

# Brandles School

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## ASSESSMENT POLICY

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## **BRANDLES SCHOOL – ASSESSMENT POLICY**

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# BRANDLES SCHOOL – ASSESSMENT POLICY

## 1 AIMS

This policy aims to:

1. Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
2. Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
3. Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

## 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the [final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#)
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in [the Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#)

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3 RATIONALE

Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other expert organisations. The Education Endowment Foundation research shows that effective feedback should:

- redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal
- be specific, accurate and clear
- encourage and support further effort
- be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong

Notably, the Department for Education's research into teacher workload has highlighted written marking as a key contributing factor to workload. The DfE's expert group emphasises that marking should be: **meaningful, manageable** and **motivating**. We have also taken note of the advice provided by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics) that the most important activity for teachers is the teaching itself, supported by the design and preparation of lessons.

At Brandles, assessment is completed across a range of activities through which we come to know about the abilities and achievements of our students, and the extent of their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Assessment and feedback are used to advise students, teachers (and others) of their progress, their targets and how to close any achievement gaps that may exist.

Assessment reflects the formal and informal judgements made by teachers and students about standards of work, and is measured, where appropriate, against nationally agreed criteria. Formative, diagnostic assessment is used throughout the year to inform teaching and learning and identify any areas for improvement. This includes low stakes testing where a simple test is employed to ascertain the extent to which knowledge is being retained and to establish an understanding of gaps in knowledge and/or skills at individual and whole class level. Summative assessment is used to evaluate learning and progress by awarding a grade of attainment to a student. We believe that this policy will enable us to assess student progress in a coherent and consistent way and facilitate higher achievement for students across all levels of ability.

Work undertaken by students deserves feedback (written or verbal) to enable them to know and understand the

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progress they are making and the next steps needed to inform them how they can continue to improve. It will also inform subject staff as to where there are gaps in students' knowledge and understanding.

At Brandles we hold the view that learning is complex and attempting to define these complexities is problematic. In our context we consider learning to be:

- Learning is a multidimensional process that results in a relatively enduring change in a person or persons, and consequently how that person or persons will perceive the world and reciprocally respond to its affordances physically, psychologically, and socially. - *(Alexander, Schallert & Reynolds, 2009)*
- Developing the competency and capacity to monitor and control thoughts and feelings  
*(Mannion, 2021)*
- Building schemas that are accessed to guide current understanding or action - *(Pankin, 2013)*

### 4 PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Our policy on feedback has at its core a number of principles:

- the sole focus of feedback and marking should be to further children's learning;
- evidence of feedback and marking is incidental to the process; we do not provide additional evidence for external verification;
- written comments should only be used where they are accessible to students according to age and ability;
- feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective, and as such feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date;
- feedback is provided both to teachers and pupils as part of assessment processes in the classroom, and takes many forms other than written comments;
- feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- All pupils' work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest appropriate opportunity so that it might impact on future learning. When work is reviewed, it should be acknowledged in books.

#### 4.1 Purpose of assessment

- Test the progress of students
- Diagnose strengths or weaknesses
- Provide feedback to students
- Demonstrate to students that they have attained some goal or acquired some skill
- Provide feedback to teachers
- Provide feedback to other stakeholders
- Select students for specific courses
- Predict future attainment
- Estimate students' current skills
- Form part of a student's profile of abilities
- Motivate the learner
- Measure the relationship between the teacher's aims and the students' output

#### 4.2 Types of Assessment

##### Formative

Assessment for this purpose is used to help guide students' progress. The process should be positive and supportive. The teacher should inform students how they can improve their work. This tends to be a student-centred, low stakes, high challenge type of assessment. The results of assessments can be used by teachers to adapt teaching to meet the needs of the students.

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### Summative

This involves summing up at some end point. Because this happens at ‘the end’ there tends to be little scope for further teacher instruction. This tends to be a high-stress type of assessment, and the results often carry greater kudos.

### Diagnostic

This type of assessment puts the emphasis on identifying where students are going wrong or having difficulties so that something can be done about it. This works best with full student cooperation, and an open process where overall (not individual) results are shared and a common way forward is found.

### Evaluative

This uses the assessment of students to give ‘wider’ information about the performance of a teacher, department, organisation, and so on. This allows for strategic overviews, but often neglects the individual student.

## 5 ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

At Brandles we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum. Brandles has minimum expectations in relation to students receiving feedback across a period of learning. In line with the Department for Education Teachers’ Standards, ‘teachers must give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking’ Therefore, colleagues should expect to have their students’ books/work/assessments checked during learning walks, observations and as part of a work-scrutiny by the Middle Leadership Team or the Senior Leadership Team. Data triangulation will take place after each summative assessment cycle.

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

### 5.1 In-school formative assessment

Formative assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. When incorporated into classroom practice, it provides the information needed to adjust teaching and learning and will affect what the student and the teacher does next. In this sense, formative assessment informs both teachers and students about a student’s knowledge retention and developing skills understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. It is acceptable for teachers to move away from schemes of work where it is clear students’ learning in a particular area needs to be reinforced or re-visited. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve, targeted learning goals within a set time frame. Although formative assessment strategies appear in a variety of formats, there are some distinct ways to distinguish them from summative assessments.

Examples of formative assessments include:

- Low stakes quizzes / tests
- Effective questioning
- Essays
- Live marking of classwork
- Piece of art work
- Practical assessment in PE, Drama or Music
- Presentations

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

**Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons

**Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning intentions, and identify areas in which they need to improve

**Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child’s strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

### 5.2 Recording formative assessment

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All teaching staff have access to the Formative Assessment module in SchoolPod (MIS). The Formative Assessment Module on SchoolPod enables us to log, track and report on achievements for students and on a more qualitative level. Unlike Summative Assessment tracking which we use to record grades and scores, with Formative Assessment tracking we record unique and more personal achievements. These achievements are based on a combination of National Curriculum aims and requirements alongside adapted, bespoke internal methods of assessment and tracking.

### Levels of Mastery – Key Stage 3

Recording progress at Key Stage 3 is aligned with the Depth of Learning model designed by Chris Quigley and already implemented at KS1-2 within the Trust. Staff assess efficacy of learning using the Depth of Learning Index:

Depth of Learning	Cognitive challenge	Nature of progress	Typically, pupils will	Predominant teaching style
Basic	Low level cognitive demand. Involves following instructions.	Acquiring	name, describe, follow instructions or methods, complete tasks, recall information, ask basic questions, use, match, report, measure, list, illustrate, label, recognise, tell, repeat, arrange, define, memorise.	Modelling Explaining
Advancing	Higher level of cognitive demand. Involves mental processing beyond recall. Requires some degree of decision making.	Practising	apply skills to solve problems, explain methods, classify, infer, categorise, identify patterns, organise, modify, predict, interpret, summarise, make observations, estimate, compare.	Reminding Guiding
Deep	Cognitive demands are complex and abstract. Involves problems with multi-steps or more than one possible answer. Requires justification of answers.	Deepening Understanding	solve non-routine problems, appraise, explain concepts, hypothesise, investigate, cite evidence, design, create, prove.	Coaching Mentoring

Rubric for recording depth of learning:

Depth of Learning	Formative Assessment Code	Meaning
Basic	B1	Some evidence of some of the indicators
	B2	Widespread evidence of some of the indicators

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Advancing	A1	Some evidence of most of the indicators
	A2	Widespread evidence of most of the indicators
Deep	D1	Some evidence of all of the indicators
	D2	Widespread evidence of all of the indicators

### Levels of Mastery – Key Stage 4

In Key Stage 4, levels of mastery are created bespoke to the specification of the qualification being delivered. Typically, rubrics have been created using mark bands and assessment objectives specific to individual qualifications. Using this format teaching staff can correlate confidence levels between formative assessment judgements (progress) and summative assessment grades (attainment).

### 5.3 In-school summative assessment

Summative Assessments are given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know, and to identify any gaps in learning, individually or collectively. Examples of summative assessment include:

- GCSE examination papers
- Interim assessments
- End-of-unit tests
- End-of-term exams / assessments

Summative assessments are a means to measure, at a particular point in time, student learning relative to specification. It is normally, though not always, used towards the end of a term. Summative assessment is used to quantify achievement, to reward achievement and to provide accurate data for the whole school analysis including school reports. Therefore, the robustness, validity and reliability of summative assessments are of the greatest importance.

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

**School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment  
**Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching

**Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve

**Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

### 5.4 Baseline standardised assessments

An accurate baseline is the bedrock to ensuring the best starting point for each student to inform curriculum planning and teaching and learning.

Reliable benchmarks result from insight into students' cognitive and reasoning abilities, as well as literacy and numeracy skills.

To replace the data provided by Key Stage 2 SATs, all students on-rolling at the school undertake standardised tests to assess ability and attainment. This gives reliable indicators for national tests and examinations including retrospective Key Stage 2 indicators and 9-1 GCSE indicators. Currently these assessments consist of:

- Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) – Taken as close to student on-roll date as possible
- New Group Reading Test (NGRT) - Taken as close to student on-roll date as possible and then termly ongoing.
- Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT5) – Taken yearly

A combination report of CAT4 and NGRT is used to identify disparities between ability and attainment.

**5.5 Nationally standardised summative assessment**

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

**School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context

**Pupils and parents** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs, functional skills and vocational qualifications during and at the end of Key Stage 4.

**5.6 Feedback and marking in practice**

It is vital that teachers evaluate the work that children undertake in lessons, and use information obtained from this to allow them to adjust their teaching. Feedback occurs at one of three common stages in the learning process:

1. Immediate feedback – at the point of teaching  
2. Summary feedback – at the end of a lesson/task

3. Review feedback – away from the point of teaching (including written comments)

The stages are deliberately numbered in order of priority, noting that feedback closest to the point of teaching and learning is likely to be most effective in driving further improvement and learning, especially for younger pupils. As a school, we place considerable emphasis on the provision of immediate feedback. Where feedback is based on review of work completed, the focus will often be on providing feedback for the teacher to further adapt teaching.

Type	What it looks like	Evidence (for observers)
<b>Immediate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes teacher gathering feedback from teaching, including mini-whiteboards, book work, etc.</li> <li>• Takes place in lessons with individuals or small groups.</li> <li>• Often given verbally to pupils for immediate action.</li> <li>• May involve use of a teaching assistant to provide support or further challenge.</li> <li>• May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task.</li> <li>• May include highlighting/annotations according to the marking code.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson ‘pop-ins’ / learning walks</li> <li>• Some evidence of annotations or use of marking code/highlighting</li> </ul>
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes place at the end of a lesson or activity.</li> <li>• Often involves groups or whole class.</li> <li>• Provides an opportunity for evaluation of learning in the lesson.</li> <li>• May take form of self-or peer-assessment against an agreed set of criteria.</li> <li>• In some cases, may guide a teacher’s further use of review feedback, focusing on areas of need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson ‘pop-ins’/learning walks</li> <li>• Some evidence of self- and peer-assessment</li> <li>• May be reflected in selected focus review feedback (marking)</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes place away from the point of teaching.</li> <li>• May involve written comments/annotations for pupils to read / respond to.</li> <li>• Provides teachers with opportunities for assessment of understanding.</li> <li>• Leads to adaptation of future lessons through planning, grouping or adaptation of tasks.</li> <li>• May lead to targets being set for pupils’ future attention, or immediate action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement of work completed.</li> <li>• Written comments and appropriate responses/action.</li> <li>• Adaptations to teaching sequences tasks when compared to planning</li> </ul>






**5.7 Marking Approaches**

All work will be acknowledged in some form by class teachers. This may be through simple symbols such as ticks or highlighting of learning intentions. Written marking and comments should be used where meaningful guidance can be offered which has not been possible to provide during the classroom session. In the case of groups of pupils having a common need, it may be appropriate for teachers to adjust planning or grouping rather than providing a written comment. Where a pupil has achieved the intended outcome and is well-prepared for the next stage in learning, this need not be annotated. In most cases, written comments will be focussed on extended pieces of written work, or extended tasks. These will allow pupil’s achievements to be recognised and provide further guidance for future learning.

**5.8 Marking Code**

Where written marking or annotations are appropriate, the intention is that minimum teacher time should lead to maximum outcomes. One way in which we achieve this is using our marking code, which combines use of highlighters and symbols codes. The core of this code is set out below, although some additional age-appropriate elements may be included.

<b>Annotation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	Work which demonstrates that a pupil has met an element of success criteria, demonstrated a particular skill or achieved the intended outcome
	Work which needs further attention or displays an error or misconception (e.g., letter needing capitalisation; poor word choice; specific error in calculation, etc.)
	Incorrect spelling. This will be used selectively when marking work, focussing on spelling patterns which should either have been secured by a pupil, or represent a pupil’s next step in spelling development.
//	New paragraph needed here
^	Missing word
TV	Use of technical vocabulary

**6. COLLECTING AND USING DATA**

Data collection has been designed to minimise impact on teacher’s workload. All data collection will be recorded on the school MIS (BehaviourWatch) in alpha-numeric format using toggles / drop down lists.

- The formative assessment model is a live, iterative process. Best practice is to log assessment decisions at the time or close to the time the learning activity took place. This allows for the capturing of both targeted and incidental learning that has taken place.
- Summative assessment data will be collected once per term.
- Attitude to Learning data will be collected half-termly.

The data collected will be used to create a variety of reports for stakeholders and external agencies including:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Staff
- Trustees
- Virtual Schools

### **7. REPORTING TO PARENTS**

- Parents will have access to attendance, achievement, assessment and behaviour reports via the Teacher2Parents
- App integrated to the school's MIS.
- Parents/Carers will be invited into school termly to review their child's attainment and progress.
- A mid-year report will be sent to parents/carers highlighting strengths and areas for development.
- KS4 provisional public examination and vocational qualification results will be shared in August each year.

### **8. INCLUSION**

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

### **9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **9.1 Trustees**

Trustees are responsible for:

Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils

Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

#### **9.2 Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

Ensuring that the policy is adhered to

Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects

Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups  
Prioritising key actions to address underachievement

Reporting to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years

#### **9.3 Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy.

### **10. MONITORING**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the senior leadership team. At every review, the policy will be shared with the board of trustees.

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All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Mr I Reid and Mr J Scales will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

Mr I Reid will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Lesson 'pop ins'
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Scheme of work audits
- De-constructed deep dive dialogue

### **11.LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES:**

This assessment policy is linked to:

Curriculum policy

Non-examination assessment policy

Examination contingency plan

Professional development policy

Pay and appraisal policy