



The John Fisher School

Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Responsible: Governors Teaching, Learning & Assessment Committee

Date Revised: March 2015

Review: March 2018

1 Rationale

The Assessment Policy at John Fisher is designed to reflect the agreed 'Aims of the school' and its 'Mission Statement'. It is also designed to comply with the statutory demands of the National Curriculum. The overall progress of each individual pupil is a central theme of the philosophy which underpins everything that we aim to achieve from our curricular and extra-curricular activities. Fundamental to ensuring that such development and progress occurs is a process of assessment which allows for formative and summative judgements to be made. Indeed, the key purpose of assessment is to improve a pupil's learning and, as such, "assessment for learning" must be our primary emphasis.

We believe that self-esteem is a vital factor in a pupil's readiness to learn. Consequently, it is essential that our pupils are given credit for their achievement(s). The quality of their responses and work must be measured against their level of ability or attainment.

In the light of the above rationale it is clear that the main responsibility for implementing this 'Assessment Policy' lies within the academic departments under the leadership of the Subject Leaders.

2 Definition of Assessment

Our working definition of assessment is that it "is a process which provides information on the experience and achievement of the individual pupil, identifies what the pupil knows, understands and can do, and provides information to guide future learning". (TGAT Report).

Types of assessment

Formative - used frequently, either in a formal or informal way, in order to determine what a pupil can do. This evidence will be used to adapt teaching to meet the pupils' needs. Formative assessment can take place as an on-going process and may not leave any written record. Questioning is a means of formative assessment. Formative assessment should encourage pupils to become reflective learners and respond to learning needs. This places pupils at the centre of assessment.

Diagnostic - used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all pupils. Where pupils are recognised as being gifted or as having learning difficulties, appropriate strategies for their needs should be devised. These assessment activities are best placed towards the end of a programme of work rather than at the end. Assessment at Week 10 of 12 allows some opportunity to revisit areas.

Summative - used to draw some conclusions at the end of a significant period of time, or at the end of a unit of work. This will include formal internal and external examinations. This will be a major factor in (i) making decisions about N.C. Levels and (ii) Target Setting. The data will be used to inform pupil groupings and to make judgements on attainment in relation to expectations (Minimum Expected Grades). We expect Depts to carry out formative assessment prior to all Interim Monitoring. This is essential at post-16, where only exam-based data should be entered in IM.

Evaluative - used to determine the effectiveness of an aspect of the work of the school e.g. by Departments in assessing their teaching methodology or Schemes of Work. This will be accompanied by Departmental moderation of work.

3 Methods of assessment

Assessment may be as a result of formal or informal means. It will occur in day-to-day situations, as a result of homework, classwork or through formal tests and exams. A variety of methods may be employed to ascertain a pupil's progress, including:-

- Observations obtained by discussion, question and engagement techniques;
- Practical tests;
- Written tests and exams;
- Oral work;
- Homework;
- Pupil self-assessment, which is only possible when they have a sufficiently clear picture of the targets that their learning is meant to attain.
- Peer assessment

The method to be employed, in any particular circumstance, will depend on the purpose of the assessment and the decisions to be taken in the light of the results that are obtained from it.

4 Assessment Calendar

An Assessment Calendar is published in the School Calendar. This contains a schedule for Interim Monitoring for all Year groups, and a schedule of examinations. It should be noted that all Interim Monitoring is recorded in Levels at Years 8/9 (including sub-levels), and grades at KS4 and KS5. From Sept 2014, Year 7 achievement is measured according to expected progress. Teachers are expected to use formal objective data to make judgements. It is noted that practical subjects such as Art and Design do not record Levels except at the end of term due to the nature of their project-based learning.

5 Key Stage 3

In Sept 2014 the DfE removed the requirement to use NC Levels at KS3. At JFS, all Year 7 pupils are placed in expected progress bands based on attainment in CATs, KS2 tests and internal baseline assessments. We then project pupil progress according to their band for each assessment. Pupil progress is therefore measured according to expected progress for the band. Pupils are allocated in bands for Ma/Sc, En/Hums/MFL, Creative, PE and Music. This process will be rolled through KS3, starting with Year 7 from Sept 2014.

6 Marking

This is an integral part of our assessment programme. Apart from the observation of children during lessons it is our most frequent medium for gauging the level of a pupil's skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities.

The marking of a pupil's work allows for:-

- a) assessment of the content in terms of accuracy (including grammar, spelling and punctuation) and NC Level Descriptions
- b) recognition of effort in terms of thoroughness and presentation;
- c) identification of problems and errors.
- d) the opportunity for diagnostic comment.

To be of value, work must be assessed against specific skills and learning objectives. Pupils must be informed, when a piece of work is set, as to what is required of them in terms of content, length, structure/format, specific skills etc.

Depts have developed their own practice of APP. On this basis, it is expected that Departments will have evolved their own specific assessment practice within the overall recommendations. As a minimum, books should be marked every two weeks – at least to acknowledge completion of work. Diagnostic comment should be for specified pieces of work and determined by Subject Leaders. Departments are expected to utilise a common format of marking with “what went well”(www) and “even better if” (ebi). These comments should be specific to the individual and should give areas to improve upon. At least after assessments, all pupils are expected to engage with the marking with “green pen” comments and reflections. Best practice is shared within Departments.

As an overall expectation:

- * All KS3 work will be marked according to one or two What Went Well, and one Even Better If...
- * Written work, set in class or given for homework at Key Stages 3 & 4, will be awarded a grade from A-E. This grade will indicate the degree of achievement for that piece of work in terms of content, presentation and effort. (Departments may also award a grade/level that indicates attainment).
A series of As will lead to a Achievement rewards under the B4L policy.
A series of Ds/Es will indicate a pupil being a ‘Cause for Concern’. Such a concern may be as a result of lack of effort and/or ability. (Pupils consistently showing a Cause for Concern should be discussed with Subject Leaders and at Departmental Meetings).
- * at Key Stage 3 a pupil’s progress, in terms of NC ‘Levels’, must be ascertained at least once during each half term.
- * at Key Stage 4 a pupil’s progress, in terms of GCSE grades, must be ascertained at least twice every half term (except where Controlled Assessments prevent this).
- * Sixth Form work must be marked so that pupils receive a clear indication about how their work measures against the required standard for AS or A2, or the BTEC criteria .
- * a diagnostic comment must, wherever possible, be given; (A comment such as ‘Good’ is insufficient. Such an assessment would need to be qualified e.g. “This is good because you have written answers containing evidence...” Similarly, for pieces of work that need improvements, some explanation of what is unacceptable should be given and ideas as to how the work could have been improved)

7 Marking Literacy

We expect all colleagues to mark specific issues regarding Literacy at each Key Stage. Teachers must use some discretion for pupils with particular needs, and identify corrections/errors appropriately. We want to raise pupil awareness of spelling, punctuation and grammar through employing a standardised approach. All teachers should use the following simple codes:

- Spelling word incorrectly (if time add correction).
- New paragraph needed

Sp or...



- Capital letter missing or punctuation error
- Poor expression



It is important that we do focus on Subject-Specific Key Words and common errors such as “their” and “there”, “Where” and “were”.

8 Work Scrutiny/Quality Control

The responsibility for Work Scrutiny lies with the Subject Leaders who, at regular intervals, should check the frequency that books are being marked and whether the standard of marking adheres both to the school and departmental policy. At specified times in the School Calendar, work scrutiny will take place, conducted by members of SLT, SLs and KS coordinators. Work Scrutiny will also accompany all lesson observations.

9 Internal formal exams/assessments

- * Formal internal examinations take place annually for Years 7, 8 and 9. Formal examinations take place in May for Year 10 and December/March for Year 11.
- * At these times all Departments must set an exam for the whole year group. This allows for valid comparisons to be made between the classes within a year group.
- * When preparing an exam it is essential that:
 - a. the pupils have been fully briefed on what they need to revise;
 - b. they are told how the exam will be structured and how they should ‘time’ their responses;
 - c. the papers are legible, clearly photocopied and the instructions are clear;
 - d. the exam will occupy the full hour of the timetabled slot;
 - e. the exam is accessible to the full academic ability range;
 - f. the exam emanates from Schemes of Work and, as such, must provide for a summative assessment of a Unit(s) within that Scheme of Work.

Individual departments will have different ideas about how frequently they need to assess their pupils in addition to these periods of formal assessment. They may decide to assess at the end of each ‘unit of work’ or at half-termly intervals. The important thing is that constant monitoring of a pupil’s progress is being made.

All Interim Monitoring must be based precisely upon the results of on-going assessments.

Data from Interim Monitoring is collated and analysed in Pupil Data for KS3, 4Matrix for KS4 and Internal ALPs for KS5.

10 Reporting to parents

10.1 Interim Progress Reports (Years 7, 8, 9 & 10) – see Academic Calendar

Parents of pupils in Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 will be sent an “Interim Progress Report” in December. Evidence will be provided, by each subject teacher, about the pupil’s:-

- Current Level of attainment (Expressed as an NC level or GCSE grade) – Year 7 will be measured as above, on, below expected progress.

- Behaviour (expressed on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 indicates excellence and 5 a major cause for concern).
- Effort (expressed on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 indicates excellence and 5 a major cause for concern).

For Interim Monitoring, teachers will record a current level of attainment. This may be lower than a previous Level/Grade and should trigger concern and possible intervention. The summative final Key Stage Level must record the highest Level attained.

At the end of the Summer Term each subject will provide a comprehensive written report that refers to the pupil's: -

- Knowledge & understanding,
- Strengths and weaknesses in terms of subject specific skills and core skills
- Target level for KS3 or GCSE.
- Exam Mark (expressed as an NC level or GCSE grade)
- Behaviour (expressed on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 indicates excellence and 5 a major cause for concern).
- Effort in Classwork and Homework (expressed on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 indicates excellence and 5 a major cause for concern).
- T.A. Levels (for Year 9) in English, Science and Maths and T.A. Levels in each of the other subjects.

10.2 Full Reports

Parents of pupils in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will be sent a full written report in July. Year 11 parents will be sent a report in February. These reports will refer to the pupil's:

- Knowledge & understanding,
- Strengths and weaknesses in terms of subject specific skills and core skills
- Target(s) for the next phase of his education.
- Behaviour
- Effort in Classwork and Homework
- Projected grade for G.C.S.E. (Year 10 & 11)

These reports will also include a "Form Tutor's Statement" in which an overview of the pupil's personal development is given. This will include mention of his academic progress, but will focus on his behaviour, his attendance and punctuality, his contribution to the life of the school and any special achievements.

10.3 Years 12 & 13

Years 12 & 13 ('A' Level and BTec candidates) use a different style of reporting. These are a combination of Subject Specific Targets and Interim Monitoring grades. These are sent to parents in November, December and March. A Tutor Report is sent to Year 12 and 13 parents in the summer term.

11 Recording

Each Department will have its own system for recording the progress of pupils who are studying their subject. The system will ensure that subject teachers are able to record the progress of pupils in relation to: -

- NC Levels of Attainment. In so doing teachers will consider whether the knowledge, understanding and skills correspond 'on the whole' more closely to the Statements of attainment at one level than another. Evidence to support a teacher's professional opinion of a pupil's progress will be found in pupils exercise books, their own 'Mark Books' and the exercise books/files used for the retention of formal assessments.
- The pupil's general standard of work. This will be clearly seen in 'Mark Books' that record the grades (A-E) awarded for homework and classwork.

Subject Leaders will be responsible for ensuring that their colleagues record marks and progress systematically, in line with agreed Departmental policy.

Information about a pupil's progress must be passed on year by year so that when a teacher becomes responsible for a new set of pupils s/he will be given such a record. This will allow him/her to plan for the group s/he has inherited.