

Our Lady's Catholic High School

Assessment Policy

'Our Lady's is first and foremost a Catholic school. It follows from this that the ethos of our school should reflect the values proclaimed by Christ in the Gospels and recognise the unique value of each individual. Everyone at Our Lady's has the right to be treated with respect at all times'.

(from OLCHS Mission Statement)

Reviewed: Spring Term 2022

Next review: Spring Term 2024

Principles

This policy sets out our arrangements for the monitoring, reporting and promotion of the progress of pupils at Our Lady's Catholic High School.

We aim to do this in a consistent, systematic and regular way and provide clear, direct feedback to pupils and parents in order to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress that leads to the very best outcomes for them all.

At the heart of our highly effective curriculum is the assessment of our students' learning and progress. This is central to informing teaching and supporting learning. The rationale behind assessment at Our Lady's Catholic High school is:

- To enhance the teaching of the curriculum through the appropriate use of valid assessment
- To provide our teachers with useful information about the impact of their teaching and so inform their future planning and delivery of the curriculum
- To provide leaders with evidence that improves the structure and sequencing of their curriculum and its delivery
- To provide our students with useful information regarding the impact of their learning, to help them identify strengths and weaknesses, and identify and act upon strategies for improvement
- To motivate our students by celebrating what they do well and by providing them with short and long-term targets
- To provide parents and carers with a clear picture of their child's progress and achievements, identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting targets for development
- To provide teachers, students and parents/carers with a record of progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4
- To inform Governors about the progress of our pupils and emerging patterns within school

Summative Assessment

We use summative assessment to sum up what a pupil has achieved at the end of a period of time, relative to the learning aims and the relevant standards. The period of time may vary, depending on the curriculum area and what the teacher intends to find out. For example, there may be an assessment at the end of a topic, at the end of a term or half-term, as a mock examination or at the end of a year. (See appendix i)

Standardisation and Moderation

Assessment outcomes must be accurate and valid. They should provide meaningful insights that provide information that helps support pupil learning.

Subjects use standardisation and moderation to ensure consistency of judgements within school and develop shared understanding.

Each subject details their standardisation (ensuring that standards are understood and can be applied consistently) and moderation (ensuring that standards have been applied consistently) procedures within the subject appendix.

Formative Assessment

At Our Lady's Catholic High School, formative assessment is used for day-to-day, often informal assessments to explore pupils' understanding and enables our teachers to decide how best to help pupils develop that understanding. (See appendix ii)

Feedback

At our school, we believe that feedback is about responding appropriately to pupils' work. Some of this is found in books and on presented work, but much of pupils' practical work and their learning experiences results in verbal feedback. It is, therefore, important to focus on feedback as a whole, rather than on written annotations and comments only. (See appendix iii)

Tracking and Reporting

The collection and use of assessment data is a vital tool in raising achievement and teachers must record attainment and progress data so that it can be analysed, used to monitor progress and drive intervention. (See appendix iv)

Acting on Information (intervention)

We aim to anticipate and remove/minimise barriers for learning by implementing the best provision to secure future progress. (See appendix v)

Reviewing Assessment

Assessment practices are reviewed regularly and the sharing of best practice is encouraged.

Principal teachers meet with Governors and members of the senior leadership team at the beginning of the academic year to discuss their CASE report; this includes a detailed evaluation of historic and current pupils' progress, reviewing evidence that supports the quality of their curriculum and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Following this, each subject produces a CAIP, informed by the CASE, and details the actions the subject is taking to improve outcomes, and implement any changes to the structure or sequencing of their curriculum.

Subject review meetings take place throughout the year to discuss progress and the curriculum and work scrutiny.

Governors

Whole school assessment data is shared and discussed with Governors at both the Staffing and Curriculum committee meetings and at the Full Governors' meetings throughout the year.

Appendix i

Summative assessments may be a written test, an observation, a conversation or a task. Whichever medium is used, the assessment will show what has been achieved. It will summarise attainment at a particular point in time.

The summative assessment that takes place at Our Lady's Catholic High School gives pupils, parents and teachers valuable information about a pupil's overall performance at a specific point in their learning. It provides information about their progress in:

- subject knowledge
- understanding
- skills and capabilities

Summative assessment usually takes place after pupils have completed units of work or modules, but this is dependent upon the subject. (See individual subject policies)

In addition, all pupils in Y7-10 are given an end of Year exam during the Summer term. Y11 pupils have their mock exams in the Autumn term.

We use our summative assessments to indicate progress and achievement, usually in numerical terms.

This information can then be provided to parents or used for certification as part of a formal examination course.

Teachers share with pupils what these grades or numbers mean in terms of what the pupil has demonstrated they can do and what the next steps to improve their learning will be. Summative assessments are relevant, purposeful and meaningful. They enable teachers to understand how pupils are performing against the curriculum at that particular point.

Appendix ii

Formative assessments may be questions, conversations, tasks, quizzes or more formal assessments. Often formative assessments may not be recorded at all.

Any assessment can be used formatively; what makes an assessment formative is what the teacher does with the information it generates. Unless the result of the assessment is used to change something in the current teaching or learning, there is nothing formative taking place. For example, a task or activity is not formative unless the information it provides is actually used to progress learning in that or a following lesson.

We use a variety of formative assessment methods within lessons, whilst pupils are engaged in learning, that involves the feedback loop of teachers gathering evidence about pupils' learning by:

- observing;
- listening;
- questioning;
- discussing; and
- reviewing their work in progress.

Our formative assessment is intended to inform changes our teachers can make during the lesson (or subsequent lessons) to the sequence of instruction so that their lessons are more effective. At the same time, our teachers provide feedback to our pupils to identify progress and gaps in learning (including individual support needs).

It also gives our pupils an active role in the assessment process. Pupils work with the teacher to determine what is being learned and to identify the next steps.

We aim that formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process; and assessment evidence is actually used to modify teaching to meet the needs of pupils; and improve learning.

Appendix iii

Our teachers will provide feedback that has a genuinely formative function by giving details of how our pupils can make further progress and by helping pupils to reflect on and take ownership of their learning. This feedback may be verbal or written in form, self, peer or teacher assessed.

Feedback to pupils should achieve at least one of the following:

- aid their future learning;
- indicate areas of success in pupils' work;
- indicate areas for future improvement;
- scaffold pupils' efforts towards such improvement;
- help inform parents of their child's progress.

Teachers are expected to ensure that:

- pupils receive written feedback at least once every six lessons (or equivalent)
- formative comments show the pupil how to improve their performance;
- comments are phrased as questions/prompts to stimulate each individual student to take the next steps in their learning;
- when marked work is returned to a class, time is set aside to allow each pupil to respond to the teacher's comments and complete any actions.

Appendix iv

Pupils and parents are presented with assessment information through a precise, informative and understandable reporting system. This information tells students and parents how progress is being monitored, what targets and support are required and what an individual's attainment is. Subjects may record summative and formative assessment on internal tracking systems, and use this to inform their planning, teaching and interventions. We use SISRA and SIMS to assist in drawing conclusions.

There are three school wide data collection points (two for year 11) for each year group (one per term) that are used to inform clear actions (see acting on information) and reported home. For each of these data collection points, and for all subjects, four grades are reported. Three of the grades are for behaviour, the completion of homework, and learning and progress. One is for current attainment (this is for Key Stage 4 only). A fifth score is generated from this data, a progress score %, a measure of the commitment, attitude and achievement and how the pupil is responding to school life. One of these data collection points is reported home as a 'progress report', where in addition to the data reported above, each subject teacher will give a brief written comment and target for improvement, and a form teacher report is also included. Year 11 do not receive a 'progress report' but rather receive a second face-to-face parents evening where they can gain advice and raise queries personally with their teachers.

For the grades for behaviour, the completion of homework, and progress, we use a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is outstanding and 4 is inadequate. Staff are provided with criteria for these grades and are provided with this guide to ensure that grades are awarded on a consistent basis.

With the exception of homework grades for Drama, PE and Music, all grades are required for all subjects. For the end of year progress reports the grade for progress is determined by the relationship between the current attainment grade and the pupil's target grade.

Our pupils are set an ambitious, optimistic target grade at the start of each academic year by their subject teachers. We use many different aids to make this target as informed as possible, including formative and summative assessment data. For Y7 this target is further supported by NGRT data and an internal CAT4 test. In Y10 and Y11, we also consider FFT5 data for each subject including English and Maths data.

Prior attainment at the beginning of each key stage is the starting point for developing expectations and for setting challenging targets.

Current Attainment

In Key Stage 4 we use a GCSE grade 9-1 and a sub grade of .9, .5 or .1. Sub level .9 indicates performance at the top of a level and a readiness to move to the next level. Sub level .1 indicates that a pupil is only just working within a level.

For BTEC we use L1 or L2 PA, ME and DI to indicate Level 1 or Level 2 Pass, Merit and Distinction. We also use sub grades 1, 2 and 3. Sub grade 1 indicates performance at the top of a grade. Sub grade 3 indicates that a pupil has only just achieved a grade.

For OCR we use P, M and D to indicate Pass, Merit and Distinction. We also use sub grades 1, 2 and 3 as above.

Staff who deliver our vocational subjects at Preston's College and Preston's Vocational Centre will provide progress grades.

Examination Marks

For subjects where pupils have taken a formal examination (end of year exams Y7-10), an examination mark is also included in the report. In all cases the examination mark is given as a percentage.

Where a pupil has been absent for an examination, arrangements will be made for the examination to be taken when the pupil has returned to school.

Year 11 pupils will receive a separate mock examination report, which highlights the grades that they have achieved in their mock examinations, prior to the second parents evening of the year.

Teacher Comment and Target

The teacher comment should be concise and generally positive, though it is recognised that there will be some cases where a negative comment is appropriate.

The target should focus on one or two of the most significant step(s) that a pupil needs to take in order to secure an improvement. Although the target might include more than one step that needs to be taken, it is not possible for these to be listed as separate bullet points.

Form Tutor Reports.

Alongside each progress report is a form tutor report. This provides information about attendance, punctuality, uniform, and the use of the planner.

For each of these, pupils will be given a grade on a scale of 1 (outstanding) to 4 (inadequate).

For attendance and punctuality, grades will be generated automatically. The grades awarded will be included on the mark sheet when these are made available to form tutors.

In addition, form tutors will provide a written comment. This comment should refer to overall progress this academic year, and may pick up on concerns highlighted by comments/grades given by subject teachers (form tutors have access to subject reports prior to the completion of form tutor reports)

The form tutor comment might also address involvement in school/form life, relationships with other pupils, courtesy and so on.

The grading criteria for attendance, punctuality, uniform and the way in which pupils have used their planner are provided below.

Attendance

1. 100-99% = excellent
2. 96-98% = good
3. 90-95% = below average
4. Below 90% = poor

Punctuality

1. = no lates
2. = 1-2 lates
3. = 3-5 lates
4. = 6+ lates

Uniform

1. No issues at all this year
2. Occasional issues this year
3. A number of issues this year
4. Multiple problems on a persistent level

Use of planner

1. All homeworks recorded and signed on time each week
2. Most homeworks recorded and signed regularly
3. Some homeworks recorded and signed after numerous reminders
4. Many homeworks missing and rarely signed

Appendix v

The assessment carried out, and data gathered should inform the structure and narrative (sequencing) of the curriculum, whilst supporting its teaching and the progress of learners through it.

The first wave of intervention is provided by quality first teaching where good quality, inclusive teaching which takes into account the learning needs of all the children in the classroom.

Identifying pupils that require additional support or interventions and where pupils require additional support takes on many forms at our school and may be informed by formative assessment, subject discussions, whole school data, subject review meetings, VPTM, SEND reviews or review days.

Interventions

It is important that the information that our assessment data provides is acted upon in the right way so that we use our data effectively. It is equally important that there is a parity in both the understanding of that data between senior and middle leaders, and staff, how that data is being used to drive interventions, and the impact of that intervention.

Following each whole school data collection point, each pupil's homework, organisation and progress grade for each subject (1-4) as well as their overall progress score (%) is incorporated into an analysis spreadsheet.

This is the model from which intervention is created and implemented.

Group Tracking

We recognise that whilst there can be differences between the performance of groups of pupils at a national level, this is likely to be less meaningful when analysed at school level.

We also understand that focusing on the underperformance of a particular group, in which data can be highly variable, can also have unintended consequences, such as unrealistic demands on staff and interventions based on analysis of very small groups of pupils. Furthermore, we believe that pupils with SEND should not be treated as a homogenous group due to the often vastly different types of pupils' needs.

However, we also believe that providing our Senior and Middle Leaders with pre-analysed group data following each interim capture point, without the expectation of dramatic and sweeping interventions can, in some circumstances, be useful in spotting patterns.

All leaders are provided with and utilise the 'Group Tracker' for each cohort (which includes all pupils, most able, PP, SEND, boys, girls, EAL, least able). Principal Teachers may use the data to reference the groups of pupils that are making more or less progress than their subject mean. The Learning Manager is provided with the overall cohort group means.

Intervention Tracking

Principal Teachers, alongside subject staff, use the 'Intervention Tracker' within curriculum development time to discuss any pupil awarded a 3 (satisfactory) or 4 (inadequate) grade for progress in their subject. Again, this is pre-analysed.

The minimum expectation is that teaching staff must have a conversation with pupils awarded these grades, explain why they have underachieved and advise the pupil on a way forward. Any further appropriate intervention, such as contact home, moving class position etc. may be recorded on the intervention tracker, but only if it is deemed useful by them to do so.

Learning Managers and Form Teachers utilise the 'Intervention Tracker' to assess progress grades for subjects, overall progress scores and to inform their own interventions. They may also utilise a pre-analysed spreadsheet that compares the progress scores of pupils over time.

Principal Teachers and Learning Managers may measure the impact of their interventions by comparing pupils who remain on or are removed from the 'Intervention Tracker', come the next data collection point.

VPTM

Vulnerable Pupil Tracking Meetings are held 6 times a year for all year groups.

Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, with SEND, under a CAF, involved with social care or with an IPSI (completed by their Learning Manager) are considered a 'vulnerable pupil'.

Each meeting is attended by an Assistant Headteacher with pastoral responsibility, the attendance officer, the exclusion manager, a representative from both SEND support and pastoral support, and the relevant Learning Manager.

Utilising the breadth of data and information that is generated, within each meeting current attainment, behaviour, attendance, BWOO are reviewed alongside previous actions and interventions and bespoke interventions are generated. Involvement of other services such as CSC/CAHMS and the Family and Wellbeing service is also discussed and information shared.

SEND Tracking

Our SEND tracking system is one of a number of measures that we use to promote equality of opportunity for our pupils.

Three times a year, a thorough analysis of data, a review of current intervention, the changing nature of each child's SEND and how to most effectively provide the provision that will aid progress takes place.

In KS3, all pupils in M2 groups plus those with an EHCP are added to the tracker. For KS4, all pupils with an EHCP are eligible for SEND tracking.

The 'SEND Tracker' is populated after each interim data collection point and includes a pupil's current attainment, target, a ½ termly accelerated reader mark, current reading age, attendance, plus a progress score for homework and organisation.

In addition, existing SEND interventions are reviewed and evaluated by the applicable teaching staff/teaching assistant and added to the tracking documentation.

Professional discussions then take place at a SEND tracking meeting where progress towards targets and TA support is reviewed and further planned.

Additional English and Maths Intervention

In Key Stage 3 English pupils are assessed for Reading and Writing and, through their formative and summative work, teachers refer pupils for additional intervention if they feel that the pupil needs additional support through withdrawal on a one-to-one or small group basis. Teachers of other subjects may also make referrals. Pupils are then assessed by the HLTA and join a programme for a given period of time, often six weeks, whereby they are withdrawn from lessons once per week for intervention. Intervention programmes run for spelling, handwriting and comprehension, and also where needed different sessions are planned. Pupils may also be screened for the likelihood of having dyslexia / having dyslexic traits.

Pupils progress through the sessions is monitored and measured, and where appropriate the impact on pupils' achievement in the Interim and Progress Reports is measured.

In the academic year 2021/22 pupils in Year 7 will be sitting the NGRT (New Group Reading Test) and NGST (New Group Spelling Test) and these will be used as a diagnostic tool and to measure impact after intervention has taken place. Also, pupils with an Accelerated Reading age of below 9 years and 6 months have been identified and where this correlates with the NGRT intervention will be put in place with the HLTA or through a buddy reading scheme until they have achieved a functional reading age.

English intervention is provided at Key Stage 4 through external tutors for pupils who need small group intervention to make progress. Identified pupils are withdrawn for one additional hour of English per week over a short period of time (maximum of six weeks) which planned to support them to make accelerated progress. Class teachers also run workshops and revision sessions before school, at lunch and after school as appropriate for the needs of pupils.

Pupils at KS4 and KS3 are regularly retested using the NGRT tests and where identified as being below chronological age and having undergone further screening tests to meet suitability requirements, may be placed onto the Thinking Reading programme. This programme withdraws pupils from a number of lessons each week and enables them to receive 1-to-1 support from a trained member of staff to increase their reading ability.

In KS3 Maths, all Y7 pupils who have not met the expected standard for Maths from KS2 (NS) are reassessed upon entry and an intervention series of 4 key Maths concepts commences.

Intervention assessments are also issued to all KS3 pupils in 2a, 2b and 2c classes based around 12 key concepts that 'unlock' the KS3 and KS4 curriculum. These indicate pupils' needs and should intervention be necessary, 5 one hour sessions will follow with a retest at the end. Pupils are also reassessed one or two months later to ascertain retention. Further intervention is offered again if needed.

During each fortnightly curriculum development time, the Maths department use current assessment practices, professional conversations plus current data to spot pupils that are making less progress and pupils can also be referred to intervention this way.

Intervention is also offered at KS4 and is focused on the more challenging topics at GCSE and targeted at pupils who are identified by staff as being at risk of not achieving their potential.

Every fortnight, the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher plus the Principal Teachers of Maths and English meet to discuss KS4 progress and agree actions for pupil interventions.

Review Days

Following their progress report, pupils participate in their year group review day. With the assistance of Form Teachers, the Assistant Learning Manager and Learning Manager pupils' attendance, progress score, positive and constructive comments from the body of the report are analysed, reflected upon, areas for personal improvement discussed and targets set.