



ALLEESTREE WOODLANDS SCHOOL

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

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Enabling aspiration and achievement through delivery of a knowledge-rich curriculum underpinned by our CORE values:

COURAGE

OPTIMISM

REGARD

ENDEAVOUR

Assessment and Feedback Policy

This policy should be used alongside the Woodlands' Assessment Principles to form the whole policy of assessment.

The purpose of assessment

We assess students' knowledge and understanding because it is one of the two main levers that teachers use to raise student achievement; the first being the quality of the curriculum (Dylan Wiliam, 2020). There are, however, different types of assessment, with formative assessment having the biggest impact on learning. Other forms of assessment serve their purpose but should be more limited in their use.

At Woodlands the purpose of assessment is:

- To know how well a student has understood and learnt the content of the curriculum
- To adapt how the curriculum is taught in the future, to help meet the needs of all students and revisit any learning gaps
- To identify any specific needs/patterns and provide support where required
- To support subject and whole school improvement

Woodlands' assessment principles

We follow a set of assessment principles at Woodlands which aim to achieve high standards of assessment with enough flexibility to support different subject disciplines across the school.

These assessment principles cover the following areas:

- The purpose of assessment (including what assessment should be used to check for)
- The validity of assessment
- The assessment schedule
- Routine checking of misconceptions and standards of work
- General feedback and feedback on summative assessments

The different types of assessment

Our principles cover the different types of assessment teachers should use to inform how well the curriculum is taught, learned, and adapted for all learners.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is defined as:

“Frequent, interactive assessment of student progress and understanding to identify needs and adjust teaching appropriately” (OECD, 2005)

Teachers use formative assessment to check for understanding through responsive teaching methods e.g. asking a question to ascertain if a student has understood the information taught or circulating the room to check students are responding to a task using what they have learnt.

Checking for understanding is an expectation of every teacher at Allestree Woodlands School through the Woodlands’ Fundamental Five. Teachers will do this through a variety of methods. This is because **high** quality checking for understanding impacts positively on learning.

Retrieval practice

Retrieval practice, when used regularly, enables students to recall prior learning from their memory. Regular recall supports the embedding of key knowledge in the long term memory, making it easier to learn new content. It also helps students to reduce cognitive load so they can manage learning new content better.

Retrieval practice as a form of checking for understanding and learning over time, is actively encouraged through our Woodlands’ Fundamental Five.

Summative assessment

This is used to:

- take a snap shot of learning over several lessons/weeks so teachers know how well their students in their class have learnt the curriculum they have taught them
- inform future teaching
- inform students of their secure knowledge and their learning gaps.

Standardised summative assessment: at least two per year, per year group, must be standardised.

Standardised assessment means that all students within that cohort/year group/nationally sit the same assessment. Examples of standardised summative assessment may be an internal end of year assessment or a final exam.

Standardised assessments should be limited. Attaching grades to assessments that are not designed to assess a significant amount of learning and are not standardised across the cohort/year group and moderated, are significantly flawed and cannot be used to determine a student’s current grade or predicted outcomes accurately. Instead, summative assessment in the main will be used to focus on the parts of the curriculum a student is secure in and what they still need to develop further.

Feedback

At Allestree Woodlands School, our ultimate aim of giving students feedback is that it changes students' capacity to produce better work longer term and not just improve a single piece of work, so students can learn to generate their own feedback. Feedback should likewise be meaningful, manageable and motivating and link specifically to their learning.

The feedback received from a formative assessment activity during a lesson will likely look very different to the feedback a teacher provides on a summative assessment. Our principles cover the different ways teachers can give students feedback to improve.

Myths of excessive written feedback

At Allestree Woodlands School, we discourage excessive written teacher feedback in books or other means and accept it as a poor indicator of the impact it has on learning. We believe that the amount of time this unnecessary workload takes up, reduces the amount of time teachers can spend planning and delivering high quality lessons.

Feedback that is easily understood and actionable is the most important aspect of high quality feedback.

Moderation

Moderation is an important aspect of our review and evaluation processes at Woodlands School. It helps all teachers within a subject to:

- check their assessments against other teachers within the same subject
- share expertise amongst staff, supporting those with less experience
- ensure students receive the same indications of their performance across a whole year group
- supports our aim to reduce unconscious biases

Moderation will take place when a significant summative assessment has taken place.

The role of leadership in assessment

Throughout the academic year, there are numerous review and evaluation activities that allow leaders opportunities to check the quality of the curriculum and assessment; how well it is being implemented across different teams and the impact of this on students' learning.

Leaders will use performance data and other key indicators to:

- analyse the impact of the taught curriculum on student outcomes and identify areas for improvement, ensuring their teams are well informed to improve future outcomes
- analyse the performance of different groups of students within their subjects, across faculties and the whole school and use this information to improve future outcomes

- make necessary adaptations to the curriculum or implementation of the curriculum e.g. sequencing, as a result of any analysis to improve future outcomes