



# ALTRINCHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## WHOLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING POLICY

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<b>Last Review Date:</b>	<b>September 2019</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>September 2020</b>

### 1. Introduction

1.1. Assessment, Recording and Reporting are central features of the teaching and learning process at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys. Assessment means making judgements upon the progress of each pupil. Assessment enables pupils, teachers and parents to monitor progress and attainment, to make corrections as necessary and to set targets for the future. The School is committed to using a variety of assessment techniques in order that each pupil achieves his full potential.

1.2. Recording and reporting are also integral to helping each pupil achieve his full potential. Systems of recording pupils' progress help in identifying trends within subjects and across the range of subjects at each key stage. Reporting to parents, formally and informally, is crucial if education is to be a partnership between home and school. Reporting also ensures accountability of pupils, teachers and the School to a range of 'stakeholders', for example, Governors, the Local Education Authority and central Government.

### 2. Definitions

2.1 Within Assessment there are two key concepts which need definition before School policy can be understood fully:

## 2.2 **Assessment of Learning**

This is also referred to as summative assessment. It is carried out **after** a teacher has taught a unit of work or at the end of a school year or key stage. Assessment of this type is usually in the form of a written test or examination paper but it might also include oral or listening tests (e.g. in Modern Foreign Languages), homework exercises or practical tasks (e.g. in Science or Technology).

## 2.3. **Assessment for Learning**

This also referred to as formative assessment. This takes place all the time in the classroom by providing pupils with regular, oral and written feedback on progress and by providing teachers with an opportunity of assessing the effectiveness of their teaching. This form of assessment enables pupils to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding.

2.4 Central to the use of both forms of assessment is the necessity to use the information collected constructively for the benefit of pupils. Gathering information is only valuable if pupils, teachers and parents then go on to do something with it for the benefit of pupils.

## 3. **The School's approach to Assessment for Learning**

3.1 Assessment for Learning as defined above is at the heart of good classroom teaching and as such it makes a significant impact upon pupil progress.

3.2 Departments and individual teachers aim to follow three principles in their approach to Assessment for Learning. First, good classroom practice ensures that the results of assessment are given to pupils **constructively and sensitively**. Second, good classroom practice also **involves pupils in the assessment process**. Pupils should, as far as it is practical, be aware of the criteria by which marks are awarded, the aspects of their work on which they need to focus and the practical steps which need to be taken to effect improvement. Third, good classroom practice offers pupils opportunities to be actively involved in making judgements about the quality of their work by, for example, comparing their work with others or engaging in constructive discussion about the quality of their work.

Through following these three principles pupils more readily develop into **independent learners** with the capacity to develop their own intellectual potential.

3.3 Assessment for Learning in the classroom is often **teacher-led** following the principles outlined above.

### 3.3.1 **Oral**

Oral questioning is used to check understanding, reinforce learning and encourage thinking. Teachers use not only closed questions which require simple factual recall, but also open or higher order thinking questions which require pupils to process information. Assessment of this type is unlikely to be formally recorded. However, the motivational significance of this aspect of assessment should not be underestimated.

### 3.3.2 **Written**

Teachers provide regular and timely written feedback on students' work, in accordance with Departmental marking policies and reflecting the whole School Assessment, Literacy and ICT policies. Such assessment should avoid blandness (e.g. 'fair', 'good', 'well done'). It should be supportive in tone. A good assessment should identify strengths and weaknesses of the piece of work and indicate ways in which improvements can be made. If appropriate, it should build upon previous comments about the pupils' work and refer to previous targets (for example whether the previous comment/target has been acted upon by the pupil).

### 3.3.3 **Whole School Independent Learning Policy September 2015**

The value of independent learning tasks is to set meaningful work as and when it is appropriate to set them. The 'one size fits all' model of homework is no longer applicable for what we want to do for our boys i.e. to encourage students to be more independent and to love learning for itself

Each department has its own independent learning policy. This will reflect the particular demands of the subject and the professional judgement of teachers to facilitate the greater pupil autonomy by allowing for greater diversity and creativity in the design of the tasks to be set.

Each policy should outline:

- i) The purpose of independent learning within the subject
- ii) The nature / style of the independent learning
- iii) How the independent learning will be assessed

Tasks can/will range from 10/15 minute activities to longer projects that might span 2-3 weeks. Tasks might take the form of written work, learning tasks, research, presentations, essays, models, and/or art etc.

Such tasks might be marked by self/peer assessment and/or formally marked by the teacher with key assessment tasks being graded and objective feedback given on what has been done well and how to improve.

Tasks will be set to challenge pupils so that they engage in higher order thinking activities and the work will be differentiated if necessary. This might mean extension work for the higher ability pupils whereas for others, including those with SEND, extra guidance /scaffolding should be considered.

### 3.3. **Assessment for Learning in the Classroom should also promote pupil involvement.**

At the beginning of the lesson, or as appropriate, learning objectives should be communicated to pupils. When work is set for pupils to do on their own, or as a group, the teacher should involve pupils by emphasising to them the key aspects of the task for which marks will be allocated. When it comes to marking work pupils should sometimes be encouraged to either mark their own work or to mark the work of others

but this should be regarded only **one** of several assessment techniques. Used to the exclusion of teacher assessment this could have adverse effects on the amount of effort pupils put into their work. This active involvement in the assessment process develops understanding.

#### **4. The Monitoring and Evaluation of Assessment for Learning**

##### **4.1 Monitoring**

4.1.1 All teachers keep detailed and appropriate records of their pupils' attainment, either in a mark book, files or through computer records. Through recording they monitor the work routines of pupils and their progress. Teacher records should include as appropriate and following Departmental assessment policy:

- details of assignments titles, the type of work set, marks awarded, targets, progress and/or prior attainment, informal and informal indicators of progress e.g. oral responses

4.1.2 Consistency of standards between different teachers and different groups is maintained through internal moderation by Departments. Such moderation is particularly important in respect of GCSE and Advanced level courses. However, it is also important to moderate the standards of internally set examinations, standardised tests and other assessment tasks so that standards are maintained across the Departments.

4.1.3 It is the responsibility of Heads of Department to monitor assessment and recording standards within their Department as is recommended within the School Performance Management Procedures. Monitoring will also include sampling pupils' books and at times having a focus on assessment for learning activities during lesson observations.

4.1.4 It is important for Heads of Department to provide leadership, guidance and examples of good practice in all aspects of assessment. Time should be set aside as part of the cycle of Departmental meetings to review assessment for learning procedures and to modify them as necessary.

4.1.5 Heads of Department review their assessment and recording policy and procedures with their SMT link as part of the School's self evaluation cycle. Such meetings offer an opportunity to discuss and plan for changes in assessment as well as to review current departmental policy.

4.1.6 In special circumstances, probably in response to parental concerns, the Head Master/Deputy Head/Head of Department may choose to monitor more closely than normal assessment practice within their Department or the assessment practices of an individual member of staff.

##### **4.1. Evaluation**

4.2.1. Governors have overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the success of the School's assessment systems and, most importantly, the impact upon Public Examination performance and the learning of pupils.

4.2.2. The Senior Management Team is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the School's assessment systems and ensuring common practice throughout the School.

4.2.3 The Assessment, Recording and Reporting Committee regularly reviews and evaluates all the School's assessment systems and practices and makes recommendations to SMT for amendments and improvements as they deem necessary.

## **5. Reporting Procedures at AGSB**

5.1 Formal feedback on the attainment of pupils and their progress is regularly communicated to parents through the School Reporting system which keeps parents informed at regular intervals throughout the academic year.

### **5.2 Termly grading**

At the end of each term all pupils in Years 7 - 11 are allocated attainment and attitude grades for every subject they study. Attainment grades are based upon a range of assessment activities and formal end of year tests. Grades are determined by teachers in accordance with the assessment and reporting policies of individual Departments based upon general criteria set out in Whole School guidelines. This takes into account the particular expectations of different various Key Stages and helps to produce consistency across the School in the awarding of grades.

There are two uses to which these grades are put. A termly grade sheet containing this data is sent home to parents and pupils. It is also used for internal monitoring and tracking purposes. Heads of School, Heads of Year and Form Tutors identify and interview pupils whose performance might cause concern. Commendations are awarded to pupils for excellent effort grades.

### **5.3 Internal Examinations**

Annual Internal Examinations are set for pupils in all years of the school. Pupils receive extensive feedback on their performance in these examinations and the use of examination results is used to inform the award of attainment grades.

### **5.4 Annual Reports**

Pupils and parents receive one full written report each year which takes the place of a grade sheet if there is one due. Each full report contains information on a pupil's progress in all areas of the curriculum. Subject reports comment upon a pupil's academic progress (attainment), his strengths, weaknesses and attitude to study. They also identify specific targets which should enable the pupil to improve his attainment.

### **5.5 Parents Evenings**

Annual Parent Consultation Evenings are held across the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the progress of their sons face to face with subject teachers. From Year 9, pupils are invited to attend with their parents.

Parents Evenings are comparable with annual written reports home. They both allow the opportunity for a detailed appraisal of a pupil's strengths and weaknesses. For this reason when planning reporting to parents it is the aim of the School to ensure that

there is a significant gap between the annual report and the Parents Evening in each year. At Parents Evenings teachers should aim to make their observations precise and concise.

#### **5.6 Diagnostic Snapshot Assessment**

Internal reporting takes place to identify those who are underachieving, to diagnose problems and to prompt remedial action. Parents are not contacted and informed of the outcome unless there are specific problems. If there are problems Heads of School, Heads of Year and Form Tutors contact parents to ensure maximum co-operation between home and School.

In addition, these snapshots help in the identification of students who are exceptional achievers and those who may have special needs due to specific learning difficulties (please refer to the School's SEND Policy).

### **6. Internal systems to measure progress against evidence of previous attainment**

#### **6.1. Key Stage 3**

6.1.1. At KS3 the following data is used at the start of Year 7 to establish a path of expected progress for each pupil:

- Key Stage 2 levels
- Cognitive Ability Test (CATS) Scores

Key stage 2 levels provide a useful baseline assessment for Maths and English. CATS tests are used to identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of the pupil as a learner.

6.1.2 In Years 7, 8 and 9 continual formative assessment and annual summer examinations are used to ensure that pupils follow their path of expected progress.

6.1.3 Heads of Year, Deputy Head and SENDCO use data to allocate where support might best be directed, for example, where extra learning support might be needed for pupils or to provide intervention such as a meeting with parents.

#### **6.1. Key Stage 4**

6.2.1. Internal targets are set using a combination of cohort CATS data and individual departmental performance at GCSE to generate a realistic profile. Attainment 8 scores of the cohort are analysed at each data point and are compared with staff projections to monitor the performance of both the department and individual students.

6.2.2. Other measures of comparison are used to monitor performance: Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data which uses KS2 results to provide estimates. AGSB uses FFT 20 which means that estimates are based on the 20% of pupils who make the most progress nationally.

6.2.3. Subject teachers use data to monitor progress, help identify individual needs and set individual targets for pupils. The data used includes:

- Marks from end of unit tests
- A wide range of teacher assessed work and formative assessment
- Peer and self-assessment
- Trial examinations in the summer term of Year 10 and the Autumn Term in Year 11.
- For subjects with practical endorsement, progress is tracked within the department.

6.2.4. Heads of Department use data to set targets for year groups and to identify how best to allocate resources. Heads of Department are responsible for academic achievement of pupils and will provide intervention if a pupil falls below his path of expected progress.

6.2.5. Heads of Year, Deputy Head and SENDCO are responsible for pastoral issues and to coordinate support for pupils who are underachieving in multiple subjects.

### **6.3 Sixth Form**

6.3.1. The performance of pupils at GCSE is used to provide targets for AS and A2 grades for every student at the beginning of the Year 12. Targets are set using ALPS (Advanced Level Performance System) based upon Best 8 GCSE performance.

6.3.2 In Year 12 data on student progress is provided by subject teachers in October and December. This data is used by students to inform their progress and by subject teachers and department heads to identify where intervention may be necessary. Students who require additional support will be identified by the Sixth Form leadership team and appropriate target setting will be put in place.

6.3.3 In Year 12 students sit internal mock examinations in the Summer Term. These internal examinations also provide a basis for UCAS predictions.

6.3.4 In Year 13 internal, formal, subject assessments are set during the second half of the Autumn term in order to provide the basis for the Year 13 report which is published in Spring Term. These are also used to identify students who need different levels of support in order to achieve or exceed their target grade. This support could be at the level of Form Teacher, Subject Teacher or Sixth Form Leadership team.

6.3.5 Subject teachers and departments regularly gather data from internal assessment of all kinds in order to monitor the progress of students. Subject teachers use this information in order to identify individual needs, set individual targets for students and measure progress. For example, such data is used during the Summer Term of Year 12 in order to identify Oxbridge potential

6.3.6 The Head of Sixth Form, Heads of Year and SENDCO use data to determine how best to support the needs of their students.

## **7. The Monitoring and Evaluation of Assessment of Learning and the Attainment of Pupils**

- 7.1. Governors monitor and evaluate the standard of assessment within the School by analysis of performance in Key Stage 3 SATS: GCSE examinations: AS level examinations: A Level examinations: and Oxbridge entry success rates. It should be emphasised that this is not the only way by which pupil achievement is judged. The importance of extra-curricular participation and the success in, for example, music, sport, drama, Duke of Edinburgh Award and Young Enterprise is also an important measure.
- 7.2. The Head Master and Senior Management Team monitor and evaluate students within the School by analysis of performance in: Public Examinations; Internal Examinations and Assessments; and through value added data. They too recognise that extra-curricular participation and success is also an integral part of the School.
- 7.3. Heads of Departments monitor and evaluate the achievement of students within their department by analysis of performance in: Public examinations; Internal Examinations and Assessments; and ALPS and PANDA valued added data.
- 7.4. The ARR Committee monitors and evaluates all aspects of the system of assessment, recording and reporting. The Committee also has a broader brief to consider the assessment implications of changes to the ARR Policy in School or external factors such as the impact of ICT or Government initiatives upon the ARR system.

## **8. ARR within Departments**

- 8.1. All Departments will issue their own ARR guidance which makes reference to Whole School policies relevant to their own departmental needs and practice.
- 8.2. Departmental guidance may include:
  - (a) Guidance on awarding of marks at all Key Stages.  
Sample work and examples of good practice specific to the subject area should be included.
  - (b) Guidance on the management and assessment of controlled assessments.
  - (c) Guidance on the marking of standardised tests.
  - (d) Guidance on the amount and type of independent learning that should be set at the different Key Stages including the frequency, standards and types of marking employed and expected within the department.