



SOLIHULL

Preparatory School Assessment and Feedback Policy

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Reviewer: Assistant Head (Junior School) and Assistant Head (Alice House)
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Version 8

1. Introduction

This policy also applies to pupils in the EYFS setting.

The policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of assessment, feedback, reporting and record keeping in Solihull Preparatory School, all of which support the processes of teaching and learning.

Assessment is an integral part of normal classroom practice, which should inform planning and take into account the ongoing development of the individual child. It should promote higher standards by improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Assessment and feedback should support motivation, self-esteem and pupils' development as learners. Pupils should experience the process as encouraging and empowering, with opportunities for self-evaluation. Through assessment and feedback, parents and staff are kept informed about each child's progress and development.

Assessment procedures should be applied consistently across relevant classes and provide information to support planning, curriculum development and the next learning steps for each child. Assessment also informs parents of their child's progress and helps pupils understand what they have done well and what can be improved. Children will have opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of their peers, and to respond to teachers' feedback.

2. The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of our teaching and learning. It is planned as part of the school's normal curriculum and is used to give positive and constructive feedback to both pupil and parents. Assessment is recorded, where appropriate, in a manageable manner and used to support children's progress by leading to effective target setting. This is achieved through both formal and informal assessments.

Our assessment methods are varied and fit for purpose:

- Formative – the ongoing process which enables teachers to plan for the next steps for individuals and groups. We regard this as fundamentally the most valuable assessment tool.
- Standardised – identifying individual strengths and weaknesses, so that learning can be supported. e.g. national Y1 phonic screening, and National Standard Assessments.
- Summative – provides a snapshot of where a child is at a given moment, and most typically involves either exams or formal assessments
- Evaluative – enabling staff to reflect on their teaching and learning, to provide information for planning and teaching.

3. The Process of Assessment

Most assessments will take place informally. Teachers are continually making judgements and comparing the children within their class and year group.

Assessments will be completed through:

- Observation
- Discussion & Questioning – feedback to and from children
- Target setting through discussion and effective feedback
- End of topic tests and assessments
- Examinations
- For pupils in I1 to J4, attainment and engagement in learning grades at the end of each half term

All teacher assessments should:

- be ongoing throughout the year and inform future teaching
- be carried out in the context of the classroom
- allow children to demonstrate what they know and understand
- allow for differentiated work, as appropriate
- show a variety of assessment techniques and be both formal and informal in their approach

Pupils are given strategies for self-assessment, to help them reflect, improve and set their own targets. Where possible, children are encouraged to peer- and self-assess their work. Results tables should not be published, nor do children need to know how they have fared in relation to other pupils.

Pupil progress is discussed in weekly Year Group meetings and also monitored by the Head of EYFS, the Assistant Heads, Deputy Head (Academic) and the Learning and Curriculum Support Coordinator each term. Teacher feedback and summative data are scrutinised to highlight pupils not making the expected progress. These highlighted children may subsequently have some targeted interventions, be put on a Strive to Thrive Card to focus on and help them improve their learning habits, become a member of a Curriculum Support group, be monitored closely following the Prep School Graduated Approach (PSGA), or be referred for further assessment, after consultation with the parents, their Form Tutor and the Learning and Curriculum Support Coordinator.

4. Written Reports & Attainment Grades

The primary purpose of reporting is to guide the parent/guardian regarding their child's progress and to promote the essential partnership between school and home. Effective reporting should ensure that accurate information is stated and explained. It enables parents, teachers and other agencies to support the child from a position of knowledge.

Reports should be honest and individual. All reports will detail progress and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the child. Targets for improvement will also be detailed. Comments should be positive but also relate to any assessments given and set out ways to help a pupil achieve the next steps in their learning. In addition, a statement is made about each child's learning habits and personal qualities by the Form Tutor. Comments are also made by a member of PMG once a year on each pupil's report.

For pupils in I1 to J4, reports are written twice each academic year. Christmas reports include long comments and attainment grades for mathematics and English, engagement in learning grades for all subjects and, where applicable, exam grades. Summer reports include an engagement in learning grade and full report for each subject, attainment grades for mathematics and English, and exam grades where applicable. Engagement in learning grades are awarded half-termly in the Christmas and Easter terms and at the end of the Summer term. Reports and assessment grades are posted on the Parent Portal. Learning Support reports are included where necessary, outlining progress and future targets. Achievements, co-curricular activities and interests are recorded in the Summer Term reports. For EYFS pupils, a full report is written at the end of the Summer term and includes statutory assessment against the Early Learning Goals for pupils in Reception.

In specific circumstances, non-custodial parents can also be issued with copies of their child's report, on request.

5. Engagement in Learning Grades

These grades will measure how a pupil's engagement in all aspects of their learning contributes to the development and fostering of excellent learning habits and attitudes and to their academic progress. This is assessed on a four-point scale.

PREP SCHOOL – Engagement in Learning descriptors

EXCELLENT

This pupil is fully engaged in their learning and approaches new ideas with curiosity, enthusiasm and a highly positive attitude. They consistently work hard towards both immediate and longer-term goals, completing tasks conscientiously and to the best of their ability.

When learning is challenging, this pupil demonstrates resilience, perseverance and determination. They are willing to explore different approaches, practise and try again in order to find solutions. They understand that mistakes are a valuable part of learning, reflect on them thoughtfully and use what they have learnt to improve.

This pupil sustains their concentration, thinks independently and takes a high level of responsibility for their own learning. They know when and how to seek support, respond positively to feedback and act upon advice to extend their understanding and improve their work.

In discussions, they listen attentively, respect the views of others and contribute thoughtful, well-considered ideas. They collaborate particularly well, taking turns, contributing purposefully and supporting others.

This pupil makes the most of every learning opportunity and consistently demonstrates highly positive and effective learning habits.

VERY GOOD

This pupil engages well in their learning and shows a positive interest in new ideas. They work conscientiously towards both immediate and longer-term goals, regularly trying their best and completing tasks with care.

When learning is challenging, this pupil usually demonstrates resilience and perseverance. They are increasingly willing to explore different approaches, practise and try again in order to find solutions. They understand that mistakes are part of learning and are developing the confidence and determination to respond positively when things do not go smoothly.

This pupil focuses well, sustains their concentration and takes increasing responsibility for their own learning. They know when to seek support, respond well to feedback and usually act upon advice to improve their work.

In discussions, they listen attentively, respect the views of others and make sensible, relevant contributions. They cooperate well with others, take turns and offer support when working collaboratively.

This pupil responds positively to learning opportunities and is developing very positive and effective learning habits.

GOOD

This pupil engages positively in many aspects of their learning and shows interest in new ideas. They generally make a good effort towards immediate and longer-term goals and complete many tasks conscientiously, although they may sometimes need encouragement or reminders to maintain their focus and produce their best work.

When learning is challenging, this pupil is developing greater resilience and perseverance. They are beginning to explore different approaches, practise and try again, but may still need support to remain engaged when a solution is not immediately clear. They increasingly recognise that mistakes are part of learning and are becoming more willing to reflect on them and move forwards.

This pupil is taking greater responsibility for their own learning. They are developing a more secure understanding of when to seek support and how to use feedback and advice to improve.

In discussions, they generally listen to and respect the views of others and can make useful contributions. They are developing the confidence to explain and extend their ideas more fully. When working with others, they are learning to cooperate effectively, take turns and offer appropriate support.

This pupil is making good progress in developing positive and effective learning habits. Greater consistency will help them to make the most of every learning opportunity.

INCONSISTENT

This pupil's engagement with learning is currently inconsistent. They are capable of making a positive contribution but do not yet approach tasks with the focus, effort and determination needed to achieve their best consistently. A more conscientious approach would help them to make stronger progress towards both immediate and longer-term goals.

When learning is challenging, this pupil may find it difficult to persevere or to recover positively from mistakes. They need to become more willing to explore different approaches, practise and try again rather than giving up or becoming disengaged. Developing greater resilience and recognising that mistakes are a valuable part of learning will help them to make progress.

This pupil needs to take greater responsibility for their own learning by sustaining concentration, seeking support at an appropriate time and responding more positively and consistently to feedback and advice.

In discussions, they would benefit from listening more attentively, respecting the contributions of others and participating more purposefully. When working collaboratively, they need to contribute more consistently, take turns appropriately and support others.

By developing greater self-motivation, perseverance and consistency, this pupil will establish more positive and effective learning habits and be better placed to fulfil their potential.

Alice House and Junior School Criteria for Attainment Grades for core subjects (Mathematics and English)

In addition, pupils will be assessed on their current level of attainment on a five-point scale. These grades are assigned across a year group as a whole, adhering as closely as possible to the % guidelines.

5. (Excellent). This grade is awarded to pupils who are deemed to reach the top 15% in attainment across their year group cohort, within our school. The pupil will be confident in understanding all areas of the subject. They will be able to apply their learning effectively, demonstrating maturity in their thinking and understanding. Their attainment in the subject will show an aptitude beyond the norm for pupils of this age.

4.(Very Good). This grade is awarded for a strong performance by a pupil of this age in our school. The pupil will be confident in understanding all areas of the subject. They will be able to apply their learning effectively. This grade will be awarded to approximately 35% of a year-group.

3. (Good). This grade is awarded for a good overall performance by a pupil of this age in our school. The pupil will show a secure level of understanding in many aspects of the subject. They will be able to apply their learning effectively in most areas. This grade will be awarded to approximately 30% of a year-group.

2.(Satisfactory). This grade is awarded for satisfactory performance by a pupil of this age in our school. The pupil may show a sound understanding of some areas of the subject. They will be able to apply their learning effectively at times, whereas other topics are less securely understood. This grade will be awarded to up to 20% of a year-group.

1.(Cause for Concern). This grade is awarded for a comparatively weak performance by a pupil of this age in our school. The pupil may show some understanding of some areas of the subject but they are struggling to keep pace with the progress of their peers in most areas. They find it difficult to apply their learning without support and a number of aspects will not be fully understood. This grade will usually be awarded to a small number of pupils in a year-group.

6. Maths Setting Arrangements

Pupils are set for maths from I2 to J4. Sets are based primarily on mathematical ability relative to the cohort, with movement between sets being commonplace. Learning style and working pace may also inform setting decisions, so a pupil in a 'middle' set may sometimes achieve a higher attainment and/or exam grade than a pupil in the 'top' set.

7. Exams and Exam Grades

In November and May, J1, J2, J3 and J4 pupils sit exams in English and mathematics. I2 also sit exams in English and Maths in May. The grades achieved in these exams will be followed by a written report from the subject teacher in the Christmas and Summer reports respectively.

I2 also sit January assessments, mirroring our external 7+. Parents will receive feedback from this at our February parents' evening.

Exam results are assigned by the following criteria:

A* - Excellent	An excellent level of attainment and academic promise
A - Very Good	A very pleasing level of attainment and academic promise
B - Good	Promising
C - Satisfactory	An adequate level of attainment, with scope for improvement
D - Cause for concern	More progress needed to reach the desired level

When assigning exam grades, we do so across the year group and broadly in line with the following criteria:

- 15% of the year group get A*s
- 35% of the year group get As
- 30% of the year group get Bs
- 20% of the year group get Cs/Ds [with relatively few Ds].

These boundaries are intended to give a clearer picture of how a child's exam results compare with their cohort and are useful indicators of how a child might perform in the 11+ examination. Obtaining a D grade in an English or mathematics exam at any point in the Prep School means that child's performance is significantly below the standard required to ultimately pass the 11+. Ongoing dialogue between relevant staff and parents is needed at this point to plan effective intervention strategies both at school and at home.

8. Standardised Tests

Christmas Term

CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test) by GL Assessment evaluates verbal, non-verbal, quantitative, and spatial reasoning to provide insights into a student's learning potential and academic strengths.

GL Progress tests in English and Maths (baseline assessment)

Easter Term

GL Progress tests in English and Maths (second assessment point)

Summer Term

I1 National Phonic Screening

J2 Multiplication check

Reception – ELG statutory assessment

The tests are used at the start of the year for baselining and during the year to measure and track progress. Detailed reports analyse key dimensions of learning for each core subject and provide a question-by-question breakdown to help identify those students who require more challenging targets and those who may need extra support.

9. Reporting via Other Formal and Informal Means

Parents and children are also involved in the reporting process throughout the school year in a number of ways.

This is implemented through:

- An “open door” policy. Staff are available during term time, by prior appointment, to discuss any aspect of a child’s progress with the parents. These meetings may, if deemed necessary, be minuted and filed for future reference and discussion.
- Reading Records and Prep Books in which parents and teachers are able to communicate concerns or suggestions for ways forward
- Parents and teachers may also communicate via email re any concerns they may have or arrange to chat over the phone, or in person, to discuss a child’s progress at any time.
- Pupil commendations awarded by the Head of the Prep School. Parents are notified by letter.

All Prep School parents are invited to two Parents’ Evenings each academic year, in October and February. Meetings are with the Form Tutor to discuss progress, with further subject-teacher appointments arranged if necessary. For Junior School pupils, Parents’ Evening appointments are followed by individual Form Tutor/pupil consultations. In February, Junior School pupils are also invited to attend parents’ evening discussions.

10. Data Recording

Records should be useful, manageable and supplementary to teachers’ professional knowledge of each pupil. Data recording supports monitoring and evaluation, helping staff understand how effectively the curriculum reaches each child and how best to support progress.

At Solihull Prep School the data we record includes:

- Exam grades, attainment and effort grades. All these are stored in the school’s database.
- Standardised testing: National Standard Assessments, including NVR and VR. This data is stored on the school’s network in a folder with restricted permissions, so that only those who need to see it can do so.
- A list of all pupils who are on the Learning Support and Curriculum Support registers. This is disseminated to the relevant teachers.
- Pupil Profiles are written for pupils who have an Educational Psychologist’s or Medical Consultant’s Report. These are also disseminated to the relevant teachers.
- On entry to Nursery and Reception all children are baseline assessed in all seven areas of learning which is used to plan an appropriate curriculum based on individual need and track individual development.
- At the end of Reception all pupils’ Early Learning Goals assessment data is reported to parents; this also addresses the characteristics of effective learning. Monitoring and review of the different areas of the EYFS curriculum and overseeing the completion of

the pupil profiles and collection of this data is the responsibility of the Head of EYFS.

Standardised testing results are collated and stored securely on the network by the Deputy Head (Academic) to track pupil performance and progress. At the point of transfer or when moving to a new school, records will be forwarded on request. Parents may view records on request.

Pupils from I1 to J4 have weekly spelling tests; times tables tests take place from J1 to J4.

11. Records Involving Home and School

Teachers, parents and pupils work together to record progress in several ways:

- Home reading records are completed in all year groups
- Weekly 'magic moments' in learning are recorded and shared with parents of pupils in EYFS via Tapestry
- Prep Books are signed daily by parents and checked regularly by the Form Tutor.
- Merits are recorded within class for Nursery – I2 and in the back of the Prep Books, for J1-J4, collated and logged at the end of each term.
- Behaviour issues are recorded. EYFS thinking spots, yellow cards (and red for serious offences) are recorded on iSAMS and collated and reviewed by the Assistant Heads of Alice House and Junior School, and by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) of the Prep School. Incidents of bullying are recorded and parents advised.
- Children underperforming in work, effort, engagement with their learning or behaviour may be placed on a 'Strive to Thrive' Card. (see Behaviour Policy)

12. Transfer through Prep school and to Senior School

Pupils joining Alice House

Following admission, further ongoing informal assessments will take place throughout EYFS and Infant 1 to ensure that Solihull is the right school for each pupil. Parents/guardians will be notified if there are any immediate concerns.

Pupils joining Infant 2

All pupils in Infants will ordinarily transfer to J1, subject to continuing to adhere to our behaviour and academic expectations. All of our Infant 2 pupils will sit the 7+ entrance examination for benchmark feedback purposes.

Pupils joining the Junior School up to and including the start of Year 5

For those pupils who move to Junior School from Alice House, join us in J1 (Year 3), J2 (Year 4) or at the beginning of J3 (Year 5), the Executive Headmaster intends to offer those pupils a place in the Senior School at the end of the first term in J3, following the Christmas term examinations.

If there is any doubt about a Junior School pupil's suitability for the Senior School, this will be communicated at the end of the Christmas term in J3. In such circumstances the Executive Headmaster will use the J3 summer examinations and/or the 11+ entrance examination to determine whether a Senior School place will be offered or not.

Offers of places in the Senior School are subject to sustained good performance throughout the remainder of J3 (Easter and summer terms) and the duration of J4 (Year 6).

Pupils joining the Junior School at the start of Year 6

For those pupils who join us in J4, the acceptance of an offer at 10+ automatically leads to an offer at 11+. Offers of places in the Senior School are subject to sustained good performance throughout the duration of J4.

Pupils will continue to sit our 11+ Entrance Test in order to compete for scholarships and to provide baseline data for the school.

Feedback Policy

1.Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a common understanding of the feedback process used throughout the Prep School. This process will then provide continuity of approach and expectations.

Feedback forms an essential part of assessment, enabling teachers to monitor progress and plan next steps. It should be positive, constructive, clear, purposeful and directly related to the child. At Solihull Prep School, feedback acknowledges achievement, guides learning and highlights areas for development.

Written work, pictures and other tasks completed by a child should receive appropriate teacher acknowledgement or feedback. In its widest sense, 'feedback' may be interpreted as:

"Teachers' responses to children's work"

Through feedback and acknowledgement, teachers show children that their efforts are valued and their work has been considered. All work should be acknowledged appropriately, for example through a stamp, sticker, brief celebratory or encouraging comment, verbal recognition or another suitable response. Verbal and written feedback should be used where it is most likely to support learning, guide improvement or celebrate achievement. Parents should be confident that pupils' work is seen and valued, and that teachers use professional judgement to decide the most appropriate and manageable form of feedback.

2. Principles

- Feedback should relate to learning objectives, with reference to key English skills in other subjects where appropriate.
- Teachers and pupils should understand the learning objectives for tasks or sequences of work, where appropriate.
- Wherever possible, feedback should be given live alongside the child, or as soon as appropriate after completion.
- Pupils should understand that identifying errors and making corrections are part of the learning process.
- Feedback should be proportionate, purposeful and manageable. Not every piece of written work requires an individual written comment. Teachers should select the approach most likely to move learning forward, including verbal feedback, live feedback, written comments, feedback codes, whole-class feedback, peer or self-assessment, or planned pupil response time, as appropriate.

Purposes of Feedback

- ☐ To respond to pupils' work and acknowledge effort, achievement and attainment.
- ☐ To build self-esteem, motivate pupils and help them understand how to improve.
- ☐ To support pupils in setting or responding to targets, where appropriate.
- ☐ To provide assessment information for teachers and inform next steps in learning.

Effective Feedback

- May be verbal, written, live, whole-class or supported by agreed Prep School feedback stampers and feedback codes, where appropriate.
- Should be positive, constructive, concise, age-appropriate and clearly understood by pupils and staff.
- Should value effort, achievement and attainment, and indicate success against learning objectives where appropriate.
- May suggest targets, next steps or questions when this will help pupils make progress or extend their thinking.
- May include planned 'Target Time' where pupils need to review, respond to or improve their work.

Teachers will:

- Focus feedback on learning objectives, success criteria, specific patterns of error and what is realistically within the child's ability, while extending potential wherever possible.
- Acknowledge pupils' efforts and achievements positively and constructively, using verbal or written feedback where this will help pupils understand what has gone well and how to improve.
- Ensure pupils understand any grades, marks or symbols used.
- Give pupils opportunities to correct and evaluate their own and each other's work through peer and self-assessment tasks, using green pen where appropriate.
- Provide prompt and regular acknowledgement and feedback, oral or written, so pupils know their work has been seen and valued and feedback remains relevant.
- Use the agreed Prep School feedback code and red pen for written teacher feedback and acknowledgement, where appropriate.
- Complete feedback in a timely manner so that it remains useful. Feedback does not always need to be written or completed before the next lesson if whole-class feedback, live feedback or planned review time is more effective and manageable.

- Address key spelling errors using the agreed approach for each year group, encouraging pupils to correct and practise spellings using appropriate strategies and resources.
- Use legible handwriting that reflects the school's Nelson handwriting style where written comments are used.
- Address poor effort and subsequent underachievement using a warmly honest approach.

3. Grades/Marks

Marks should only be given for tests where appropriate, e.g. mental arithmetic tests and spelling tests. Grades or marks may be given for occasional assessment purposes, for example in preparation for the 11+ examinations in J4. This may be necessary when preparing for exams as indicators of performance and progress for each individual pupil. In such cases, grades should still be supported by positive feedback, which may be written or verbal, and may include suggestions on how to improve the work further.

Feedback should promote learning and improve children's performance. It involves making time to talk to pupils and to teach them to be reflective about both the learning objectives and their work/responses.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To maintain consistency and standards, Subject Leaders monitor pupils' work, expectations and the quality, appropriateness and impact of feedback. English and mathematics are reviewed termly; foundation subjects are reviewed annually. Monitoring should consider whether work is appropriately acknowledged and feedback is purposeful and manageable, rather than the quantity of written comments. A written report is shared with PMG and disseminated to staff. Immediate issues are actioned; longer-term actions are discussed, implemented and reviewed at the next work trawl. The Head of EYFS, Assistant Heads and Deputy Head (Academic) may also assist, as appropriate.

4. Inclusion

The Assessment and Feedback Policy seeks to monitor that all children make expected progress across the curriculum regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, ability or specific learning or behavioural needs and ensures the fullest possible coverage of curriculum areas.

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with the following Prep School Policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy