

St Ivo School Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Aims

It is the aim of teachers at the school to offer all pupils an opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do. In order to help pupils develop their understanding, knowledge and skills we see assessment as a vital tool. Through assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' work, we aim to:

- Enable pupils to understand what they have to do to attain specific levels and grades
- Facilitate the setting of clear targets for improvement
- Allow staff and pupils to plan more effectively;
- involve pupils and their parents/carers in the pupils' progress;
- provide our school with information to evaluate teaching;
- give pupils helpful feedback on their achievements and areas for development, in order that they can learn more effectively;
- ensure that our practices in this area adhere to the equal opportunities policy of the school.

Principles

Assessment, recording and reporting at St Ivo School should:

- be based on an agreed framework of consistent principles used throughout the school.
- enable the school to fulfil its statutory obligations.
- inform teachers' forward planning;
- involve the learners, so that pupils are aware of the criteria by which they are assessed and that they are provided with feedback so that they can learn more effectively;
- be integrated into curriculum plans. Individual departments are responsible for choosing assessment opportunities, procedures and systems, in order that the pupil is best served in each separate subject;
- provide intelligible and meaningful information for parents;
- be manageable within existing resources and time;
- use a wide variety of assessment techniques;
- be simple and understood by all.

Implementation

The principles of the school's policy give rise to agreed practices in assessment, recording and reporting, specifically:

Assessment Points

The model for all departments is the assessment of a unit of work, module or programme of study three times each year at key stage 3. It is anticipated that one assessment point will normally be an opportunity to formally assess achievement and the pupils' progress in meeting their targets. At key stage 4 and above, the number of assessment points required is determined by departments, but there is at least one major reporting point each year.

Positive feedback

Teachers' feedback to pupils, both written and oral, should focus on their progress and achievement. Such feedback has two purposes; firstly, to reward and praise progress and achievement and, secondly, to identify areas for improvement, future targets and courses of action.

Consistent marking systems

Departments should be confident of assessing to common standards. As part of this, it is expected that, within a department, there will be a common marking system, consistently applied by staff and understood by pupils.

A Wide Variety of Assessment Techniques

Responsibility lies with the individual teacher and with the Head of Department leading the subject team, to use as wide a variety of assessment methods as possible. Pupils must be given full opportunities to show what they know, understand and can do and tests should not be needlessly dependent upon a language which excludes some children (e.g. tests could be conducted orally, or use first language and involve Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, or Special Needs staff.) A range of assessment techniques increases variety and interest in our teaching and learning. Displays, discussion, observation, oral presentation and practical work are examples of wider evidence which can be used to assess pupils. The more formal task of marking can be varied to include grades for effort and attainment; marks for specific skills, pupil self-assessment; pupil and/or staff targets and comments on the completed work. All of this provides invaluable information for the records of achievement.

Reliability and Common Standards

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to put in place a set of criteria for the assessment of pupil work in that subject. Staff must also adhere to the criteria of external assessment bodies, and at all times, pupils should be made aware of both sets of criteria in order that they can assess their own achievements and set meaningful targets. To support these aims departments are developing pupil friendly assessment criteria related to specific topics as part of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategy. An important feature of the AfL strategy is that the criteria are discussed with and understood by students so that they are helped to take the next steps in their learning.

Quality Assurance

At departmental level it is the role of the Head of Department to monitor standards and consistency of assessment within his or her team. The sampling of at least 5% of the department's records of achievement is mandatory. The quality of the reports is also checked by the form tutor, head of year and designated members of the senior management team.

Record of Progress

Reports are in the form of a Record of Progress, which has the same overall format for each department - this consists of a course outline, assessment results/levels over the year in progress and a teacher comment. Comments should be positive and are usually in the form of a dialogue between student and teacher. After mock examinations for key stage 4 and the September report prior to further education applications in year 13, summative reports are written in the third person, so that extraction for references and the National Progress File can be made.

Deadlines for reporting are issued in the school calendar and the assessment co-ordinator issues regular briefing papers, or reminders to staff. Records of Progress are sent home to parents once a year and arrangements are made to discuss the student's progress at parents/carers' consultation evenings. The Head of Year is also available to discuss overall progress. Copies of record of progress are kept in school and are attached to a pupil's individual record. It should be noted that although this fulfils our statutory obligations, contact with home is promoted through the planner system, merit and credit marks, student monitoring and the importance given to the role of the form tutor to ensure that parents feel they are involved in their children's progress.

Consultation Evenings

Each year group has one parent/carers' consultation evening per year. Appointment sheets are issued to staff and pupils via the head of year. Pupils make appointments with the teachers in their subjects and a time of five minutes is set aside for each consultation. The form tutor and head of year are also available to discuss pastoral issues.

Merits and Credits, Rewards and Praise

Merit marks are awarded in year 7, with credit marks in years 8 and 9. Individual departments set the criteria for awarding marks, but teachers can also award marks for helpful behaviour, or good conduct about the school. Staff record these marks in the student's planner and these accumulate so that bronze, silver and gold certificates are awarded by the Head of Year in assembly. During and at the end of half-terms, student achievement is celebrated in assemblies. At the end of the year both year group and whole school assemblies celebrate student achievement in all its forms. Some departments award certificates, prizes and trophies for effort and

achievement. Pupils are praised within the classroom situation where appropriate. This can be in the form of oral comments, written response to work, or in the planners and the records of achievement. Many departments share exceptional work with the head of department, head of year, or a member of the senior management team. In the sixth form, green slips notify the student and the form tutor of good work, or a significant contribution to school life. The Head's newsletter, issued at the ends of terms, also seeks to mark student achievement in all its forms, beyond the immediate school forum.

Monitoring, Tracking and Progress Checks

Each year team develops their own methods for monitoring progress. In years 7, 8 and 9 for example, this takes the form of interims twice a year. The times for these are recorded on the school calendar and involve a simple A - E, 1 - 5, effort and attainment system. Significant achievements and concerns are reported home. In the sixth form, a full academic tracking process exists whereby teachers record progress half-termly against a 'minimum level of expectation' grade which is derived from ALIS. This information is discussed with the student and supplies valuable evidence for meaningful tutor/student dialogue. The progress each half term and the ALIs grade are reported home to parents. Target setting is made more individual through this system.

Self Assessment and Target Setting

Marking is seen as a dialogue between student and teacher and students should be given opportunities to assess themselves at least three times per year. Students are involved in writing their overall comments on their records of progress and they have a responsibility to negotiate with their form tutor targets for future improvement in their work. Targets should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time -constrained. Teachers should offer these guidelines to students in order that the targets enable progress. Targets need to be recorded in planners so that targets underpin future teaching, learning and assessment. Publication of student friendly assessment criteria at the start of a project enables pupils and staff to target realistic, but challenging targets as part of their progression within a subject.

At a whole school level, targets are set for the GCSE cohort in the autumn term of Year 10. Target grades are set with reference to prior and current performance as well as future potential. These grades are monitored throughout the course. Action by the subject teacher is taken if students appear to be diverting from their target grades.

Examinations

The internal examinations timetable is created and arranged by the examinations officer, who also administers all arrangements for external examinations. Internal examinations and tests are only held where they are deemed worthwhile and a productive part of the learning process.

Analysis of examination results

Results of external examinations and statutory National Curriculum assessments at key stage 3, are analysed both in subject departments and for the school as a whole. The intention of these analyses is to identify where strong performance exists and where improvement is needed. Departments are required to consider the reasons for particular levels of performance between syllabuses, subjects, teachers and teaching groups, and trends over time. As a result, good practice is identified and shared; and weaknesses addressed.

The school is developing its systems for monitoring pupil progress and for measures of value added. A system of projected grades, value added measurement and student tracking exists in the sixth form.

Training and Sharing Good Practice

The Assessment Co-ordinator delivers training to whole staff, or smaller departmental, and/or pastoral groups. Progress File training, for example, is given to year 10 tutors on the outset of the process leading to the National Progress File and new staff have an assessment, recording and reporting session within their induction programme. There are regular reminders and tips offered at staff briefing sessions, or statutory meetings.

The Assessment Co-ordinator is available to assist departments, or attend departmental, or pastoral meetings. The head of department, or head of year is responsible for training and supporting individual staff in assessment, recording and reporting practices which affect their particular areas. Departmental policy should be clearly stated and issued to all staff within that area.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The Assessment Co-ordinator and Senior Management Team

The Assessment Co-ordinator is responsible for briefing the governors' curriculum and assessment committee, the senior management team, the curriculum management group and the senior co-ordinating group on current assessment, recording and reporting issues. The co-ordinator has oversight of assessment in the school.

The Head and both deputies are involved in reviewing examination results with heads of department at the beginning of the Autumn term each year.

The senior management team checks reports for quality and comments on standards to the assessment co-ordinator.

Heads of Department and Subject Teachers

It is the head of department's responsibility to ensure that departmental policy

adheres to school policy and that each member of the department is aware of both. They should also report back to the department on assessment issues discussed at management meetings. The head of department, or his or her delegate should ensure that deadlines for reporting are met; they should sample reports and monitor marking and assessment within the department. Subject teachers should be aware of, and abide by, departmental and school policies.

Heads of Year and Form Tutors

Both tutors and heads of year play a vital role in quality assurance in relation to reporting. They monitor reports sent home; keep themselves aware of important issues in those reports and respond to, or refer on to a relevant authority (such as the head of a subject area) the comments made by parents after reports have been sent home. In the form tutor's report, the tutor is responsible for assessing performance in personal and social education, monitoring attendance, behaviour and punctuality and recording achievements brought to their attention by the student, or a member of staff.

Curriculum Management Group Pastoral Management Group and Senior Co-ordinating Group

The Curriculum Management Group, comprising heads of major departments and post holders with curriculum responsibilities, meets at least twice per term. Its partner group, the Pastoral Management Group, consisting of heads of year, assistant heads of year and the deputy head pastoral, also meets at this time. The Senior Co-ordinating Group, consisting of all heads of department and heads of year as well as post holders with major responsibilities, meets again, at least twice per term. In all three groups, teacher assessment, end of key stage reporting and assessment and examination organisation and timing are all discussed and reviewed.

Governors' Curriculum and Assessment Committee

The Governors' Curriculum and Assessment Committee meets approximately twice per term. Its terms of reference include, "to ensure that statutory requirements of Assessment, Recording and Reporting are met". The committee considers developments and initiatives in the curriculum and assessment and monitors the effectiveness in curriculum provision, the school's assessment procedures, and the school's examination results.

School Self Assessment Working Group

This group devises and plays a crucial role in assessing departments and policies within the school. AfL is placed on the agenda at least once per year so that its application and impact can be monitored.

Policy Reviewed: Summer 2005
Review Date: Summer 2007