



Wadebridge School

Assessment and Feedback Policy

Contact Person: S Williams

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Preamble

This policy has been developed by the Assessment Group in response to the major changes that have taken place to the national examination systems (new KS2 tests, the demise of NC levels at KS3 and the introduction of new GCSE specifications and grading systems). Whilst developing this policy the Assessment Group have gathered opinions from each curriculum area within the school and taken heed of two reports produced by the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group published in March 2016

- Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking
- Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with data management.

Assessment

Teaching and learning are inherently interactive and assessment forms an integral part of the process. Teachers need to know about their pupils' progress and assessment provides a mechanism for meaningful interaction between teacher and learner: a way for teachers to acknowledge pupils' work, check their understanding and progress and, thereby, make decisions about what the teacher and the learner need to do next. The primary aim of any assessment is to facilitate pupil progress.

Assessment can take many forms including, but not limited to:

- teachers asking pupils questions
- pupils reviewing their own work – self-assessment
- pupils checking each other's work – peer assessment
- teachers marking pupils' work

The school uses the new GCSE grades 9 -1 throughout years 7 to 11, other than in some vocational subjects in KS4 (e.g. BTEC and Technical Awards) where grades Distinction*, Distinction, Merit and Pass are used. These grades may be sub-divided into three bands +(1), =(2), -(3) to denote where the piece of work falls within the grade boundaries. Although teachers may comment on things like presentation or effort no grades should be given for this.

Progress

Progress is measured in terms of how far pupils have moved from their KS2 prior attainment baselines, progress occurs over time as pupils improve their levels of attainment.

In order to help facilitate progress pupils are set Minimum Expected Grades (MEG) in each subject in Year 7 that relate to the end of KS4 using the new GCSE grades 9 – 1. MEGs are arrived at using KS2 average scores in English and Maths and the expected GCSE outcomes for pupils with similar scores using data from FFT Aspire. When pupils choose their options and move into KS4 aspirational target grades are set to facilitate progress beyond the relevant MEG. These target grades are informed by teachers' knowledge of the pupils using professional judgements. As students make progress these targets may be adjusted upwards to ensure learners are challenged to achieve the highest grades possible. It should be stressed here that progress is measured from KS2 baseline not towards these aspirational target grades and that a subject's or a teacher's performance should **never** be judged by considering how many students reach their target; teacher performance **is** evaluated on how much progress students make from their differing starting points.

To help evidence progress and facilitate discussions between teacher and learner the school uses a system of 'flightpaths' to record assessment information. These show pupils' starting points, MEGs, aspirational targets in such a way that assessment scores can be plotted to allow judgements to be made about pupil progress (see Appendix 1 for examples of flightpaths)

Marking and DIRT

For assessment to be effective in moving pupils forward in their learning then it should be accompanied by some form of feedback that the learners should then respond to. This feedback can take different forms:

- oral feedback to individual learners
- small group or whole class instructions planned and led by the teacher
- written feedback providing learners with the next steps in their learning

However, the school is mindful of the report from the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group on eliminating unnecessary workload around marking warns that

Marking has evolved into an unhelpful burden for teachers when the time it takes is not repaid in positive impact on pupils' progress. This is frequently because it is serving a different purpose such as demonstrating teacher performance ... Too often it is the marking itself which is being monitored and commented on by leaders rather than pupil outcomes and progress as a result of quality feedback.

The consequence of this skewed dominance of written feedback means that teachers have less time to focus on the most important aspect of their job – teaching pupils.

*In summary we recommend that marking should be **meaningful, manageable and motivating**.*

To make marking **meaningful** teachers will provide feedback on selected pieces of work that is directly related to the learning objectives for the piece of work in question and will include identifying strategies that advance pupil progress and outcomes. Learners are required to respond to this feedback in Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time either in class or as homework. Each curriculum area has developed its own DIRT policy and practice in line with the whole school assessment and feedback policy.

To ensure that marking is **manageable** each curriculum area will ensure that marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback. It must be acknowledged that time spent marking does not always correlate with successful pupil outcomes and when carried out ineffectively can constitute a waste of teacher time. There is no expectation for every piece of pupils' work to be marked.

To make marking **motivating** it is important to acknowledge the effort a pupil has put into producing a piece of work and to celebrate the progress they have made but it must be remembered that there are many ways to do this without giving extensive written comments. Accepting work that pupils have not checked sufficiently detracts from pupils' responsibility for their own learning and they should be encouraged to check their own understanding of the success criteria so that work is completed to the highest standard before it is submitted for marking.

It is important to note that it is the quality not the quantity of marking and feedback that matters in helping learners progress and that when judgements are made about teaching and learning excessive and ineffective marking does not represent good practice.

Progress Reports

It is acknowledged that pupils make progress at different rates in different areas of the curriculum. Individual subjects assess pupils' performance according to its own assessment framework. The school will collect information on pupils' performance twice a year in KS3 (years 7 and 8) and three times a year in KS4 (years 9, 10 and 11) and communicate this to parents in the form of a Progress Report. The exact timings of the publication of these Progress Reports is set on the school calendar. Each data capture requires teachers to enter information directly into the relevant marksheet in SIMS. This information includes:

- Minimum Expected Grades (set in the Autumn Term of Year 7)
- Aspirational targets (set at the start of KS4 and may be periodically revised)
- A Progress judgement (is the pupil above, on, or below trajectory to meet the relevant MEG?)
- Expectations in the class (are pupils Exceeding, Meeting or Below their teachers' expectations)
- Expectations beyond the classroom (are pupils Exceeding, Meeting or Below their teachers' expectations)
- A teacher comment consisting of two bullet points (limited to 70 characters each) indicating strategies that will lead to the pupil making further progress.