

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting pupils' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence.

An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information to be used as feedback, by teachers, and by their pupils in assessing themselves and each other, to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes 'formative assessment' when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs (Black et al, 2002).

Policy objectives:

- To set out the means by which assessment is used as a tool to inform planning
- To set out the means to track pupil progress.
- To maximize pupils' contribution towards their own progress.
- To empower parents to contribute towards their child's education.

Policy Aims:

- To ensure that information about every child's attainment is based on knowledge gained through observation, questioning, ability to improve after feedback, ability of self-assessment, peer assessment.
- To ensure that every educator has an accurate picture of every child's attainment and progress
- To ensure that all children are informed about their progress and how to better their achievement.

Implementation:

- Clear learning intentions are provided for each lesson and shared with the pupils. Teacher and LSAs can correct against learning intentions of the particular lesson.
- Success criteria should be discussed with students so they are fully aware of what is being expected of them.
- Effective **questioning** techniques are to be used in the classroom as they have a considerable impact on learning. Teachers should give ample time for pupils to answer questions.

- Types of questions include:
 - a. *Wh* questions / closed questions which encourage recall of facts
 - b. Open / open ended questions which encourage pupils to think
 - c. Higher order questions where pupils are encouraged to think of similar situations / stories with different introductions or endings
 - d. Analytical questions which help pupils support their answers with evidence
 - e. Synthesis questions which help pupils form opinions
 - f. Evaluation questions which help pupils analyze and offer alternatives
- Avoiding the hands-up technique helps teachers not to forget pupils who never take a risk.
- Traffic light or thumbs up/down to indicate if they understood the particular topic.
- Teachers should use both oral and written **feedback** to help their pupils. All type of feedback should engage students, be challenging but achievable. The nature of the feedback is more important than the amount.
- The use of comments and marks for the same task should not be used as research shows that pupils ignore comments when marks are also given.
- Feedback in literacy should include comments whereby students reflect on their own work such as suggestions as to what can be written next.
- It is of utmost importance that after every task pupils are given the chance to write corrections of their work and the teachers should correct them all.
- Peer and self **assessment** contribute greatly to pupils' learning. Teachers need to train their pupils by asking questions / make them talk about pictures. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate against success criteria and express themselves.
- Pupils can be encouraged to start evaluating / criticizing events, talks and shows.
- Pupils can also be encouraged to criticize (constructively and in the right manner) a piece of work by their peers.
- Recording assessment: Introduction of some type of structured feedback to parents twice a year. from Kinder to upper years may be explored as a means to keep record and track of pupils' progress.
- Parents' Evening and Parents' Day: These meetings with parents can be used formatively to inform and empower parents about their child's education. If portfolios are in place, parents will have a showcase of their child's progress at school.

2. Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning is more associated with judgements based on scores or levels for statutory or summative purposes. Assessment of learning describes and labels past learning.

Aims and objectives:

- To give a picture of what a particular pupil has learnt up to a specific point in time
- It backs up teacher assessment
- To give a picture of where the school stands as compared with national results when pupils sit for benchmark tests and national annual exams
- To ensure that the result of such assessment is used diagnostically to inform future planning
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses at all levels and helps in the school self-evaluation in analysing the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- Provides information for national monitoring and evaluation.

Implementation:

- Half yearly (February) and Annual exams (June) for Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils. Benchmarking (June) in the three main subjects for Year 6 pupils.
- Half yearly papers are set up by a College Committee. They should serve also in a formative way apart from being summative. Pupils should be given the chance to see the corrected papers for this purpose.
- Core Competencies checklists for the early years are more of a diagnostic nature.
- There should be a consistency of testing against attainment levels (excellent, good, fairly good, needs improvement) in classes wherein results are recorded and used for further planning by teachers.

