



# **Assessment Policy**

Policy adapted from (if applicable):

**Governing Body Sub-committee**

Name:

Curriculum and Performance

Date approved:

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**Full Governing Body**

Date approved:

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To provide a clear system that promotes outstanding learning and teaching.
- To ensure a consistent approach to assessment across all faculties and departments in the school.
- To ensure that all students are able to make good progress in all subjects.
- To give clear guidelines on the school's approach to assessment for all its main stakeholders: teachers, students, parents and governors.

### **Assessment Overview**

Assessment takes a number of different forms and serves a number of distinct purposes. All marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating. The Teachers' Standards state that teachers should 'give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback'. This is not a requirement for pupils to provide a written response to feedback: it could simply be that pupils should act on the feedback in subsequent work.

Assessment is used by teachers to enable them to form valid and reliable judgements of students' progress for the development of the curriculum. This means that teachers monitor and track the progress of all students that they teach, and particularly students in defined learner groups, in order to decide which students may need additional support. Teachers can then provide the necessary interventions to allow each student to make the required progress in order to reach or exceed their potential.

Assessment is also used to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their students, this can become a disincentive for students to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work. Assessments should be made with the intention of allowing the student to understand what they need to do in order to make further progress with their work in order to create positive student outcomes.

Formal assessment of student progress is recorded regularly into the school's student information system (ePortal) by teachers through looking at a range of each student's work to consider what progress they are making. This can include summative assessment techniques such as looking at test results, formative evaluation of students' class work and homework, and the students' own perceptions of their learning. Teachers will evaluate how well students are doing against relevant age-related expectations or as set out by the national curriculum, locally agreed syllabus, faculty procedures or exam board criteria as appropriate.

## **Section 1. Types of Assessment at Belper School & Sixth Form Centre**

Effective assessment is an essential part of the education process. At its heart, it is an interaction between teacher and student: a way of acknowledging students' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and students need to do next, with the primary aim of driving pupil progress. This can often be achieved without extensive written dialogue or comments. Assessment commonly involves both written and verbal feedback from teachers but it may also involve a number of techniques such as peer assessment whereby students evaluate each other's work against a set of criteria given by the teacher or self-assessment whereby students evaluate their own work against a defined set of criteria. All these forms of assessment are equally valid and the most important person in deciding what is appropriate is the subject teacher. Oral feedback, working with pupils in class, reading their work – all help teachers understand what students can do and understand and allow them to make informed decisions about how best to help individual students make better progress. The impact of the feedback, however given, will be seen in how a student is able to tackle subsequent work.

Assessment and marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the student and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers will adjust their approach as necessary and will incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

An important element of assessment is to acknowledge the work a student has done, to value their efforts and achievement, and to celebrate progress. There are many ways to do this without extensive marking and too much feedback can take away responsibility from the student, detract from the challenge of a piece of work, and reduce long term retention and resilience-building. Accepting work that pupils have not checked sufficiently and then providing extensive feedback detracts from students' responsibility for their own learning, particularly in editing and drafting skills. Students are encouraged to check their own work by understanding the success criteria, presented in an age appropriate way, so that they complete work to the highest standard.

### **1a. Formative Assessment**

Regularly throughout the school day, across all key stages, teachers use formative assessment which can have a huge impact on motivation and attainment. This involves the continuous use of a wide range of classroom assessment methods to improve learning. This is the most common method of assessment used by teachers at the school and may include differentiated questioning, verbal and written feedback, peer and self-assessment, exemplification, online assessment and close reference to clear and precise learning objectives which are shared with students in every lesson. Most forms of formative assessment are not usually recorded by teachers but it is important that it is acted upon. Formative assessment data is used for teachers' own planning purposes and to inform professional dialogue between the student and other stakeholders.

### **1b. Summative Assessment**

These are external or internal exams or controlled assessments which provide an assessment of learning. These types of assessments are commonly undertaken at the end of an academic year or at the end of unit. Summative assessments are used to inform teachers of students' progress and understanding. They measure what a student knows or can do at a particular point in time.

Periodically, such as once per year, in every subject, all students will undertake an internally set summative assessment task which will be assessed by the students' subject teacher and this grade will be recorded in the school's student information system (ePortal) and shared with parents/carers. For Year 11 and Year 13 the summative assessment task will usually take place in December/January - commonly referred to as 'mock exams' - and for all other students they will usually take place during the summer term.

## **Section 2. Assessment Procedures Used at Belper School & Sixth Form Centre**

### **2a. Faculty/Department Assessment and Marking Procedures**

Each faculty/department will determine the assessment and marking procedures in their areas, responding to the different workload demands, and drawing on teacher professionalism to create a meaningful and manageable approach to assessment. Marking practice within each faculty/department will be proportionate and consider the frequency and complexity of required written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to the overall workload of teachers.

Each faculty/department will produce a document called the [**Faculty/Department name**] **Assessment and Marking Procedures**. The faculty/department's procedures will automatically adopt the principles of this assessment policy and explain how marking is consistently expected to be evidenced by teachers in that faculty. It will also detail where students taught in that faculty will be expected to keep their Assessment Tracking Sheets. The faculty/department procedures will also incorporate an **Assessment Plan (see Appendix 1)**. The Assessment Plan will be used by all stakeholders to state that each student's work will have an in-depth mark periodically e.g. every half term and for organising work scrutinies of students' work.

Each faculty/department Assessment Plan describes the types of assessment that might be expected to take place and where a record of the assessment can be evidenced (e.g. exercise book, test, practical assessment sheets etc.) The individual tasks may be completed at any time during the assessment window and will be assessed in a timely manner. The Assessment Plan will take into consideration group rotations for subjects that utilise this method of timetabling. It will be revised each academic year as necessary and made available on the school website for parents and students. During any update cycle, The Assessment Plans for the current academic term (autumn, spring, summer) for each faculty/department will always be available on the school website. The Assessment Plan will also include any faculty pre-agreed deadlines for end of unit marking and recording of student assessments.

### **2b. Approach to Written Work**

Teachers must make efforts to ensure that all written work undertaken by students in exercise books/assessment folders is dated by students and labelled alongside the work as class notes or homework. Teachers will ensure that they regularly give some form of written or verbal feedback to students for these tasks. Some subjects require students to undertake practical work or project based activities which may involve little written feedback until the end of the project. In some subjects students will have books that are used for making notes and writing short answers that may have been peer-assessed or self-assessed. It is not unusual for these types of books to have no written feedback recorded in them from the subject teacher.

Additionally, when a teacher gives written or verbal feedback to a student then they may make reference to some literacy or numeracy mistakes made by the student. Students should then correct these errors and attempt to not make them in subsequent work. Students may seek further guidance from their subject teacher if they are unclear about the reason for the error.

Where it is evident that students in Years 7-11 have put a lot of time/effort into their work then this exceptional effort/performance should be acknowledged by the school's rewards system and a merit should be awarded to the student using school's rewards system. The code **M in a circle** should also be recorded on the students' work to show that a merit has been added to ePortal.

During periods of time when students are undertaking summative tests or completing coursework or controlled assessments it is accepted that teachers will prioritise this assessment over the marking of students' written work in exercise books or assessment folders.

In Years 7-10 and 12 each student will receive effective written feedback regularly. In Years 11 and 13 students will receive this regularly and proportionately.

### **2c. Effective Written Feedback**

Faculty Assessment Plans will state that effective written feedback will be given to pupils regularly. It should also state which pieces of student work could receive effective written feedback. The phrase 'Next Steps' will also be written which will show that this feedback is effective written feedback.

For all effective written feedback, the teacher will record the date on the student's work when they gave the written feedback to the student. When effective written feedback has been undertaken this may not necessarily include a written grade for students in Years 7-9 but it will always include some feedback that explains what the student needs to do in order to make further progress. This means that effective written feedback will always include the phrase '**NEXT STEPS**' as part of the written teacher dialogue followed by detailed comments from the teacher explaining what the student needs to do to make further progress towards their end of year target.

Regular effective written feedback will include written comments on what the student has done well. It should also detail what needs further improvement and how that improvement may be secured in future work. This will include a comment about a skill or action that the student needs to undertake when they complete subsequent work. When the teacher assesses any future work that the student has completed they will be able to judge whether the student has acted on the feedback and whether they are making progress.

Where students are undertaking exam board related coursework or controlled assessment during an assessment window then the teacher must always refer to the exam board regulations which may limit the quantity and detail of written feedback including next steps.

In Years 7 - 9, teachers will assess with regard to the appropriate framework. For students in Years 10-13 teachers should assess using assessment criteria set out in specifications to indicate the grade which work at this level would be likely to gain. In Years 10-11, effective written feedback will refer to exam board grades where applicable. Assessments of students work in Years 12-13 will relate directly to the requirements and methodologies of the relevant awarding bodies for the AS, A-level or other Key Stage 5 qualifications being studied. It is important that students have the opportunity to develop their understanding of the different levels or if they are meeting age expected criteria or exam grades as appropriate and how to progress. This will necessitate the teacher providing specific advice and targets for improvement when undertaking effective written feedback of students' work in Years 10-13 and provide quality detailed feedback as part of this process to students. Teachers should be mindful of all aspects of these students' work – both written and oral and they should cross check this with target data to ensure students are performing in line with their ability and potential.

### **Section 3. Assessment Tracking Systems at Belper School & Sixth Form Centre**

#### **3a. Assessment Tracking Systems for Teachers**

Teachers need to know if students are on track to achieve end-of-year or key stage expectations, and whether students are where they should be, and they are best placed to make such judgements through their professional knowledge. However, data about this needs to be recorded so that the school can effectively track and monitor the progress of students including specific cohorts and learner groups. Unless there are issues of performance to address and monitor, or mock exam grades need recording, whole school summative data will not normally be collected more than three times a year per pupil.

In addition to termly ePortal data entry, some faculties may have specific ways of tracking student progress as detailed in their Faculty/Department Assessment Procedures. As part of the tracking process three times each academic year (twice for Year 11 and Year 13) all teachers are required to record a series of assessment data into ePortal including an 'estimated target grade' (for the end of the academic year for all students in Years 7-9, the end of year 11 for students in Years 10-11, and the end of the academic year for students in Years 12-13) based on students' current performance. This data is recorded in ePortal using a published timetable of autumn, spring and summer data entry windows. The data is then exported into the school's electronic data analysis tool (currently SISRA Analytics). This facilitates teachers' access to data and targets and enables teachers to inform their practice accordingly.

All end of Key Stage 4 targets in SISRA Analytics and ePortal for students in Years 7-11 are currently based on students' performance in year 6 (key stage 2) statutory tests. Most students are set targets based on making a minimum of three levels of progress from the end of year 6 to the end of year 11. Some students who are expected to make exceptional progress will be set targets indicating they have made four or more levels of progress in some subjects.

For students in Years 12-13 the targets set for students in SISRA Analytics and ePortal are based on ALIS (Advanced Level Information System) data which analyses students' prior performance at GCSE.

#### **3b. Assessment Tracking System for Students**

Each faculty has a student assessment tracking sheet, as detailed in their Faculty Assessment and Marking Procedures, which is made available for students to use in all subjects. These should be either permanently fixed to the inside of the front of exercise books, and inside the cover of students' folders or within special pages in Student Planners for subjects where students do not have books or folders. The Faculty/Department Assessment Procedures will confirm where students in each subject/year group will be expected to keep this tracking information. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that student assessment tracking sheets are regularly updated. The data that students will be expected to record on their tracking sheets will be determined by the Faculty/Department Assessment Procedures.

### **3c. Assessment Tracking Systems for Parents/Carers**

Parents will be able to track the progress of their child(ren) by reading the next steps actions and other written feedback recorded in student exercise books/assessment folders/Student Planners, or asking students what progress they have been making with work in practical subjects. Additionally, parents/carers with Parental Access via ePortal can log on and view their students current target grades and 'working at' levels and additional data relating to effort, behaviour etc. in each subject. This data is updated in ePortal three times a year for students except those in Year 11 and Year 13 where it is only recorded twice. The grades obtained by students for end of year summative assessments are also recorded electronically in ePortal. Parents/carers will also receive a written report once per year that shows student progress over the last three academic terms in each subject. An opportunity is also made at an annual Parents' Consultation Evening to discuss progress with subject teachers

## APPENDIX 1

Example pro-forma Faculty Assessment Plan

**[Faculty/Department Name]** Faculty Assessment Plan  
Marking of student work – [e.g. Autumn term 1]

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description of task(s) that students could be asked to complete (taking into consideration group rotations as appropriate)</b>	<b>Location where the completed student work can be evidenced including the method by which it will be assessed e.g. teacher assessment, peer assessment etc.</b>
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