



ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

Belfast High School

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Ratified by: Board of Governors

Responsibility: Board of Governors

Author: Vice Principal

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Rationale

The assessment of pupils' work and progress is an integral aspect of the curriculum at Belfast High School. Assessment is a key element for measuring pupil progress and planning for improvement so that each pupil has the opportunity to achieve their potential. Reporting serves to inform parent(s)/carer(s) of:

- their child's attainment;
- areas their child should focus on developing to improve outcomes;
- strategies which will help their child to improve their performance in the subject.

The whole school community of pupils, teachers and parent(s)/carer(s) are involved in the assessment and reporting process.

Definitions

Assessment

'Assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning.' It can be described as the process of obtaining, analysing and interpreting evidence for use by pupils, parent(s)/carer(s) and teachers to enable the review, planning and improvement of learning. It is fully integrated in the delivery of the curriculum and is an essential component of classroom practice. It uses prior knowledge of the level and nature of pupil attainment to inform the choice and use of teaching and learning methods and of subject content. It consolidates pupil strengths and addresses individual areas of weakness. It allows all members of the school community to reflect on areas of and strategies for improvement.

Recording

Consistent record keeping by all teachers allows the effective monitoring of pupil progress and the regular evaluation of teaching content, styles and methods.

Good Practice encourages:

- Common Assessment Tasks marks/grades to be recorded centrally in shared spreadsheets and the Management Information System (MIS) which are accessed through the C2K network;
- Homework marks/grades to be recorded centrally in shared spreadsheets and the MIS which are accessed through the C2K network;
- Internal Examination and Controlled Assessment marks/grades to be recorded centrally in shared spreadsheets and the MIS which are accessed through the C2K network.

Reporting

Effective reporting of pupil attainment provides relevant communication of progress to pupils, teachers, parent(s)/carer(s) and other external parties. It highlights performance and provides a wealth of data which is used to inform strategies and areas for improvement and progress. It provides a base of prior knowledge from which progress can be measured. It offers a body of material upon which each member of the school community can reflect and plan for improvement. Teachers use reports to:

- analyse the grade or mark from the recent examination;
- identify areas for development or improvement to help the pupil raise their attainment e.g. a specific topic or skill on which to focus;
- provide strategies the pupil can use to improve their result e.g. completing past paper questions, attending a revision session, using a revision website such as BBC Bitesize.

The School provides guidance and support to teachers to ensure effective and consistent reporting.

The Nature of Assessment

The School uses formal summative assessment and many of the arrangements listed below conform to that type. However, there is also a focus on formative assessment and multiple assessment points to gain an overall picture of pupil performance. In general, the Winter/Summer assessments and reports will be summative and based on examination data from the whole-School examination weeks or, where appropriate, Controlled Assessment marks while the two progress points are likely to be based on a range of assessments over a number of weeks and, therefore, are akin to formative assessment. Additionally, pupils themselves increasingly have ownership of the assessment process through the opportunities provided for self-assessment. All assessments should be robust, reliable, reflective of external examination style and content and ensure progression throughout each Key Stage of study and between Key Stages.

The School has made increased use of the data rich opportunities for assessing and reporting pupil progress which includes the use of CAT and ALIS data. This allows the School to assess pupils' performance both against their cohort but also against that pupil's own abilities.

Leadership and Management

SLT

Final accountability for assessment and reporting rests with the Principal. However, strategic planning for the timing and nature of assessments and reporting are the collective responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team. Within this corporate responsibility, the Vice Principals lead the work of Middle Leaders at formal meetings, SLT Links will support HoDs in ensuring robust and reliable assessment occurs in Departments and the Senior Leader in charge of reporting is responsible for formal reporting and the data recording process in the MIS. Senior leaders also act as SLT Links for the pastoral team to support their role in quality assuring reports and providing appropriately detailed and pupil specific pastoral comments.

MLT

Heads of Department are responsible for the planning and management of assessment within their particular area of learning. It is also the responsibility of Heads of Department to apply, embed and monitor the principles of the School Assessment Policy within their own departmental practice. Heads of Year lead their team of Form Tutors who are responsible for monitoring and managing pupil progress within a pastoral context and providing pastoral comments for pupil reports.

All Teachers

Subject teachers are responsible for their academic report comments while Form Tutors provide pastoral comments and input. Teachers follow the School's Assessment and Reporting policy and the School's guidance on reporting and assessment.

Staff Development

Successful strategies for pupil assessment require suitably qualified and informed teachers who have up-to-date knowledge and skills. The development of such skills and the building of capacity are of prime importance in school improvement. Examples of how the teaching staff are kept informed of changes include:

- Middle Leader Meetings;
- Sharing Good Practice;
- School Staff Development Days;
- External providers, eg CCEA, EANI;
- Publications and web resources.

Arrangements for Assessment and Reporting

- Report data and comments are completed, stored and generated through the School MIS;
- Pupils receive reports three times each year. This includes two progress points which provide numerical scores or letter grades and one full formal report which includes numerical scores or letter grades plus teacher comments;
- Through CAT and ALIS data, pupils receive 'if challenged' numerical scores and grades to enable a pupil's performance to be measured against their potential;
- There are two formal examination periods each year. For Key Stage 3, these are winter and summer examination weeks and for Key Stages 4 and 5 these are the winter examination week and the external summer examinations;
- Each year group has an annual parent consultation providing opportunities for parent(s)/carer(s) to speak to teachers regarding their child's progress;
- Annually, the Board of Governors publish their report on the varied achievements of the pupils;
- Through the MIS there is systematic tracking of pupil performance within subject areas focusing on attainment of skills as well as specific subject knowledge;
- Homework is used both as a learning and formative assessment tool as it is regularly and consistently marked with suggestions for improvement;
- Internal examinations are moderated within subject departments;
- External Non-Examination Assessments are moderated for GCSE and A Level;
- Heads of Department and Heads of Year meetings help in sharing information on pupil progress;
- Departmental and Pastoral meetings help in sharing information on pupil progress;
- The School uses CCEA NI Grammar School data for comparison of the School's CCEA results against NI performance in external examinations and identification of areas for improvement;
- Where available, the School uses similar centre data for non-CCEA examinations;
- CCEA analytics are used to support departmental development;
- Parent(s)/carer(s) can contact teaching staff about their child's progress to arrange Subject Teacher/Head of Department and/or Form Tutor/Head of Year phone calls;
- The Annual Prize Night is an opportunity to publicly celebrate success and mark individual achievement;
- External results are published to the wider community to publicly celebrate success and mark individual achievement.

Monitor, Evaluate and Review

The policy will be reviewed in line with the School schedule and information and evidence to support the review may be gathered from:

- Production of benchmarking data for discussion at SLT;
- SLT annual review of target setting of standards and outcomes;
- MLT Academic and Pastoral meetings;
- Departmental monitoring by Heads of Department through agreed school PRSD focus;
- Evaluative questionnaires and feedback from staff and pupils;
- Utilisation of CCEA NI Grammar School baseline data for comparison of school and NI Grammar School performance and identification of areas for improvement.

Other Relevant School Policies

- Curriculum Policy;
- External Examinations Policy;
- Learning and Teaching Policy;
- Managing Malpractice;
- Word processing policy of Examinations.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

Summative

This is Assessment of Learning. It is used mainly to measure performance and clearly identifies a standard of pupil attainment. It is carried out at the end of a period of learning. Examples include:

- External Examinations;
- Internal School Examinations;
- End of Topic/Unit Tests;
- Standardised Tests.

Formative

This is Assessment for Learning. It is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through identifying difficulties, providing feedback and diagnosing future learning priorities. Examples include:

- Classwork;
- Homework;
- Questioning;
- Oral Discussion;
- Presentation;
- Short Recall Test;
- Practical Project;
- Research.

Self-assessment

This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own progress by:

- Evaluating their own achievement against shared learning outcomes;
- Identifying their own strengths and areas for improvement;
- Encouraging individual learning goals and action plans for future progression;
- Fostering a culture of self-reflective learning;
- Encouraging independence in learning.