



**WESTFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING POLICY**

**DATE September 2008**

**Reviewed by**

**DATE**

## Assessment for Learning Policy

### 1. Definition of terms

#### ASSESSMENT

IN this policy, the term 'Assessment' is based on the Black & William definition:-  
"Assessment refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers and by their pupils in assessing themselves which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged." (Black & William *Inside the Black Box* 1998 Kings College London)

#### ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (Formative assessment)

AfL is any assessment activity which **INFORMS** the next steps to learning. The key message is that AfL depends crucially on actually using the information gained.

#### ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING (Summative assessment)

AfL is any assessment which **SUMMARISES** where learners are at a given point in time – it provides a snapshot of what has been learned (both in terms of attainment and achievement).

#### INDIVIDUAL PUPIL LEARNING TARGETS

These targets are specific actions which pupils can take in order for them to realise learning outcomes / success criteria and / or to make further progress.

#### CURRICULAR TARGETS

A curricular target expresses in words supported by data a specific aspect of the curriculum as a focus for improvement. It may be focused by numeric outcomes. It is identified from a range of sources as an area of weakness in pupil learning. Curricular targets can be for a whole class, a group of pupils and /or an individual pupil. It can also be long-term or medium-term. (Ref: KS3 Assessment for Learning – DfES 0043-2004-G)

### 2. Principles behind assessment policy

We believe that assessment is only valuable when it is part of the whole teaching and learning process. The values and beliefs which underpin the whole school teaching and learning policy also apply to the assessment process – namely that:-

- i) In our school everyone is important. We aim to make everyone feel that they belong, so they want to contribute to each other, the school and the wider community. *Assessment should reflect the inclusive ethos / nature of Westfield Middle School (ie. Everyone in the school community has the right to be provided with appropriate opportunities to demonstrate what they know, can do and understand in a form and*

*manner that is accessible and appropriate. Everyone should support each other in developing and reaching high levels of attainment.)*

- ii) We want everyone to gain as much as they can. The school is a place which offers a wealth of opportunities for learning and development. There us such a lot to learn and our school offers so many ways to learn it. *Assessment should reflect the variety of which in which children learn.*
- iii) You can grow here. We expect young people to become more independent as they acquire the skills and knowledge they need to take greater control of their own progress. We hope that each young person who leaves Westfield Middle School will take with them lasting values, confidence in their own ability and the maturity to face future challenges. *Pupils should be involved in the assessment process and see it as a tool to develop further learning.*

### **3. Specific purposes of assessment (Why do we do assessment at Westfield Middle School?)**

(NB. This section has most validity if it is the result of discussions based around the question: Why do we do assessment at our school – discussions should be held with all stakeholders – eg. staff, pupils, parents, governors, etc.)

1. To advance pupils' learning.
2. To raise pupils' self esteem and motivation.
3. To involve pupils in their learning and assessment and to help them to know their learning is progressing
4. To allow teachers and pupils to evaluate the current level of attainment (where they are at) and plan next steps for learning – at an individual, group, department and whole school level (this includes assessing pupils' readiness for future learning and identifying the particular help that individuals and groups of pupils need).
5. To contribute to the evaluation of the curriculum which is delivered.
6. To assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of teaching and learning styles.
7. To provide a record and track pupil progress.
8. To provide a statement of current attainment for pupil, teacher, parent, governors and outside agencies.
9. To provide information for individual, group, department and whole school targets.
10. To fulfil statutory requirements.

### **4. Practice (How do we assess at Westfield Middle School?)**

#### **a) Teaching, marking and setting targets**

1. Planning should be led by learning objectives rather than activities.

- a) Medium-term planning and day-to-day planning should be guided by key questions:-  
'What do I want pupils to learn by the end of the unit / lesson?'  
'How do I (and the pupils) know that they've learned it?'  
... then plan the activities
2. Teaching expects high achievement and supports it by clarity of aims and outcomes, by methods that involve pupils actively and give them so responsibility for how they learn.
  - a) Lessons take account of National Curriculum levels of attainment / Exam specifications (and lessons are planned around descriptors – especially ensuring that there is coverage of challenging levels appropriate to each class and year group).
  - b) Learning objectives are clearly stated during each lesson (They should be written down by pupils to provide a learning log or may be used as the title for written work).
  - c) Learning objectives are written in terms of which pupils will learn.
  - d) Learning objectives are linked to explicit success criteria / learning outcomes and should form the basis of marking, individual pupil learning target setting and review sessions (inc plenaries).
3. Effective use is made of NC level descriptors, key objectives and exam specifications to demonstrate to pupils what they need to do to progress in their learning and attain higher standards.
  - a) Lessons are planned around level descriptors, framework objectives and exam specifications.
  - b) Levels of attainment, framework objectives and exam specifications are explained to pupils.
  - c) Progression ladders are actively used.
  - d) Exemplar material is used with pupils to highlight the standards for which they are aiming.
  - e) Pupils sometimes mark others' and their own work against NC / Exam criteria and they set individual learning targets for themselves and their peers
4. When work is returned, pupils are given written or spoken feedback which gives a clear evaluation of performance against stated success criteria / learning outcomes. Where appropriate, feedback is given which will lead to pupils recognising their next steps to learning and how to take them.
  - a) Marking should always refer back to learning objectives and to the related key assessment criteria / learning outcomes.

- b) Exercise books should always be marked in line with the whole-school written feedback policy and should be returned to pupils within two weeks of being handed in.
  - c) Each department should agree and publish a comprehensive assessment schedule for each year group which identifies key assessment tasks. These tasks should cover a wide range of assessment styles and should include other forms of assessment than written assessments so that all pupils are able to demonstrate what they know, can do and understand.
  - d) When marking generally for literacy purposes, whole school coding should be used regardless of the subject that gave purpose to the work.
5. Quality and consistency of marking is monitored within departments and by senior managers.
- a) Curriculum co-ordinators / Heads of Department should conduct a scrutiny of work across all year groups at least twice a Year.
  - b) Heads of Year and Senior Leadership Team should conduct a cross-curricular scrutiny of work across all year groups at least once a year. Findings and points for action should be discussed with all staff.
  - c) At least 1 main assessment task should be moderated by all members of the department.

## **b) Monitoring and supporting progress**

1. Data is made available to support the monitoring of progress.
  - a) NC Levels are collated for each year group on a termly basis -> analysis by individual pupil, gender, group are all available.
  - b) National, local and school-level data is made available in the Autumn Terms to allow Curriculum Co-ordinators to make comparisons in order to support the evaluation of school performance.
2. Curricular Target-setting is part of the whole-school system for checking progress. Whole-school checkpoints in the year include:
  - a) Termly updates of NC levels (PAF Grades)
  - b) Annual subject audit / review of performance.
  - c) KS2 target-setting
  - d) KS3 results analysed by Assessment Co-ordinator

NB Curriculum co-ordinators and form tutors use this data to review pupil performance across subjects, year groups and across key stages. All curricular target-setting is designed to be diagnostic. It should ensure that pupils who need support are identified and that intervention programmes are designed to meet their individual

needs. Increasingly, pupils should be involved in the review process and should reflect this data with their teachers.

**c. Involving pupils**

1. Pupils are given at least 2 opportunities for peer and self assessment per year in each subject.
  - a) This may include strategies such as 'traffic lighting', marking against NC / Exam criteria, marking against key framework objectives, setting targets for peers, negotiating targets with teachers.
  - b) Pupils need help in understanding the National Curriculum / Exam criteria and framework objectives and also in how to set realistic targets for future learning and progress.
  - c) Pupils need training in how to self and peer assess.

**d. Communicating with parents and others (reporting)**

1. A strong partnership with parents, based on frequent, regular, personalised and pertinent communication, helps the pupils to achieve their best.
  - a) Autumn Term – Y5-8 – Introductory Parents' Evenings.
  - b) Use of Pupil Organiser to inform parents of homework. It may also be used to record individual learning and behavioural targets, and progress. Monitored by form tutors / Head of Year.
  - c) Spring Term Consultation Evenings with Form and Subject Staff.
  - d) Summer Term – School Reports to Parents followed by consultation evening.
  - e) Information to parents should be clear, consistent and comprehensive and should highlight strengths
  - f) and areas to be developed.
2. Statutory reporting information is provided to parents
  - a) Reports to parents include an indication as to whether pupils are performing above, below or at expected levels of attainment. Year 6 (End of KS2) reports also include detail of NC Test Levels and Teacher assessment levels for Core Subjects. An opportunity for discussion is offered.

**e. Using data**

1. The assessment software is used to collect, store and analyse data for all pupils. Data available includes:  
From Lower School ...

- KS1 Results – NC Test Levels and Teacher Assessments for English and Maths
  - Year 4 QCA Test Results for English and Maths
  - Year 4 Teacher Assessments for English, Maths and Science.
2. From LA ...
    - Fischer Family Trust Predictions in English and Maths.
    - County Comparative data
  3. From National resources
    - RAISE Online
  4. Internally generated ..(please adapt to reflect the data generated internally)
    - Teacher Assessments in all Core and Foundation Subjects (for all year groups ... and updated termly)
    - KS2 Results – NC Test Levels and Teacher Assessments for English, Maths and Science.
    - Year 5 QCA Test Results for English and Maths
    - Year 7 QCA Test Results for Maths
    - Year 8 QCA Test Results for Maths
    - Year 7 Progress Tests for English and Maths
    - Year 8 Locally-agreed Test Results for English
    - Reading/Spelling age for all year groups – done annually in September (NB. This information is stored separately by SEN department)
  5. To Upper School
    - KS1 and KS2 Test Results for English and Maths (+KS2 Test Results for Science)
    - Teacher Assessments for all Core and Foundation Subjects
    - Year 7 Progress Tests for English and Maths
    - Year 8 QCA Test Results for Maths
    - Year 8 Locally-agreed Test Results for English
    - Subject specific information – eg. French & Maths provide a teacher-to-teacher transfer sheet with details of performance in different ATs and detailing curriculum coverage.

All of this information is available to staff, governors, parents and outside agencies.

Data is used for the following purposes:

- a) To provide baseline information for curricular target-setting and for setting individual pupil learning targets.
- b) To provide summative information where required (eg. Statutory reporting to LA and DCSF)
- c) To monitor, track and analyse the progress made by year groups, class groups, teaching groups, gender and ethnic groups and individual pupils.

- d) To monitor, track and analyse the achievement or underachievement by individuals or groups of pupils.
- e) To provide continuity and progression of learning between year groups. (Data and other appropriate information to be provided for new form and subject staff in September)
- f) Subject staff and SENCO may use data to identify individual needs and support application for help from outside agencies.
- g) To inform curriculum delivery and planning (eg. Subject co-ordinators may use data to evaluate the delivery of their subject, to identify areas of strength and weakness and so address this through subject development planning and performance management)
- h) To help set individual and school targets.
- i) To provide continuity and progression of learning between phases and Key Stages and to allow for ease of transfer. Data is collected from feeder lower schools and LA (Aspire) on entry and fed into system.
- j) To measure the effectiveness of the school.

#### **f) Managing assessment**

1. Assessment is seen as an essential teaching skill and there is an important link between assessment and high quality teaching.
  - a) It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning experience at all levels – from planning through to delivery and evaluation. They should use the information and data available to them to inform pupil learning. They should keep abreast of the latest developments in assessment and follow the guidelines set out in the school assessment policy. Where identified, either at a personal level as part of a performance management or a whole-school level, training will be provided in order to ensure good assessment practice and uniformity across the school.
  - b) Each subject teacher is responsible for accessing, using, monitoring and updating assessment data for their teaching groups.
  - c) Each subject teacher is responsible for ensuring that all lessons deliver the agreed schemes of work and that all assessments identified in that scheme of work are completed.
  - d) Records of individual pupil progress should be simple, relevant and useful, providing information for future planning. They should be regularly maintained and should be available to support judgements made – particularly when reporting to parents.

- e) All reports and comments re: pupil attainment should be supported by evidence and should not be a surprise to pupils!
  - f) Assessment practices should be communicated and shared with pupils – displays, reference materials, checklists, curriculum progression ladders, etc. should be used to support pupils in becoming competent at assessing their own and others' performance and level of attainment.
2. Senior managers have a strong understanding of key aspects of assessment, from the use of data to effective classroom practice, and monitor these.
- a) Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring assessment practices and the use of data across the school. They establish an annual planning and review cycle which ensures the Curriculum Co-ordinators / Heads of Department regularly reflect on the progress pupils make in their subject area, and that they reflect annually on the performance of their department. Individual teachers are also responsible for reflecting on the data available and should set challenging targets for all of their pupils.
  - b) The Assessment Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that all relevant data is available to staff and administrative support should be provided to help collect and produce this data.
  - c) The Assessment Co-ordinator is responsible for analysing data and reporting back to whole-staff, SLT, governors, parents and individual members of staff.
  - d) Curriculum Co-ordinators are responsible for devising an assessment policy and an assessment schedule pertinent to their own curriculum area based on this document. The assessment schedule should ensure that assessment activities covering different learning styles and abilities are included in that schedule. It should also ensure that appropriate levels of challenge are planned in for all pupils.
  - e) Curriculum Co-ordinators are responsible for analysing the data provided to them and setting curricular targets for all pupils in their subject area.
  - f) Curriculum Co-ordinators are responsible for monitoring the implementation and review of the assessment policy and schedule within their own curriculum area.

**g. Connecting the elements of assessment.**

1. Assessment is the key to improving the curriculum, teaching and learning and should be inclusive.

- a) Assessment is the joint responsibility of pupils, individual teachers, year teams, Curriculum Co-ordinators and SMT.
  - b) Communication and sharing good practice between staff is vital to developing assessment for learning across the school and ensuring the consistency of approach.
2. Assessment is only worth doing if it is used as a learning or evaluation tool.

## **5. Linked documents**

- Written Feedback / Marking Policy
- Subject assessment policies and programmes or study.
- Teaching and Learning policy.
- Monitoring and evaluation policy.
- SEN Policy and IEPs.
- School and subject development plans.

## **6. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the policy**

Monitoring and evaluating the assessment policy should be carried out at several levels.

- Senior management team / Assessment Co-ordinator.
- Heads of Year.
- Curriculum Co-Ordinators
- Governors.

Date for review of the Assessment Policy : DATE October 2009.