

# SACRED HEART GRAMMAR SCHOOL



## ASSESSMENT POLICY

*“Promoting children’s learning is a principal aim of schools. Assessment lies at the heart of this process. It can provide a framework in which educational objectives may be set and pupils’ progress charted and expressed. It can yield a basis for planning the next steps in response to children’s needs...it should be an integral part of the educational process, continually providing “feedback” and “feedforward”. It therefore needs to be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies and practices at all levels.”*

(National Curriculum Task Group on Assessment and Testing)

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and is central to the realisation of the aims and objectives of Sacred Heart Grammar School. It is the process of obtaining, analysing and interpreting evidence for use by both students and teachers to enable the review, planning and improvement of learning. It is fully integrated with the delivery of the curriculum and is an essential component of effective classroom practice.

### **THE PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT**

The school places particular emphasis on Assessment *for* Learning which is based on the principle that ability is not fixed; and, with appropriate guidance and feedback, all students have the potential to improve their performance. Other features of this method of assessment are that it:

- builds an open relationship between learner and teacher with sharing of learning intentions and success criteria;
- makes use of effective questioning techniques;
- develops use of Peer and Self evaluation of learning;
- promotes independent and life-long learning;
- uses formative feedback techniques.

Assessment is also used for **Summative purposes:**

- to enable systematic recording and reporting of progress and achievement ;
- to assist students in deciding on subject selection and career choice;
- to provide practice for students in planning study time and exam skills.

**Diagnostic Assessments**, such as MIDYIS, YELLIS and Literacy Diagnostic tests are carried out periodically:

- to assist in individual and departmental target setting;
- to indicate the precise nature of difficulties students are experiencing;
- to indicate when remedial action/extra support/extension work is necessary;
- to enable the planning of appropriate future work.

### **FORMAT OF ASSESSMENT**

The normal student/teacher interactions which include questioning, listening, discussion and observation are a significant feature of the **INFORMAL METHODS** of assessment which take place on a day to day basis

The **FORMAL METHODS** of assessment which meet the needs of teachers and students and fulfil statutory requirements include: Written Assessments, Classroom Tests, Homework, End of Term Examinations, Practical Assessments, Controlled Assessments\* and Public Examinations in Winter and Summer series.

\***CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS** at GCSE level which require internal assessment. The setting, completion and marking of tasks may have different levels of control applied to them. Hence the level of supervision varies for each subject and is defined in the specification for each subject.

### **REPORTING**

In-house examinations may be conducted twice yearly. The exams are set and marked by the subject teacher and may only be reported upon if taken under school exam conditions.

The results may be given as a percentage or grade, which is recorded on the end of term/year Report using SIMS Assessment. The report is designed in line with the statutory requirements and allows assessment of the Areas of Learning and Skills as directed by DE. The subject teacher records the class average and includes a comment in either the Winter or Summer series. (See table below).

All Reports are read and signed by the **FORM TEACHER**, **YEAR HEAD** and/or **PRINCIPAL** before they are posted to parents. The Student Reports are central to the discussion about a student's progress at the **ANNUAL PARENT/TEACHER MEETING**.

	<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Type of report</b>
<b>Winter</b>	8, 9, 11	Mark/Grade + Class Average
	10, 12, 13, 14	Mark/Grade + Class Average and comment
<b>Summer</b>	8, 9, 11	Mark/Grade + Class Average and comment
	10	Junior Certificate

**Formal Assessment at the end of Key Stage 3 is by the school's internal Junior Examination which assesses progress in all subjects and/or the external Key Stage 3 Testing in English and Mathematics.**

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Role of Student**

- to participate fully in class and prepare conscientiously for all assessments;
- to be active learners not passive recipients of knowledge and act on 'feedback';
- to participate responsibly in self and peer evaluation;
- to set targets for each subject and strive towards achieving these;
- to use assessment results to assist in making subject choices and career decisions.

### **Role of Parents**

- to monitor ongoing progress e.g. by signing class tests and checking results in planner;
- to attend Parent-Teacher meetings to discuss results, reports and student progress;
- to help and support students to plan and prepare for both internal and external exams.

### **Role of Classroom Teacher**

- to create an atmosphere in the classroom which encourages open interaction;
- to support an understanding that all ideas/answers are to be valued;
- to assess work in line with the Assessment *for* Learning principles;
- to share learning intentions and success criteria with students;
- to assist students in setting targets and track their progress by providing assessment criteria and using Tracking/Progress Reporting facilities in SIMS;
- to provide feedback on achievement and indicate next learning steps;
- to help advise on levels of exam entry and inform Examinations Officer;
- to evaluate the success of his/her teaching;
- to reinforce and revise what has been taught.

### **Role of Head of Department**

- to monitor the quantity and quality of assessments within the department;
- to encourage and support the development of suitable tasks to be used for the purposes of assessing the Cross Curricular Skills and the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities;
- to evaluate effectiveness of teaching strategies and consider ways of improving performance;
- to coordinate and support the identification of common assessments to be used for Tracking/Progress Reporting purposes;
- to set and review departmental targets using performance analysis data provided by Examinations Officer;
- arrange/support the internal moderation of controlled assessments;
- develop and share good practice in terms of assessment tasks and marking policies.

### **Role of Year Heads**

- to proof-read and evaluate summative assessments in annual reports;
- to use summative assessments and progress reporting/tracking to identify progress and/ or underachievements;
- to monitor and chart the students' performance and assist in target setting;
- to liaise with parents when concerns arise regarding pupil progress.

### **Role of Examinations Officer**

- to liaise with class teacher and students regarding exam entries;
- to organise external examinations;
- to issue information to students regarding procedures relating to coursework, controlled assessment, external exams, results and re-marks;
- to provide Performance Analysis data to individual subject teachers for comparative purposes and to HoDs for evaluation.

### **Role of Senior Management Team**

- to support staff in implementation of Assessment Policy;
- to promote the principles of Assessment *for* Learning;
- to comply with statutory requirements regarding the recording and reporting of student progress;
- to liaise with Coordinators of Cross Curricular Skills to ensure the implementation of assessment and reporting as required;
- to promote the use and effectiveness of tracking student progress;
- to facilitate modifications in Student Planner to assist in target setting e.g. Progress Charts.