ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the role of assessment as an integral part of all teaching and learning. Effective assessment practices enable staff to make consistent and reliable judgments of achievement to inform collaborative planning and differentiation to meet student needs. They are also essential in developing assessment capable self-regulated students, responsible for assessing their own learning and able to co-construct learning goals and success criteria.

DEFINITION

1. Assessment is the ongoing practice of collecting, analysing, reflecting on and evaluating information about student achievement. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process.
2. Assessment identifies a learner's growth and point of need. It will inform future teaching sequences to target individual needs to improve student performance.
3. Assessment is an integral part of the learning cycle as it provides information about student achievement and informs a cycle of planning and reflection.
4. Assessment is central to the Primary Years Program (PYP) goal of guiding students through the elements of the IB-PYP curriculum:
   - Knowledge
   - Concepts
   - Approaches to Learning (ATL)
   - Action
5. Assessment is also aligned with the Victorian Curriculum to accurately measure student achievement against DET policies.
6. Assessment includes the process of communication and feedback for parents and students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Highly effective assessment shares some key characteristics (Adapted from Clarke 2012).

- **Authentic:** It supports making connections to the real world to promote student engagement.

- **Clear and specific:** This includes desired learning goals (targeting identified gaps), success criteria and the process students use to learn.

- **Varied:** It uses a wider range of tools and strategies that are fit for purpose in order to build a well-rounded picture of student learning.

- **Developmental:** It focuses on an individual student's progress rather than their performance in relation to others.

- **Collaborative:** It engages teachers, students (individually and peer) and parents in the assessment development and evaluation process.

- **Interactive:** Assessment encompasses ongoing and repeated dialogue about learning.

- **Feedback to feedforward:** It provides feedback on current learning to inform what is needed to support future learning (Hattie, Timperley 2007) and raises students' motivation in their own learning journey.

The PYP approach to assessment gives the students a vital role in the assessment process and engages the teachers in considering assessment as fit for purpose. Effective PYP assessment practice holistically integrates assessment for, of and as learning (Harlen, Johnson 2014) to support effective learning and teaching.

International Baccalaureate, Principles into Practice, 2018, Assessment in the Primary Years Programme.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

At Surrey Hills Primary School students, teachers and parents need to have a clear and shared understanding of how assessments are used in the classroom and how they relate to each other.

- **Summative assessment (Assessment of learning)**
  Summative Assessment is generally at the conclusion of a unit of work, enabling students to demonstrate their understanding and achievement level. Summative assessment tells us what students know and can do and provides evidence that is used to make judgements of student progress against goals, standards and achievement in relation to others.

- **Formative assessment (Assessment for learning)**
  Formative Assessment is ongoing and provides information that is used to provide feedback to plan future teaching sequences and monitor the effectiveness of the teaching and learning. Formative assessment enhances learning by promoting and giving specific and timely feedback which students can use to monitor progress towards goals and provide direction for their learning.

- **Peer and self-assessment (Assessment as learning)**
  Assessment as learning is student directed and involves students co-constructing learning goals and success criteria and assessing their own and peers' work. In this type of assessment students take an active role to analyse how they think and learn and to move beyond being self-assessors to self-monitor and eventually self-adjustors. The focus is both the process and the outcome of learning.

- **Assessment of prior knowledge**
  Assessment of prior knowledge occurs at the start of new units of inquiry and before any single subject units of work. It is an essential process as it enables teachers to effectively plan for, group and teach students at their point of need.

- **Standardised assessment**
  Standardised Assessment is used periodically to measure student progress and achievement against DET guidelines and the Victorian Curriculum and track individual and cohort growth over time. Examples include Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN, Essential Assessment, PM Benchmarking, PROBE and online PAT Reading and Numeracy. Analysis of standardised results may be used to set school goals and track our progress towards achieving them.

- **Evaluative assessment**
  Evaluative assessment refers to the process of using the results of multiple forms of assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Monitoring learning	Documenting learning
Measuring learning	Reporting on learning
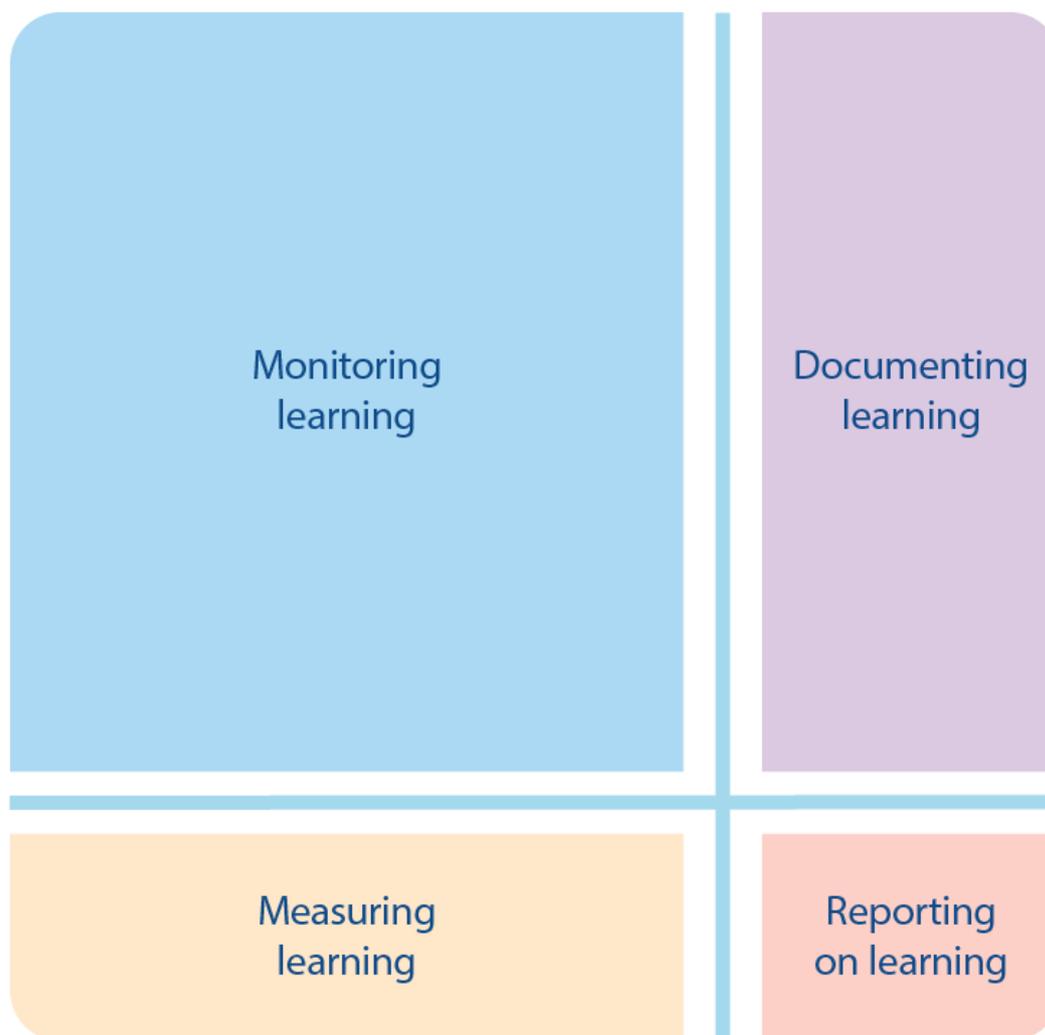
Assessment in the PYP is comprised of four dimensions. Each dimension has its own function and value and while all dimensions are essential to balanced assessment practices, they are not weighted equally. There is greater emphasis in the PYP on the dimensions of monitoring and documenting learning as these are critical in providing relevant, timely and actionable feedback for students.

Monitoring learning
Processes to discover what students know and understand
- Assessment is authentic, purposeful and timely. It is planned as part of the teaching sequence to monitor student progress and achievement against DET standards and IB-PYP requirements
- Assessment should be open, multi-modal and encompass a broad range of approaches to provide a balanced understanding of students' learning and the effectiveness of teaching sequences. It should be used to inspire and motivate both students and teachers.
- Assessment should be differentiated to enable students of all achievement levels to engage with and demonstrate their learning with success.
- A variety of measures and methods are used to assess, record and report student achievement to ensure information is consistent.

Documenting learning

Compilation of the evidence of learning

- Assessment provides evidence that will be monitored and communicated in a timely manner, taking into account the ongoing nature of learning revealed over time.
- A broad range of strategies are used to document and assess student knowledge and understanding of learning areas, central ideas, skills, attitudes and concepts. These may include, but are not limited to, tests, examinations, projects, portfolios, oral work, open-ended assessments and reflections. Sometimes, assessments are carried out over a prolonged period, and at other times they take place over a short time period.
- The previously identified assessment strategies are put into practise using a variety of assessment tools. These may include, but are not limited to, rubrics, worked examples, checklists, anecdotal observations, continuums, conferences, peer feedback and self-reflections.
- Evidence collected as assessment data is transitioned between teachers at the end of the academic year or when a change in teacher occurs during the year. Time is allocated to the student hand over process.
- Teachers are responsible for keeping accurate and up to date evidence of student achievement and progress.

Measuring learning

Analysis of achievement data to identify progress and future learning sequences

Figure AS04Data-informed decision-making

Generation and collection of data and evidence

From monitoring and documenting:

- focused observations
- learning tasks
- feedback
- self-reflections
- self-assessment
- peer feedback
- conferencing
- questioning
- portfolios.

From measuring tools:

- class-based test scores
- standardized test scores.

Collaborative analysis of data and evidence

Identity:

- working strategies
- possible changes to teaching practice
- students who require additional scaffolding, practice, reinforcement, deeper modelling
- students who need extension, deepen thinking, application of learning
- quality and depth of learning.

Reflect and act on data and evidence

Consider:

- teaching strategies
- data collection
- decision for time and material resource
- how to share the data and decisions.

- Assessment practices will include moderation of results and teacher judgements with a view for consistency across the school.
- School-wide data sharing procedures support our collective understanding of patterns in school-wide strengths and weaknesses to inform school goals and Professional Development of staff.
- Assessment methods are valid, reliable and consistent and include opportunities for sharing best practice and moderation across teams.
- Assessment is ongoing to provide information used to group and regroup students to target teaching, plan future teaching sequences and evaluate the success of teaching practices through analysis of results and teacher and student reflections.
- Assessment data is collected by individual teachers and is analysed in a variety of contexts (individual, group, class, cohort, school) by teachers and Leadership teams. This is done through a process of collating, comparing, identifying patterns, looking for explanations, considering enablers and barriers and understanding it in the context of Surrey Hills PS. SMART goals are then set to identify future directions for students, teachers and the school.
- Teachers adhere to the whole school assessment schedule, which is regularly reviewed and updated.

Reporting on learning
Communicating student learning, achievement and progress
- Timely feedback following assessment assists students to take ownership of their own data, progress and future learning. Feedback, reflection and goal setting are an integral part of assessment at Surrey Hills Primary School.
- Reporting is a means of clearly communicating what students know, understand and can do to families. At Surrey Hills Primary School reporting to parents includes:
    - Written reports – distributed online twice a year at the end of each semester, moving to continuous reporting in the future
    - Parent Teacher Meetings – held twice a year in Term 1 and 3 to communicate and discuss learning goals for the coming semester
    - Learning Journals – collection of work samples from all learning areas across the semester and shared with parents/families at the end of each semester along with the report
    - Individual Education Plans – goal setting for students with particular academic, behavioural or social needs and is discussed and monitored with parents

EVALUATION

Evaluation of this policy will be undertaken annually by staff.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy updated on 29 March 2021 and is scheduled for review in March 2023

REFERENCES

- International Baccalaureate - 'Making the PYP Happen'
- International Baccalaureate – 'From Principles to Practice – Assessment'
- International Baccalaureate – 'Programme Standards and Practices'
- Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Assessment and Reporting Advice
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority – Victorian Curriculum Foundation – 10

Information was also gathered from the following IB-PYP school assessment policies:

- Mornington Primary School Assessment Policy
- McKinnon Primary School Assessment Policy
- Somerset College – PYP Assessment Guidelines Pre-Prep to Year 5 2019