CLAYESMORE

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Responsible: Deputy Head (Academic)
Date Reviewed: September 2025
Scope: Whole School
Review Due: September 2026
Reviewed: SLT annually
External Release: Yes

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote the wellbeing of students by:

- Providing clear reporting of students' progress and outcomes in education, training and recreation, both to parents/carers and key staff.
- Providing a framework to evaluate students' work and performance regularly and thoroughly to allow them to reach their potential.
- Allow early identification of students' individual learning needs.

Assumptions

1. Good assessment practice derives from scrupulous attention to the progress of each individual pupil.
2. The quality of our reporting has a significant impact on attitudes to learning and on attainment.

Principles

Each department devises its own marking and assessment policy taking into account all the points listed below. Y3-8 use a standard marking and feedback policy.

Good use of data is a basic feature of our practice. In particular: data from entrance examinations for new students in Y9 or above, from MidYIS and Primary Insights, and from internal tests and examinations allow us to monitor and review individual pupil progress – especially to identify signs of underachievement or unusual potential. Pupils are helped to improve their work by:

a. frequent and regular assessment using clear criteria
b. teaching methods that involve students actively and emphasise analysis, discussion, experimentation and thinking ideas through
c. written or verbal feedback on their work that provide both clear evaluation of the content and structure and sensible advice that gives them manageable action points
d. use of A Level and GCSE grade criteria and National Curriculum attainment targets to show what needs to be done to make progress

It is the responsibility of subject staff to communicate to staff in the TLC, to Tutors, House Staff, Director of Studies (Prep), Assistant Heads and Deputy Head (Academic) concerns about pupils' academic progress and their attitudes, behaviour and personal development.

We will always welcome the involvement of parents and seek to communicate with them regularly. Reports are available to parents via the Parent Portal. We welcome informal consultation over and above that provided at conventional parent-teacher evenings.

Both SLT and Heads of Department monitor practice thoroughly, and seek to provide continuing professional development that addresses both difficulties and important new ideas in assessment practice.

Calendar of Assessment and Reporting

This link takes you to the current version, which details all reports, exams, and parent-teacher meetings. It gives a detailed description of what happens throughout the year.

Use of Data

In the first term, all Years 3 to 6 pupils will sit the Primary Insights test, Years 7 to 9 pupils will sit the MidYIS tests. Students new in Year 10 or Year11 will take the YELLIS test. All Year 12 students will sit the ALIS test. These are administered by the Director of Studies (Prep) and the Director of Academic Progress (Senior) and are carried out online. The aim is for all new pupils to have completed the test within four weeks of arriving at the school.

In interpreting and using data, staff must remember the following guiding principles:

a. Data analysis should promote discussion, evaluation and planning. Data raises questions; it does not provide answers.
b. Data is most effectively used in conjunction with the teacher's knowledge and experience. A combination of data analysis and professional judgement is more effective than either used alone.

About Primary Insights/MIDYIS/ALIS

The Primary Insights, Middle Years Information System (MidYIS) and A Level Information System (ALIS) are nationally recognized schemes for baseline testing. MidYIS and ALIS target setting at GCSE or A Level. You can read more about them on their website here. New pupils who join the school later in the academic year, will take their age-relevant test.

Primary Insights consists of five modules: Reading, Spelling, Mathematics, Arithmetic and Developed Ability.

MidYIS/ALIS comprise four tests that assess the main types of mental processing which play a substantial role in human thought. They assess:

a. Vocabulary – word fluency and understanding
b. Mathematics – logical thinking, manipulating numbers and numerical concepts
c. Non-verbal ability – recognising shapes, matching patterns, applying spatial awareness and visual intuition
d. Skills - such as proofreading, perceptual speed and accuracy

MidYIS/ALIS measures developed abilities – *not* innate abilities. It tells us what a student can do at the point of taking the test - it reflects the skills they have developed between Reception to Year 8/Year 11. The development of these abilities begins at birth and continues through early adulthood. It is influenced by both in-school and out-of-school experiences. Because these abilities are closely related to an individual's success in school in almost all subjects, MidYIS/ALIS scores, together with other relevant information, can be used to set target grades and devise the types of learning experiences that will help pupils to improve their current levels of performance.

YEARS 3 - 8

Assessment Tracking

Regular meetings with relevant groups of staff and whole staff are held at key times during the academic year to discuss data from assessments. Tracking software is used to track pupil progress in writing, reading and maths. This helps to inform the pupil progress meetings.

We use the following summative assessments: PIRA (Years 3 to 6) and NGRT (Years 7&8) termly reading assessments, NGMT termly maths assessments, English writing assessments and end-of-unit subject assessments. Other types of summative assessments include the end of Key Stage 2 tests in Year 6 (summer term) and formal exams in Year 7 (summer term) and in Year 8 (spring term).

Attainment Grades

Attainment grades are inputted each term into the school management information system, ISAMs and are then published on the parent portal. The allocation of these grades is based on subject specific criteria created by each HOD. These criteria are closely linked to the National Curriculum. Pupils' attainment is reported as 'working below', 'working toward', 'working at', 'working above' and 'working well above' expected age-related levels. The attainment grades represent the level of attainment achieved for the most recent reporting period. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive termly attainment grades in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 7 to 8 receive termly attainment grades in all subjects, except RS and PSHRE.

Attitudes to Learning

We monitor and report on pupil application and attitudes to learning (AtL) and create a termly colour-coded profile. This profile is made available to parents and to pupils who will reflect on their grades with their tutors in one-to-one AtL tutorials. The AtL grades are based on three separate areas: approach to learning, behaviour and focus, and personal organisation.

Always meeting the expected standard
Usually meeting the expected standard
Sometimes meeting the expected standard
Rarely meeting the expected standard
Never meeting the expected standard

Communicating with parents

Reports are available to parents in the Parent Portal.

Year 3: February

Year 4: February

Year 5: February

Year 6: June

Year 7: December, March

Year 8: December, June

YEARS 9 - 11

Minimum Target Grade (MTG)

When the tests have been completed the Academic Committee will use the 'GCSE Indicator' information provided by MidYIS to generate a minimum target grade (MTG) for each pupil in each GCSE subject. This will be recorded as a grade numbered from 4 up to 9.

Some students have a MidYIS grade of 3 or lower. However, the lowest target grade we set and share with students is a 4.

Students whom MidYIS identifies 9 as their most likely grade are set 8 or 8/9 as a minimum target grade. This is to avoid placing undue stress upon a student - for whom a string of 9s as minimum target grades while initially flattering can become a terrible burden. This is kept under review and changed to a 9 as soon as we can be confident the grade is realistic. MidYIS is not a good predictor of a final grade in Art, for example.

The minimum target grades (MTG) are put onto the parent portal in readiness for the second assessment in the autumn term.

These grades are then used by HoDs to monitor the progress of students in their departments throughout the three years to GCSE.

Working Towards grades

The purpose of this grade is to give students, parents and SLT an indication of the student's final grade if they continue to work much as they are working.

Twice each term, students are formally or semi-formally assessed and teachers make a judgement about attainment. At this point they are given a numerical grade between 2 and 9, sometimes followed by a plus or a minus e.g. 9, 9-, 8+, 8, 8-, 7+.....2. Year 9 students may be given split grades such as 4/5, 5/6 or 7/8 to reflect the fact that they are early in their academic journey. These grades can be seen in the portal soon after each assessment takes place.

Each department uses the data it has to monitor student progress, and especially to identify possible underachievement. Heads of Departments ensure subject teachers are doing this, and it is the responsibility of subject teachers to raise any concerns they have with their Head of Department.

Subject teachers and tutors use data and other assessment information to review the performance and expectations of pupils, maintaining a productive dialogue with the pupils about their progress.

The Working Towards grade should not vary much from one reporting period to another. It is forward looking, and is not simply a report on the specific attainment in a subject over the previous assessment period. This is an important point: these grades are

designed to help parents, Heads of Department and SLT to understand who is on track or not for GCSE and not reflect recent short-term performance.

Note: the alternative to reporting on attainment in this way is for all students to start with a grade they would get if they took the exam "tomorrow" and for these grades to rise over time towards the target grade. While this superficially seems to show progress it also risks demoralising Year 9 and Year 10 students for no good reason.

Expectation Assessments

Once each half-term, subject teachers award expectation assessments related to meeting deadlines and meeting expectations for prep, behaviour and classwork. The terms used are:

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
- n/a

Prep has been identified by the Sutton Trust / the Educational Endowment Foundation as a critical factor in whether students make significant progress at secondary school.

Each judgement is made with reference to the pupil's own level of working / attainment, taking into account SEND information, prior attainment data and pastoral circumstances.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment plays a key role in helping students reflect and develop. Time is set aside in lessons for students to write self-assessments, the teachers comment on these and these are shared with parents.

Year 11: November and March, after each set of mock exams

Sixth Form - see below.

SIXTH FORM

Minimum Target Grade (MTG)

In the Sixth Form, a minimum target grade (MTG) is generated from ALIS (A Level Information System). Students take the ALIS test in the first few weeks of Year 12 and you can read more about it here.

We use the test result and the separate ALIS prediction derived from GCSE grades to develop a MTG in each subject. Heads of Department are involved in the process of setting MTGs, and can raise them if they wish to do so. The MTG is expressed as a single grade (C, or B, or A etc) or a borderline grade (C/B, B/A, A/A*).

Working Towards Grades - Sixth Form

At least once each term students are graded on their attainment using lettered grades related either to A Level or BTECs. Each grade may be followed by a plus or a minus e.g. A-, B+, B, B- or M, M/D etc for BTECs.

Tutors use the assessment data to track progress in the Sixth Form. They compare their tutees' predictions to their university offers (Year 13), review these with their tutees and, together, come up with an action plan if it looks like they might fall short.

Tutors are encouraged to contact parents before the grades are published on the Parent Portal if they feel that parents may be anxious about the assessments.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment plays a key role in the Sixth Form assessment process. Students start the process by writing a comment about their own performance in each of their subjects. Their subject teachers respond to their comment, offering advice and guidance for the next assessment period. Students will then set themselves objectives. Teachers award attainment grades and an effort grade.

Expectation Assessments

These operate in the same way as outlined above for Years 9 - 11. Students who are not meeting expectations will be seen by tutors or the Head of Sixth Form and helped in various ways to try to recover their motivation to study.

Inclusion

Pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) or those learning English as an additional language (EAL) are identified on entry to the school or by subsequent testing. These pupils and their needs are discussed at the first staff meeting of the year and detailed notes are kept on each pupil on Provision Map. Subject staff are expected to know and to take account of the information provided by the TLC on how to help these pupils.

Role of the Tutor

Tutors are responsible for monitoring the progress of their tutees and for raising concerns with house staff orAssistant Head (Sixth Form) and other subject staff if appropriate. Tutors should monitor effort and attainment and also a wider range of criteria about organisation and learning.

Tutors review the reports for their tutor groups and analyse them in relation to their minimum target grades. Significant underperformance should be raised with house staff. The tutor should follow up the reports with subject teachers to ensure that there is a plan in place to help their tutees make progress.

Communicating with parents

Reports are available to parents in the Parent Portal.

A few days after the reports have been made they are transferred to the portal. This gives tutors the opportunity to start looking into possible reasons for any underperformance and to make contact with parents if they think that the parents may

be troubled by the report. Tutors are encouraged to contact parents with a plan. They must not give the parent the problem but tell them what we are doing to help their son or daughter and perhaps suggest ways in which they might be able to help at home.

Students and parents receive detailed written comments as follows:

Year 9: December, March, June

Year 10: October, February, June

Year 11: December*, March*, June

Year 12: October*, February*, June*

Year 13: December*, March*, June

*These reports also involve students writing self-assessments.

Additionally, tutors write a summary report each term, and Houseparents in December and June.

Following up / Interventions

The Academic Working Party (Deputy Head Academic, Senior Deputy, Assistant Heads of Years 3 to 13, SENCO, Director of Academic Progress and Prep Director of Studies) meets fortnightly.

After each formal report a detailed easy to digest report is sent to all tutors, house staff and Assistant Head (Sixth Form). This enables them to see which students are doing well and which are at risk of falling behind.

The Assistant Head (Sixth Form) and house parents follow up on students whose grades indicate concerns about progress. This may include a requirement to attend workshops, a review of their commitments, some additional support for a short or longer time, a screening for an undiagnosed need etc. The process and its response considers every student, is pastorally driven to consider the wellbeing of each individual, but is designed to react to the data as it comes in.

Training

All staff receive refresher training on this policy and associated guidance from the Deputy Head (Academic) before the start of the first reporting process of the academic year during inset sessions.

Linked Policies
Teaching and Learning
Special Educational Needs
Y3-8 Attitude to Learning Policy