

YANCHEP LAGOON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Assessment Policy

Rationale

Yanchep Lagoon Primary School is committed to providing high-quality educational programs for its students. Assessment, monitoring and reporting are integral to the achievement of high-quality learning outcomes and form part of the interacting processes of teaching and learning

The following information set out the requirements and responsibilities for students and teachers and the expectations of parents/caregivers necessary to achieve these goals. These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training ***Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting: Policy and Guidelines and School Curriculum and Standards Authority (www.scsa.wa.edu.au)*** documents.

Definition of Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering information about students and their learning, and using the data gathered to make judgments about achievement, in terms of agreed standards. This information forms the basis of planning for teaching and learning.

The two main forms of assessment are;

1. Formative Assessment

Formative Assessment is used to monitor progress during a learning sequence. It provides continuous feedback to teachers and students, which enables them to monitor progress and identify errors in learning. The feedback is the crucial component as it informs students about their progress with the specific purpose of helping them to improve.

2. Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment seeks to establish the level of achievement attained by a student, and typically occurs at the end of a learning sequence, course or unit. Although the main purpose is to establish levels of achievement, it also provides information for judging the effectiveness of teaching programs.

Assessment at Yanchep Lagoon Primary School will endeavour to -

- Identify students' achievements and the extent of their progress in relation to the Curriculum and Expected Standard.
- Assist with identification of students at educational risk;
- Improve students' learning;
- Allow students to set goals for their learning;
- Motivate students to learn because their learning is personalised;
- Improve the effectiveness of teachers' planning, pedagogy, monitoring and reporting to parents;
- Allow YLPS to plan for improvement by determining with the School Council realistic priorities; and
- Broaden home/school links that will enable parents to further assist with their children's learning.

Assessment of students' work assists teachers and the school in:

- Monitoring the progress of students and diagnosing learning difficulties;
- Providing feedback to students on how they may improve their achievement;
- Adjusting programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the intended outcomes;
- Developing subsequent learning programs;
- Reporting student achievement to parents;
- Whole school and system planning, reporting and accountability procedures.

Measuring Student Achievement

Assessment tasks will be developed in accordance with the Principles of Teaching Learning and Assessment, and syllabi. Teachers are not expected to grade or level each piece of student work but are expected to provide feedback to students on assessments so that students know how to improve and teachers know what to plan for in their teaching.

Teachers may use a variety of assessment tools including: NAPLAN and PAT testing data, other standardised tests, anecdotal comments, observations or checklists profiles, photographs. Teachers may assess in ways they feel comfortable with to determine a summative grade.

All students must be provided with sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of outcomes.

Teacher Recording Of Student Achievement

It is a requirement of teacher accountability that they maintain ongoing classroom based records showing each student's achievement of the outcomes covered and that evidence of their judgements is kept. These records need to document:

1. Attempts at a task and the degree of success of those attempts.
2. Task details

This should be recorded in such a format that it can be used for reporting purposes. Staff use *SIS Monitor and Evaluate* as part of this accountability process as SIS enables student data to be passed on from teacher to teacher, year to year and school to school.

The school must maintain copies of all documentation by teachers, which are records of student achievement. Teachers must therefore give copies of all information to the Deputy Principal at the end of the year, which they have used to come to a summative grade for reporting purposes.

Required Assessments

PAT testing Term 1 and 4

On Entry testing in Pre-Primary in Term 1

NAPLAN annually in Semester 1

Moderation

To support consistency of teacher judgements, teachers will have opportunities to engage in school based moderation.

Where there is limited opportunity for in school moderation, this process will be extended to include teachers at other schools for example this could be in The Arts, Technology and Enterprise and LOTE).

Beliefs about Assessment

At Yanchep Lagoon Primary School we believe assessment should:

- facilitate learning
- refer to criteria that are explicit
- identify strengths and achievements
- include a variety of strategies and sources of evidence
- be appropriate for each phase of schooling
- include student self-evaluation and reflection
- involve teacher judgement
- provide opportunities for students to work together
- be sensitive to students with special needs

Our **beliefs** about assessment are based on the assessment principles from the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority*:

1. Assessment should be an integral part of Teaching and Learning

Assessments should arise naturally out of the teaching and intended learning of the curriculum and syllabus. They should be carefully constructed to enable judgements to be made about the students' progress in ways that contribute to ongoing learning.

To do this, assessments should provide information about fine changes in student learning related to specific aspects of that learning. They should help teachers understand where students are in their learning, what they need to learn next as well as identify any misunderstandings or misconceptions that the

students have. It is this fine-grained information that enables teachers to plan programs that challenge students to go beyond what they already know, understand or can do in order to build new knowledge, understandings and skills.

There are myriad ways that teachers can find out where students are in their learning including one-to-one conferencing with individual students, the range of formative assessment strategies that allow teachers to check students' understandings during the course of the lesson, learning journals, exhibitions, portfolios as well as teacher-devised tests and standardised assessments. All the information teachers collect about their students should become an integral part of the planning of instructional activities.

Teachers need to give careful consideration to planning for assessment as well as planning for teaching. This preparation should include planning how they will draw on their own observations and planning for summative assessments. Teachers also need to consider how they will refine their teaching programs based on the information they collect.

2. Assessment should be educative

Assessment practices should be educationally sound and contribute to learning. Assessments may do this in a number of ways. Firstly, assessment activities should encourage in-depth and long-term learning. Secondly, assessments should provide feedback that assists students in learning and informs teachers' planning. Thirdly, where appropriate, assessment criteria should be made explicit to students to focus their attention on what they have to achieve and provide students with feedback about their progress.

Assessment needs to be comprehensive and balanced across various domains of learning and assess knowledge and higher order cognitive skills such as problem solving and critical thinking. Assessments need to be aligned with the curriculum and use a variety of assessment strategies, on the basis of their relevance to the knowledge, skills and understanding to be assessed and the purpose of the assessment. Students need to be included in the assessment process. With expert support, students can learn to assess and evaluate their own learning in a way that further extends that learning. It is important that teachers are responsive to the unexpected ways students reveal their thinking. These opportunities can be used to extend or redirect teaching.

3. Assessment should be fair

Assessment needs to take account of the diverse needs of students, to be equitable with regard to gender, disability, background language and socio-economic status and not discriminate on grounds that are irrelevant to learning.

If assessments are to be fair they should provide valid information on the actual ideas, processes, products and values expected of students. A valid assessment is one that assesses what it is supposed to assess. For example, recall of facts should not be assessed if the primary purpose of the assessment is to collect information about problem solving skills.

Assessments should also provide reliable indications of students' knowledge, understandings and skills and should be based on the integration of a range of types and sources of evidence.

4. Assessments should be designed to meet their specific purposes

Information collected to establish where students are in their learning can be used for summative purposes (assessment *of* learning) and for formative purposes (assessment *for* learning) because it is used to inform subsequent teaching. The principles of assessment apply to all forms of assessments.

Summative assessment involves assessment procedures that aim to determine students' learning at a particular time, for example when reporting against the achievement standards, after completion of a unit of work or at the end of a term or semester. The aim of the assessment is to identify students' achievement at that point in time and it is particularly important that the assessments are fair and that teacher judgements are reliable.

Formative assessment involves a range of informal and formal assessment procedures used by teachers during the learning process in order to improve student attainment and to guide teaching and learning activities. It often involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) for both students and teachers that focuses on the details of specific knowledge and skills that are being learnt. Therefore it is essential that the assessments provide fine-grained information about student performance that supports teachers to plan learning that challenges students to go beyond what they already know, understand or can do in order to build new knowledge, understandings and skills.

5. Assessment should lead to informative reporting

Reporting happens at the end of a teaching cycle and should provide an accurate summary of the formative and summative assessment information collected for each student. The purpose of reporting is to provide feedback to students, parents, and teachers. The information is also valuable for school and system-wide

planning. It is important that, in addition to providing an accurate synopsis of student performance, the judgements of student achievement are reliable.

6. Assessment should lead to school-wide evaluation processes

Highly effective schools pay particular attention to teachers' qualitative and quantitative data and standardised test data. Teachers and school leaders need to understand current and past student achievement levels, be explicit about targets for improvement and be explicit about how progress towards those targets will be monitored. School leaders need to plan for how they will evaluate the effectiveness of school initiatives and programs. Teachers should plan for how they will reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices. This implies that schools and teachers need to be willing to identify and evaluate both the intended and unintended consequences of any initiative or program.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students will be responsible for:

- Contributing to discussions about assessment processes;
- Assessing own learning and that of their peers;
- Meeting assessment deadlines as agreed upon with the classroom teachers; and
- Responding to assessments made by peers, teachers and others.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Developing skills and an understanding of assessment practices ensure that their assessment practices are valid and reliable;
- Designing assessment opportunities that explicitly test what students know, understand and can do in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts;
- Using assessment information to inform their teaching and learning;
- Ensuring that students know what is being assessed, and when and why;
- Providing students with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to participate in self and peer assessments;
- Providing feedback to students that highlights what students have demonstrated and what they need to do to improve;
- Returning assessed work in a **timely fashion** to students (major pieces of work 4 weeks max);
- Participating in professional collaboration to ensure consistency of judgements between teachers;
- Ensuring monitoring and evaluation records are placed upon the schools information system (SIS)

It is expected that parents/carers will be responsible for:

- Communicating relevant information that may affect their child's learning;
- Taking advantage of opportunities to be informed or to learn about assessment procedures;
- Providing feedback about assessment practices in relation to their impact on their child; and
- Through School Council contribute to the development and review of the school development plan.