ASSESSMENT RECORDING AND REPORTING POLICY

Effective teaching and learning can only take place where there is a continuous feedback of information comparing what has been taught to what has been learnt. A successful assessment procedure enables teachers to analyse the learning styles of their pupils and use this information to modify their teaching to increase pupil achievement.

Warminster School also places a strong emphasis on the importance of the partnership between the School and its parents as a means of maximising pupil potential. Central to the success of this partnership is the communication between the School and parents. Formal, written reports and grade cards form an important role in this communication.

AIMS OF THE POLICY:
- by its implementation to facilitate progress in pupils' learning;
- to provide a guide for each Department to develop its own assessment policy;
- to promote a consistent approach to assessment;
- to offer guidance on Assessment, Marking, Recording and Reporting procedures and practices;
- to underline the importance of assessment and moderation procedures;
- to inform staff of statutory requirements;
- to detail specific staff responsibilities.

SECTION I - THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING:
1. The main aim of the assessment process must be to facilitate progress in a pupil’s learning. It is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, and is a valuable formative and summative tool. Departments should give careful thought to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole Curriculum and learning opportunities.
2. Effective assessment provides:
   - a statement of current attainment;
   - a record of progress;
   - an acknowledgement of achievement and underachievement;
   - information on the pupils’ readiness for future learning;
   - information on the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed and the current scheme of work.
3. To be at its most effective assessment should primarily be a continual process and not an infrequent, purely summative exercise.
4. The outcomes of assessment should be used to modify teaching methods as well as indicate pupil progress. On entering the School, a pupil will normally be given an entrance test, at the appropriate level, in order to establish a baseline assessment from which future progress can be measured.
5. Positive and constructive assessment feedback can be a powerful tool in raising a pupil’s self-image and encouraging further study.
6. In addition to normal assessment, staff are advised to record, initially informally eg in their mark book, significant points in a child's development, such as:
   - a moment of 'breakthrough' in understanding;
   - interesting examples of problem solving strategies;
• difficulties encountered/areas of weakness and possible reasons for them. These records are invaluable for reports and/or parents evenings.

7. Assessment which has a common procedure:
   • directs teacher judgements that are as valid and reliable as possible, consistent both within the School, and with N.C./Exam Board standards.
   • promotes a common interpretation of the Exam Board grade descriptors.
   • gives teachers confidence in their professional judgement and skill.
   • is fair to pupils.

8. Assessment records:
   • are based on an agreed set of principles and purposes;
   • assess pupil progress against N.C./Exam Board criteria;
   • must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and not administratively burdensome.

9. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.

10. Assessment gradually builds up into a profile for each pupil over their school career.

11. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the evidence and assessment techniques being used and to review their own progress by a procedure containing an element of self-assessment.

12. Assessment records provide confidence between teachers across phases and enhance progression for pupils. Prior achievement records for new pupils are recorded/assimilated onto Senior School records as appropriate.

13. Recognition is given by the Headmaster and Governors for the time and resource implications of good assessment, and due allowance made for this in the construction of the teachers' working day.

SECTION 2 - INFORMATION/ADVICE FOR STAFF:
The regular assessment of pupils' progress is an integral part of good and effective teaching/learning in the classroom. Such assessments may range from simply looking over pupils' shoulders while they are writing during a period of normal Classwork, to the use of formally administered tests and examinations. A number of methods of assessment can be used though not all need contribute to pupils' academic records.

Departments need to:
• use the programme(s) of study to agree/identify opportunities for assessment;
• plan a variety of learning experiences for pupils in their Schemes of Work so that there is a good balance throughout the course and within individual lessons. This will allow for different forms of assessment to be employed so that weaknesses/strengths in pupils' learning can be identified and improvements achieved;
• consider carefully the nature of the tasks set. To have a positive effect on the standards of pupils' achievement, an appropriate level of work needs to be provided which probe pupils' grasp of the material being studied;
• utilise a range of informal assessment techniques so that pupils are challenged to show the extent of their understanding. e.g. oral questioning by the teacher on a whole-class, group, or individual basis, the discussion of individual responses to practical and creative tasks, and helping pupils over specific difficulties as exercises proceed.
• increase the range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment by:
  i. good classroom organisation which encourages pupils to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group;
  ii. effective use of the co-operation of support teachers and other adults in the classroom;
  ii. classroom experiences which arise from a wide range of stimuli and lead to tasks which offer opportunities for observation.
• have clear and high expectations of pupils’ performances and provide them with understandable assessment criteria so that they are clear about what they need to learn;
• ensure that, in as far as is possible, account is taken of pupils’ attainment on entry in Year 7 or later.
• ensure that procedures and practices adopted for assessing pupils’ progress are not too time-consuming and bureaucratic for teachers and/or pupils.

SECTION 3 - MARKING and PUPIL SELF-ASSESSMENT:  
For full details on the School’s marking policy see the separate policy.

The one-to-one tutor/pupil interview is an opportunity for pupils to evaluate their own strengths/weaknesses and to work collaboratively with their tutor in setting attainable targets for the future.

SECTION 4 - MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES:  
Several different systems are employed to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the degree to which it is being implemented:
• Tutors regularly monitor their pupil’s Organisers. Amongst other things this can show:
  i. the degree of parental involvement - they are asked to sign the Organiser every week.
  ii. organisational problems, which can be either pupil or teacher related, e.g. a pupil may be failing to complete set tasks or may be given too many tests in the same week.
• Spot checks are undertaken by each Head of Department to ascertain how well the various policies concerned with assessment/recording and reporting are being implemented.
• Departments regularly review pupil progress. Those pupils causing concern as well as those who are excelling are discussed and certain names and information will be passed onto the relevant tutor and Head of School. Those pupils who are suspected of underachievement, including pupils of average or higher ability who are doing just enough to get by, are the focus of discussion. The tutor will form an overall picture of individual pupils and will liaise with the Head of School as necessary.
• Heads of School perform detailed analysis of pupil progress through academic accountability files following each grade card or report session.
• Matters of concern related to assessment/recording and reporting should be discussed with the Deputy Head (Academic).
SECTION 5 - RECORDING ASSESSMENTS:
Statutory Requirements:
Elaborate arrangements for recording assessments and retaining evidence are neither required by the National Curriculum, nor necessary to satisfy ISC inspections. Details to be provided to a pupil's new school must contain the teacher's latest assessment of the pupil's progress.

Methods of Recording:
One single, prescriptive system for Recording cannot be imposed on all Departments. Teachers should record attainment in all assessments, oral, written or practical, in their mark books, together with any other key progress indicators or weaknesses. Departments must have an agreed standard for assessing work, particularly project or coursework, and should have a common recording system to enable smooth transfer of pupils through a modular course.

Teachers should use the Pupil Organiser as a continuous and interactive method of recording individual successes or causes of concern. The importance of the Pupil Organiser as a means of motivating pupils, and also maintaining communication with tutors, parents and boarding house staff, cannot be overemphasised.

The teacher's mark book, with associated annotations, is usually the primary record of pupil attainment, although individual Departments often have a detailed subject record of pupil performance accessed through the Staff Pool.

Access to mark books can be restricted to Heads of Department, Heads of Schools, and both Deputy Heads.

SECTION 6 - REPORTING TO PARENTS:
Please also refer to guidance notes for the completion of reports.

Statutory Requirements:
As a fee-paying school, Warminster School considers it appropriate to exceed the statutory requirement of one written report every school year. Warminster School aims to convey results of external examinations to parents as soon as is administratively possible.

Warminster School will forward the following details to a new school (with the permission of the pupil's parents or guardian):
- The last year's reports and grade card results.
- A reference written by the tutor on behalf of the Headmaster.
- A summary of the pupil's extra-curricular achievements.

Warminster School issues written reports for all pupils at the end of the Autumn Term. Reports are written for Years 11 and Upper Sixth at the end of the Spring Term. End of Year reports, including a summary of the work covered in the year, are issued to Years 7 to 10 and Lower Sixth pupils at the end of the Summer Term. Grade cards are issued for all pupils at half-terms and for Years 7 to 10 and Lower Sixth at the end of the Spring Term. Written reports should be as constructive and specific as possible. Please refer to the report writing policy.
SECTION 7 - SETTING STANDARDS:
Departments need to:

- ensure that assessments are consistent so that when judgements are made against standards there is fairness for pupils both within a teaching group and between teaching groups;
- develop standard activities focused on agreed objectives which have agreed and standardised criteria for assessment;
- compare the performance of pupils from different classes on common activities;
- ensure that coursework/controlled assessment is moderated to meet GCSE, A level and IB requirements.

SECTION 8 - END OF KEY STAGE ARRANGEMENTS:
Key Stage 4, AS and A Level and IB:
Pupils must be well prepared for the tests. Their preparation may include:

- having taken several tests of similar structure as part of the course of study;
- having taken one ‘mock’ exam;

N.B. Past paper test questions should be used in the tests and prep/classwork tasks.

- having had feedback on their performance in the test papers;
- tutoring in revision and examination techniques;
- a briefing of what to expect - this could include information about the format of the tests, their significance, the nature of the questions, the structure of the exam weeks, opportunities for revision and details of available support and counselling.

Entry to the different tasks or tiers:
Departments must use the evidence from testing and teacher assessment to ensure that pupils are entered for the appropriate tier of the exams.

Study leave is given for GCSE, A Level and IB formal exams and the Head of Middle School and the Head of Sixth Form co-ordinate the activities of tutors to ensure that pupils are carefully tutored/prepared in how to fully exploit this opportunity.

SECTION 9 - STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:
A school policy in itself provides only a basis for action and the means to ensure consistent and effective implementation need to be found - the roles of Senior Staff and Heads of Department are central to this process.

The Deputy Head (Academic) should:

- facilitate INSET/discussion opportunities for departments or teams of teachers to discuss assessment/recording/reporting;
- look at early predictions of final GCSE/A level grades and work with the Head of Middle School and the Head of Sixth Form to implement systems aimed at substantially improving their performance;
- sample the work of each Department;
- analyse and evaluate test/exam results and discuss implications of findings with Heads of School and Heads of Departments with respect to future developments in teaching and assessment;
- oversee the arrangements for public examinations and internal mock exams;
• keep up-to-date with local and national developments relating to assessment, disseminate relevant documentation to Heads of Subject and advise other colleagues when necessary;
• support, monitor and evaluate assessment/recording/reporting within the school.

**Heads of Department should:**
• monitor and evaluate teachers’ marking and other assessment/recording/reporting practices within their department, e.g. they should ensure that the common grading policy is applied consistently across the Department;
• promote consistency in assessment/recording/reporting within their department;
• provide guidance on judgmental issues when assessment standards are being set;
• ensure that their staff have access to relevant publications and are fully informed of the arrangements for public examinations;
• use the results of assessment to inform and direct future teaching and curriculum planning;
• undertake periodic examination of pupils' written work. Follow-up needs to take place where standards are poor or excellent;
• periodically meet with the Deputy Head (Academic) to discuss, amongst other issues, matters relating to assessment/recording/reporting.

**Tutors should:**
• regularly check Pupil Organisers and monitor pupils' progress;
• undertake initial examination of the quality of the comments made by staff on reports, reporting errors for correction. If a tutor is concerned that the comment is insufficient or inappropriate they should refer the matter to the Deputy Head (Academic);
• deliver those aspects of the PSE course related to preparing for examinations, e.g. how to revise effectively;
• undertake examination of the comments made by staff on the reports. Issues causing concern should be discussed with the relevant Head of School. Comments expressing excellence should be highlighted for the Headmaster.

**Heads of School should:**
• undertake periodic examination of pupils’ written work and liaise closely with the Deputy Head (Academic) on issues related to assessment, recording and especially reporting. Follow-up needs to take place where standards are poor or excellent;
• undertake further examination of any content of the pupils’ reports which has been raised as a concern by the tutor;
• work with the School Nurse to organise, within the delivery of PSHE, the teaching skills related to preparing for examinations, e.g. how to revise effectively;
• work with the Deputy Head (Academic) to analyse the performance in School examinations, developing action plans to improve the performance of underachievers.
SECTION 10 – IB
The previous nine sections apply to stakeholders concerned with the IB. In addition to these nine sections, the following points also apply:

- Teachers should grade pupil work in accordance with DP marking levels (1-7) and using the criteria pertaining to the mark schemes of the individual subjects, as found in the subject handbooks on OCC.
- Grade cards and reports should use the 1-7 levels to communicate current levels of attainment. Current levels of attainment may not be reflected in the final achieved grades pertaining to the award or failure to be awarded the IB Diploma.
- Decimals or fractions should not be used when communicating levels.
- DP assessment should be both formative and summative when appropriate.
- Each assessment task should enable pupils to access the full range of levels.
- Assessment guidelines should be made available by subject teachers to all stakeholders by rubrics which are clear, transparent, measurable and enable pupils to understand the requirements of the assessment. The development of these rubrics is the responsibility of each teacher.
- Academic Honesty should be a consideration when teachers mark pupil work. Teachers and pupils are aware of the academic honesty policy of the school and adhere to this.
- A calendar of assessment deadlines is updated annually by the IB Coordinator in communication with the Deputy Head and other subject teachers. It is disseminated by the IB Coordinator to stakeholders at the beginning of the academic year. It is the responsibility of subject teachers to adhere to this calendar and to communicate interim deadlines to pupils in order to help pupil planning of work.

Further reading (available via OCC)
Diploma Programme assessment: Principles and practice
The Diploma Programme: From principles to practice

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