

## Assessment For Learning Policy

### Our vision

Our vision is to provide a high quality education for all our students. We are committed to continuously improving all aspects of that education for young people. What we offer will, within the context of our humanities ethos, support the development of successful, moral, adaptable, autonomous, life-long learners.

When this vision is fully realised we will be the first choice for secondary education within our community.

### What is Assessment for Learning

'Assessment for Learning is a process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there'

*Assessment Reform Group 2002*

Assessment for Learning acknowledges that learners must ultimately be responsible for their learning since no one else can do it for them. It is a continuous process that provides information on the achievement of pupils in relation to clearly defined national criteria and is an integral part of our planning, recording, reporting, and evaluation cycle.

Good Assessment for Learning at our school will ensure that all students know how they are doing and understand what they need to do to improve and how to get there. They will get the support they need to be motivated, independent learners with ambitious targets for improvement. All teachers will be equipped to make accurate and reliable judgements about their students' attainment based on a range of evidence, they will understand the concepts and principles of progression and know how to use their assessment judgements to forward plan and support the progress of all students. The school will have a structured, systematic and robust assessment system for making regular, useful, accurate and manageable assessments of students and for tracking their progress rigorously against targets. All parents and carers will know how their child is doing, what they need to do to improve and how they can support their child and their teachers.

Assessment for learning is an essential part of learning and teaching. It involves sharing learning goals with pupils. It aims to help pupils to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for. It involves students in peer and self assessment. It provides feedback which leads to pupils recognising their next steps and the setting of curricular targets to support aid progress towards those targets in small, easy steps. It involves both teachers and students reviewing and reflecting on assessment data and information.

**The national expectation is that all students will make two levels progress across a key stage. This policy sets out the strategies that teachers and students at Darton High School will use in the assessment for learning process in order to strive to achieve this goal.**

**Our assessment policy is in 2 distinct sections:**

- 1. Assessment for learning in everyday lessons**
- 2. Formative use of summative assessment**

**Assessment for learning in everyday lessons**

**Objective led lessons**

In order for effective learning to take place, students need to be made aware of what they will be learning during the lesson. This makes the learning explicit.

Teachers will:

- Share the 'big picture' with students
- Display learning objectives constantly and share them with students at the beginning of the lesson
- Monitor progress towards the learning objectives regularly throughout the lesson and evaluate them at the end
- Share success criteria with students each lesson
- Differentiate outcomes to challenge and support students

**Oral and written feedback**

Feedback is more effective if it focuses on the task, is given regularly and while still relevant. It should confirm the pupils are on the right track, giving details of why answers are correct or wrong and should stimulate correction of errors or improvement to a piece of work. Effective feedback should always make suggestions for improvement and students should have time to reflect on these.

In order to achieve this all teaching staff will:

- Have a clear understanding of pupil levels/grades and how they can support students to achieve them
- Give regular and relevant feedback that is focussed on the objectives of the lesson (but may not necessarily give the students a level or grade)
- Give positive and encouraging feedback that highlights the areas of success so students can repeat it (but may not necessarily give the students a level or a grade)
- Give specific feedback that shows students how much they have progressed towards their target level or grade on specific occasions
- Give specific feedback to show **HOW** a student can improve
- Give the students the opportunity and responsibility to respond to their feedback
- Mark/assess class work, coursework and homework and return it to students in a **maximum of one week** (two weeks if coursework needs heavy annotation)
- Make effective suggestions for improvement to act as "scaffolding" i.e. pupils should be given as much help as they need to use their knowledge.
- Oral feedback will be provided during lessons and in plenary sessions, individually or collectively

### The 7 key features of marking

When giving written feedback to students all staff are expected to use the 7 key features of marking as outlined below:

- Ticks/acknowledgement of the work
- Levels/grades given
- Target levels/grades for end of year/Key Stage
- Praise and reward comments
- Written suggestions for improvement from the teacher
- Written levelled/graded assessments from peer/self assessment
- Written suggestions for improvement from peer/self assessment

### Peer and self assessment

This will give the students responsibility for tracking their own progress towards objectives, numerical targets and curricular targets. It will give them the opportunity to reflect on their learning.

Within every subject area a variety of self and peer assessment opportunities will be planned into the curriculum on a regular basis (at least once per unit of work)

Teaching staff will ensure that students:

- Understand the criteria or standards that will be used to assess their work (through teachers sharing learning objectives, outcomes and criteria for success)
- Are helped to identify any gaps between their actual attainment and targets,
- Have opportunities to identify the strategies that they might use to close the gaps in their learning
- Have planned opportunities to use those strategies in order to progress further
- Have the opportunity to reflect on their own work and consider HOW they have learned
- Have the opportunity to observe best practice in peer and self assessment in order to develop their own skills

### Numerical target setting

Numerical targets will be used as an integral part of the learning process in order to ensure progression. All students will:

- Have a target level or grade set by the teacher (based on 3 levels progress from KS2 to 4 or 4 levels progress for G& T students) in all subject areas displayed and monitored in their exercise book or folder and in their planner
- Have a predicted level or grade based on their current performance in class (KS4)
- Have their numerical targets reviewed, by their class teacher, each term to ensure progression

- Use their numerical target for each subject area to monitor their own progress towards those targets on a regular basis in class (for example; through level assessed activities, peer and self assessment or focused learning journeys)
- Use their numerical targets to identify gaps in their learning in order to identify curricular targets for improvement

### Curricular target setting

A curricular target expresses in words, not numbers, a specific aspect of the curriculum or specific skill as a focus for improvement. It can be for an individual, a group of students or a whole class and can relate to the long term (term or year), medium term (few weeks) or short term (few lessons). Curricular target setting is an important part of target setting that informs the students and the teachers **HOW** a student or group of students can make further progress to move their learning forward.

All students will:

- Identify curricular targets, based on their performance in class, in order to explain exactly what they need to do in order to move their learning forward  
*(For example: a student may have identified the fact that they do not work well as a member of team so their curricular target in Skills for Learning may be:  
'To work more cooperatively with other members of my class during group work activities')*
- Track their own progress towards those curricular targets

All teachers will:

- Identify curricular targets, based on student performance in class work or homework activities, in order to show pupils what they need to do move their learning forward  
*(For example: In Science a curricular target for a class may be:  
'To be able to use primary evidence to support the writing of conclusions' (this target may span across a few weeks or half a term for some pupils but may take longer for others to achieve)  
(For example: In English an individual student may have a curricular target of:  
'To develop understanding of the use of colons and semi colons in written work')*
- Regularly track pupil progress towards their curricular targets
- Give pupils time to reflect on their curricular targets and their progress towards them

## Questioning and dialogue

Students will be given opportunities to explain, clarify and discuss their ideas and to question and support their peers in all areas of the curriculum in order to move their learning forward. Teachers will develop rich questioning skills within the students by:

- Including questions and reflection time in short and medium term plans
- Providing a high proportion of open questions to present challenge and scaffold student learning
- Providing time for pupils to think about and discuss their responses to questions with teachers and learning partners
- Developing opportunities for pupils to enter into focused dialogue with peers and teachers
- Providing supplementary questions to extend understanding
- Providing questions that encourage pupils to reflect on their thinking and begin to understand HOW they are learning as well as what they are learning
- Providing opportunities for pupils to generate questions themselves.
- Ensuring that the climate for learning is conducive with pupils taking risks and being prepared to air their thoughts, solutions and further questions

## 2. Formative use of summative assessment

Summative assessment makes a formal record of a student's achievement at a specific point in time. This may be achieved via internal or external assessment tasks. Summative assessments should also be a positive part of the learning process.

### How we will use summative assessment in a formative way

It is expected that students will make **2 levels of progress across a Key Stage. They should make 3 levels progress between KS2 and KS4 or 4 levels of progress if they are G&T.** Summative assessment information will be most effectively used to support this if it is used in a formative way to

- Analyse student strengths and areas for development. (For example; analysis of KS4 mock exam responses to identify curriculum or skills areas students struggle with and write appropriate curricular targets)
- Identify learning milestones across subject areas that focus on key elements of the curriculum
- Inform future lesson planning of particular curriculum/skill areas
- Identify students for re-sit exams or improvements in coursework, in order to improve their attainment,
- Plan revision sessions and strategies
- Make changes to schemes of work/teaching resources in response to analysis of summative assessment tasks
- Keep students and parents/carers informed of their progress to targets
- Encourage students to analyse and reflect on their own performance and that of others in key pieces of work in order to inform revision

- Encourage students through peer and self assessment to apply criteria to help them understand how their work might be improved in future

### **The summative information we will use in a formative way**

Good use of data is a basic feature of each departments practice. It plays an integral part in Learning and Teaching and Assessment for Learning. Effective use of data is imperative for the continued success of all departments.

All staff will therefore have:

- KS2 and/or KS3 SAT results for English, Maths and Science
- CAT data to provide an assessment of pupil capabilities
- Subject specific external exam results and coursework
- A variety of focused subject specific internal assessment results
- KS3 and/or KS4 numerical targets for students based on 3 and 4 levels of expected progress
- To use the above information to set targets for all individual pupils and review them twice each year within departments.
- Special needs and Gifted and Talented students identified in their registers
- Current reading age of all students

Some staff will have:

- Access to levels or grades from Assessing Pupil Progress tasks
- Access to levels or grades from single level tests

### **The role of the teacher when using summative assessment in a formative way**

Each department will have an agreed list of assessments that will be used in order to monitor student progress and learning milestones across their curriculum. In order to use these effectively all staff will:

- Track and monitor student progress against targets at each milestone in their learning
- Identify underachievement, slow progress or unusual potential quickly and set appropriate curricular targets for improvement
- Identify barriers to student progress and use the information to plan and discuss the next steps in their learning
- Ensure that target setting focuses on specific, relevant and achievable goals based on performance that will support catch up or extension of student learning
- Inform Curriculum Team Leaders of specific underachievement, slow progress or unusual potential of students quickly
- Ensure that students use their summative assessment data to track their own progress across each half term, school year and Key Stage
- Ensure that students use this to set themselves curricular targets for improvement based on content and skills

### **The role of Curriculum Team leaders when using summative assessment in a formative way**

Curriculum Team Leaders will:

- Have a robust tracking system that is regularly updated with agreed summative assessment tasks in order to identify underachievement, slow movers or students displaying unusual potential
- Ensure that all staff have the ability to assess student work in a robust and reliable way that is consistent across the department
- Ensure that moderation and standardisation meetings take place to ensure consistency in assessment at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- Ensure that the Assessing Pupil Progress programme is implemented consistently across the department (where appropriate)
- Follow up any students who are cause for concern and, in liaison with staff, put appropriate intervention in place to support those students in making as much progress as possible
- Ensure that parents/carers are informed when necessary
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of marking and assessment in their departments with particular emphasis on the 7 key features of marking

Staffing and funding allocated to the intervention programme will support effective catch up or extension within student learning.

Our Assessment for Learning policy will be implemented consistently across the school in order to ensure that students are motivated and are given as many opportunities as possible to achieve their highest potential.

Written 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009

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