Assessment Policy

Policy Owner:	Heads of School
Formally Endorsed By:	Principal
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Human *Connection* in all we do

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1. Aims

Within the context of Michael Hall Waldorf School, this policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment across the school – including phonics, reading, maths and English.
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents/carers
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated
- Ensure consistency of approach to assessment, feedback and marking across the school based on a common understanding of expectations.

2. Legislation and guidance

Since 2014 schools have been expected to develop their own assessment processes. Michael Hall has created a progressive assessment system which allows pupils to flourish as well as allowing the school to monitor progress, provide supportive interventions, and identify possible SEND requirements for further investigation.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1

3. Principles of Assessment

At Michael Hall we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use 2 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment and in-school summative assessment.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents/carers** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment

- **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period, and the impact of their own teaching
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents/carers** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

4. Assessment Approaches

4.1 Formative assessment

Formative refers to a range of formal and informal assessment procedures carried out by teachers in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve a pupil's progress and attainment. It includes diagnostic testing/assessment.

In the younger classes, formative assessment focuses on the child's effort, participation and engagement in class and the outcomes in main lesson books/ projects, rather than on tests and exams. Summative assessment and marking are introduced gradually and by Class 7, assessment; feedback, and marking are based on a clear set of success criteria.

Formative assessment:

- must be age appropriate;
- should clearly refer to the skills being developed such as working in a group, finishing the task, developing an idea;
- should clearly refer to the skills specific to the subject being taught;
- for younger classes, should come from exploring the teacher's model before the pupils attempt the task for themselves;
- for older students, peer and self - assessment should be encouraged.

4.2 Feedback

Feedback, both verbal and written, should provide an opportunity for:

- children to talk about their work and what they could do to improve;
- From Class 4 onward, children edit their work in response to feedback. In Lower School this might happen when practice work is improved as it is transferred to Main Lesson Books. In Upper School, this might be either re-drafting or pupil responses to the teacher's marking.

Verbal feedback:

- should occur at least once per week;
- Children should be able to talk about the teacher's feedback.

Written feedback;

- should occur at least once every two weeks;
- should be written clearly, using script and language that is appropriate to the ability of the child;

4.3 Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment, which refers to feedback that makes a "judgement," should:

- focus on the skills that have been formatively addressed;
- recognise the progress made;
- recognise and praise the effort/contribution/engagement as well as the attainment.

Written summative assessment and feedback, otherwise known as ‘marking’, should:

- apply from Class 4 onwards;
- occur at the end of every Main Lesson block. It should be benchmarked against developmental goals indicated in the whole school curriculum;
- inform teachers’ tracking of progress against the Literacy and Numeracy frameworks in Lower School and the External Qualifications skills and knowledge in Upper School. In the Lower School, this data must be input into the Class Profile sheets. In the Upper School, this data must be input termly to our data tracking system – and responded to where necessary to address pupil progress issues;
- be shared with parents/carers at parents’ evenings and meetings as well as informing the written report to parents.

All teachers are teachers of literacy and numeracy, and as such should use some of their marking to support improvement in these areas as well as their own subject.

Written summative assessment (marking) and feedback for pupils with SEND should be informed by the respective pupils’ Support Plans/ EHCP targets where appropriate.

Standardised Assessment and Tracking
Class 1: teacher assessment and Sounds Write assessments in Autumn and Summer term
Class 2: teacher assessment and Sounds Write assessments in Autumn and Summer term and PM Benchmarking*
Class 3: standardised whole class assessment of numeracy and literacy
Class 4: standardised whole class assessment of numeracy and literacy
Class 5 standardised whole class assessment of numeracy and literacy
Class 6: standardised whole class assessment of numeracy, literacy, and LASS
Class 7: standardised whole class assessment of numeracy and literacy
Class 8: standardised whole class assessment of numeracy, literacy, and LASS
Classes 9-12: Mock/end of year tests Class 10: Mock external examinations and teacher assessment

Interventions to address pupil progress / learning issues will normally be led by the class teacher and may be supported by the phase lead and/or respective SEN coordinator.

*PM Benchmarking is continued until children reach their age-related level and for children who are in the lowest 20% until Class 8.

5. Collecting and using data

Data is collected via assessments, and this is discussed during Pupil Progress meetings and used to identify gaps and inform planning as part of a wider faculty team.

In the Upper School, termly tracking informed by summative and formative assessment is entered into the termly tracking system and shared at the Upper School Faculty meeting via the Guardians and shared with ELT.

In the Upper School, termly tracking data is also shared with parents via the Parent Portal.

6. Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils, and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Michael Hall School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework

- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed and referenced

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience, and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in, as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

Where students have been identified as being in the lowest 20% for maths, the INCo will contact parents to get permission to administer the specialist maths assessment. The purpose of this to give an overview of the gaps and challenges within a child's learning. While LASS (11-15) will be used to screen classes 6-8 as a diagnostic tool, there may be cases in which individual children and families may request for this assessment to be administered.

8. Training

New Class 1 & 2 and other new class teachers will undertake specialist training through Waldorf UK to ensure their readiness to teach these year groups. Within this, Class 1 and 2 teachers complete "Sounds-Write" assessment training.

Upper School teachers are given access to exam board assessment materials and training in order to administer progress tests and mock exams.

This policy is shared annually with teachers at the beginning of year INSET days so that all teachers are clear on what assessment is expected for each year group.

Subject leads deliver ongoing CPD for subject relevant assessment.

9. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 Trustees

Trustees are responsible for:

- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data
- Monitoring that school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school

10.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is followed
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Ensuring there is analysis of pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Responding to emerging trends to address underachievement
- Reporting to Trustees on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessment competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities

10.3 Subject Leads

Subject Leads are responsible for:

- Ensuring that assessment in their subject is appropriate and practiced effectively across the school
- Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they lead
- Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice

10.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy
- Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they teach
- Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice
- Developing assessment opportunities for their classes

10. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed yearly by ELT. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal and shared with the Board of Trustees.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. ELT is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The Principal will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

Pupil Progress meetings, moderation, lesson observations, book scrutinies and learning walks.

11. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Curriculum policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Non-examination assessment policy
- Examination contingency plan