



FOOTSCRAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Assessment and Reporting Policy



'Learners need endless feedback more than they need endless teaching' (Wiggins).

Rationale

The Assessment and Reporting policy takes into account the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum as well as the perspective of the Primary Years Programme. The first question we ask is 'How will we know what we have learned?' The question implies the 'we' is both the students and the teachers working together as a community of learners. Assessment is central to the learning for students/teachers and supports and guides us through the five elements of the P.Y.P: the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of learning skills, the development of attitudes and how this transfers to life and action. To promote the commonality of human experience assessment activities provide opportunities to act and reflect on the attributes of the learner profile. This commonality of experience extends the role of the assessor to students through peer and self-assessment strategies.

The assessment philosophy at Footscray Primary School are based on the constructivist principles of learning (Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner). Learning is an active process of thinking and rethinking where deep understanding is our goal. Assessment is also about engaging our students with gathering evidence for their learning, for providing feedback to improve their learning and for us to evaluate how effective our teaching practices have been.

Finally assessment happens in all facets of the students experience at school focused on processes of students' learning as well as products to move to a mindset of student growth.

Purpose: Why do we assess?

The purpose of assessment at Footscray Primary School is that it provides a sound basis for planning for learning, reporting and evaluation. Assessment informs and guide the learning process, record student achievement to monitor progress and allows teachers to evaluate on the success of teaching and learning.

Three points why we assess are:

- Pre-assessment activities support teachers to gather evidence about what students already know, do and understand and their unique interests to guide inquiries. They can uncover student misconceptions about big ideas and concepts.
- Formative assessments (assessment for learning) prides guidance to support teachers to identify what the next steps of learning are for students. Formative assessment provides timely, specific feedback to students. Learning intentions and success criteria also articulate the 'what' and 'how' of learning, support students to develop personalised goals through conferring conversations. Peer and Self-evaluation through the use of rubrics and success criteria can foster student reflection and goal setting.
- Summative assessment (assessment of learning) allows students to independently demonstrate their growth with learning. Summative assessment aims to give teachers a clear insight into the student's understanding and the skills and attitudes of learning they have developed. Rich assessment tasks or summative assessment are planned at the beginning of each unit of inquiry. Teachers use three questions to design summative assessment tasks:
 1. What do we want students to do? The question directs to the nature of the task towards higher order thinking. We want students to create, analyse and evaluate not recall or define.
 2. Why do we want them to do this? This directs the focus to the central idea of the unit of inquiry and uses the wording 'in order to show that...'

3. How will they demonstrate their understanding? This question leads to a detailed description of the task. GRASPS can also be used to develop rich assessment tasks. Rubrics are also developed within teams to support assessment of the five elements of the PYP.

Implementation: How do we assess?

Assessments are always linked to the teaching and learning programme. Once teachers have identified the essential learnings and unpacked them with the essential knowledge, skills and understandings they ask themselves three key questions:

1. What evidence can show that the students have achieved the essential learnings?
2. How will the summative assessment tasks anchor the curriculum units and guide instruction?
3. What should we look for to determine the extent of student understanding?

Pre-Assessment

Teachers always establish student prior knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning experiences. This demonstrates the student's entry point to the unit of inquiry and provides the information required for effective differentiation across the disciplines.

Pre-assessment in the classroom could be:

- Pre-tests in Mathematics that are then analysed using the planning for learning template.
- Concept mapping or mind mapping tools connected to a provocation.
- Thinking routines <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/professional-development/online-courses/visible-thinking>

Formative Assessment (Responsibility and Student Voice)

Formative assessment involves qualitative feedback for both students and teachers that focuses on the details of specific knowledge and skills that are being learnt. It is important that effective assessment provides specific and explicit details and insights 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 for them to construct and build new knowledge, understandings and skills through active learning experiences.

Formative assessment in the classroom could be:

- Using exemplars of student work to provide and develop rubrics and success criteria. The exemplars could also be used by the students to identify points of improvement.
- Sharing learning intentions with students including the 'what' and 'how' of learning.
- Collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking through direct experiences and conferring.
- Documenting the learning process.
- Engaging students in reflecting on their learning.
- Students assessing work produced by themselves and by others.
- Developing rubrics to include all of the PYP elements.
- Feedback that is explicit, timely and specific. Criteria needs to support feedback. Telling students to do more of this and less of that. Ask questions or having students describe how samples of work is similar to success criteria
- Analysing with the student performance on summative tasks and support them to set learning goals which they track and monitor.
- Reading, writing and maths conferences support student voice and goal setting. These conferences are recorded on cross checkers and goals are visible in the classroom. Effective questioning is key for the success of the conferring process.
- The use of student learning portfolios to demonstrate growth over time and provides a tool for reflection.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment aims to give teachers and students clear insights into student understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process. Summative Assessment should be a balance of strategies and is described in the assessment schedule and is:

- Pat Maths and Reading, Regular Writing Moderation, S.P.A.T phonemic awareness assessment in Foundation and Year 1.
- NAPLAN Testing in Years 3 and 5.
- Rich Summative Assessment Tasks (GRASPS framework can be used to support development of tasks)
- The Year 6 Exhibition and Celebration of Learnings at other year levels.

Reporting to Parents

Student achievement is reported each term to parents in the following format:

- Term 1: Teacher-parent conferences
- Term 2: Semester 1 Written reports (Summative) and Student-led Conferences
- Term 3: Student-led Conferences (in the context of a Celebration of Learning)
- Term 4: Written Reports (Summative)
- All terms (PSG) Parent Support groups termly as required for students on individual learning plan. These are conducted during the day to provide time for teachers to manage this workload.

*Parent teacher meetings may occur at other times throughout the year as requested by parents. The teacher communicates available times at the beginning of each school year.

Teacher-parent conferences

In Term 1, this interview is based on feedback from the parents after they complete the 'You Tell Us', teachers' observations, collected work of students and any pre-assessment material that informs student learning. The main purpose of the first term interview is to establish the relationship between the parent and often a new teacher. The emphasis is on the pastoral care needs of the student.

Student-Led Conferences (Responsibility and Student Voice)

This consists of a 15 minutes with the parent, student and teacher. The student's work and reflections are organised in hard copy (F-1) and digital (2-6_ format and include reporting on the learner profile; the essential elements of the PYP- conceptual understandings, skills, attitudes and action; show growth; include learning goals and evidence of achieving them; used as a basis for reflection and students taking responsibility for reporting on their progress to their parents

Formal Written Reports

These are provided for all students Foundation to Year 6 in Term 2 and Term 4. In Victorian schools, these are mandated reports to give parents a clear picture of their child's progress against expected state-wide standards using and A-E rating.

- A – Student is performing significantly above the standard expected at this time of year.
- B – Student is performing above the standard expected at this time of the year.
- C – Student is performing at the standard expected at this time of the year.
- D – Student is approaching the standard expected at this time of year.
- E – Student is significantly below the standard expected at this time of the year.

The report consists of:

- Criteria based assessment in discipline knowledge and skills as defined by the PYP and the Victorian Curriculum.
- Criteria based assessment of transdisciplinary skills and the general capabilities as described by the Victorian Curriculum.
- Teacher written comments identifying strengths, areas for improvement or future areas for development and if required advice on how the child can be supported by the school and parents.
- Teacher summary comments based on attitudes and the learner profile.

Exhibition and Celebration of Learning

Year 6 students work through to prepare an exhibition around a central idea and a transdisciplinary theme. The summative assessment task offers the students a rich opportunity to demonstrate a range of transdisciplinary skills and a deep conceptual understanding of the central idea. Reflection and self-evaluation are a significant component.

Celebrations of Learning occur three time each year for each year level and are based on the idea of the exhibition where students lead and share their learning with parents.

Evaluation

This policy was ratified in 2015 and has been recently revised in 2017.

Assessment is also a basis for evaluation of programs and pedagogy. Evaluation

- Identifies areas for revision or rethinking
- Guides future planning and identifies trends
- Assess students' performance in relation to national and regional benchmarks in curriculum and reporting.
- Identifies what is worth knowing
- Informs all stakeholders.

Tools for the evaluation process:

- Formal consultation with parents through the school council
- Consultation with the students through the Student Representative Council and other student forums.
- Parent consultative committee convened in response to specific changes to curriculum.
- Regular cycle of review by the Education Department and the International Baccalaureate Organisation
- Regular cycle of interviews between the individual teachers and the Principal.
- Regular Review of standardised testing data at the Guiding Coalition for School Improvement and with teachers