upon advice as to how further progress can be made in relation to developing further understanding and skills.

**The Assessment (for Learning) Policy therefore requires staff to:**

**1. Understand levels of attainment and the steps needed for students to progress in a particular skill or area of understanding. Departments have been developing the use of progress ladders within their subject areas and now have a better understanding of progress made by students.**

**2. Explain these to students in the form of learning outcomes using the progress ladders where appropriate.**

**3. Design activities to move students to the next level of understanding**

**4. Deliver plenaries which focus on these learning outcomes, using MAD time where appropriate.**

**5. Provide formative feedback against the level ladders.**

**6. Provide opportunities for students to assess their own learning and enter into a dialogue with teachers about their learning and progress**

The following techniques may be used in ongoing assessment as a means to support learning:

* questioning (strategies used from the ‘Walkthrus’ series such as Cold Calling, Say it Again Better, etc).
* teachers writing comments on work which focus on learning and progress;
* students responding to teacher comments
* individuals / groups repeating work, adding to previous work, making corrections etc
* comments which identify targets for improvement;
* student self-assessment;
* peer assessment;
* students devising test questions;
* students analysing and devising mark schemes;
* students receiving feedback from tests.
* Use of MAD time to consolidate learning during each topic.

**Departments and teachers will strive to provide such opportunities in the knowledge that such strategies play a crucial role in the learning process.**

**4.2 Nationally standardised summative assessment**

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 own performance in the broader national context
* **Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally.

Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4.

# 5. Collecting and Using Data

5.1 We collect data for year 7, 8,9 and 10 twice per academic year and organize for staff to meet with parents once during the year as well.

5.2 Data will be collected for year 11 3 times per academic year, they will be assigned a mentor and the student will meet with this mentor on a regular basis to discuss progress against expected targets. Actions will be put in place by HOD to support all students who are not achieving their targets. Priority will be given to PP students, those who are SEN K students and boys before any other cohort is considered. Staff will be expected to explain why a child might be underachieving and what they can do at classroom level to support these students.

# 6. Reporting to Parents

6.1 We will report to parents twice in each academic year, once with an interim report and once with a full written report. Year 11 students will receive a further interim report and all students will be invited to parents evenings each year.

6.2 Twice per year (September and Easter), students will be tested for their reading ability. This NGRT Reading Age is then communicated with parents/carers, along with strategies to enable students to be supported at home.

# 7. Inclusion

7.1 The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

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

# 8. Training

8.1 Staff will be kept up to date when changes are made to the assessment policy and will be expected to attend training sessions when necessary.

8.2 The progress ladders will be updated by staff on a regular basis to ensure they are fit for purpose and will be regularly checked by the Head teacher and Assistant head teacher in charge of assessment.

8.3 The school will regularly review current practice in-line with national developments and consultation with staff will take place when appropriate.

# 9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 **Governors**

Governors 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

9.2 **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

9.3 **Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy.

# 10. Monitoring

10.1 This policy will be reviewed when changes are made to ensure consistency of approach to assessment by the Head teacher and Assistant head teacher (Assessment). At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

10.2 All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. HOD is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

10.3 Assistant head teacher in charge of assessment will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through: Lesson observations to check standard of work produced by students and to monitor the standard of presentation in books. Book scrutiny and pupil voice.

# 11. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

* Feedback Policy (updated September 2021)
* Curriculum policy
* Non-examination assessment policy
* Examination contingency plan
* BTEC guidance for assessment.

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