

Assessment At Blackfriars

The staff at Blackfriars Academy see assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Our assessment practice enables teachers and students to recognize and value their achievements and know how they can improve and build upon their previous performances. The aim of any assessment is to raise the attainment of our students in all areas of their school experience and inspire individuality.

Introduction



The staff at Blackfriars Academy see assessment as an integral part of any scheme of work. We believe that our assessment practice should enable students to recognise and value their achievements and to learn how to improve and build on their previous performances. We feel that it is extremely important that students know what is expected of them, how well they have done and how they can improve in the future. We also feel that parents can support their children by having a full knowledge of our expectations. Assessment can take many forms, including marking, written comments, reports and individual teacher and student discussion.

Why Do We Assess?

We believe that assessment is a very important part of the education process and that:

- Assessment is necessary to inform students, parents, staff, Academy Councillors etc of the progress being made by each and every student.
- Assessment should be formative, summative or self-assessment as appropriate.
- Assessment should help both students and staff with target setting. Assessment for Learning (AFL) is essential to this. Students need to be aware of the criteria in which they are assessed by and be part of assessing themselves against it. Such strategies used in lessons enable students to work alongside the teacher in setting their own targets and be motivated to achieve them.
- Assessment should reward achievement.
- Assessment should be used to increase the self-esteem of students.
- Assessment should not just be subject-based but should involve the monitoring of Cross-Curricular themes and skills wherever possible.
- Assessment should take various forms e.g. written and verbal feedback.
- Assessment should meet present legal requirements.
- Assessment should form an integral part of teaching and learning methodology. Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies should under-pin the teaching that happens each lesson. Setting objectives, questioning, peer assessment, feedback and using success criteria should be used to maximise the achievement of all students.
- Assessment should have outcomes which can be evaluated.
- Assessment should be continuous and ongoing from one year to the next.

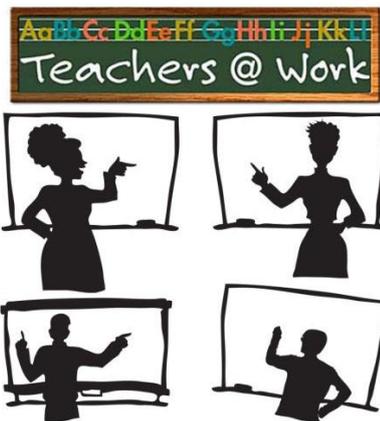


Assessment at Blackfriars Academy should follow a common framework but allow for variation between subjects and consistency within them. Currently every school is moving away from National Curriculum Levels, which is what you will have seen on previous reports, e.g. P1-8, NC 1, NC 2 etc. We will move towards assessing against a common skills set and these will be reported as bands, which will run from Band Entry 1 – Band 15 and cover all levels of ability.

This is currently a work in progress so watch this space for assessment updates.

Types of Assessment – A Parents' Guide

There are three main types of assessment:



- **Summative** – this type of assessment comes at the end of a unit or piece of work. It could be formal summative assessment such as an end of unit controlled test or an exam.
- **Formative** – this type of assessment is ongoing and forms an integral part of the teaching process. It checks students' understanding and allows us to re-teach elements if we need to.
- **Self Assessment** – this type of assessment is completed by some of our students - they consider how well they have done and their understanding of what has been taught to them. This is important because it allows us to respond to individual student needs.

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Whilst posing a challenge in a special needs setting, Blackfriars is firmly committed to the principles underlying AFL, in particular the philosophy that:

When a teacher teaches, no matter how well he or she might design a lesson, what a child learns is unpredictable. Children do not always learn what we teach. That is why the most important assessment does not happen at the end of learning – it happens during the learning, when there is still time to do something with the information.

Dylan Wiliam, 2011

Assessment for Learning allows students to be involved in the assessment process and more involved in the learning process. It is used to ensure that:

- Students are involved in their own learning, using self/peer assessment, success criteria and a knowledge of their bands or grades in order to consider the next steps in their learning.
- Promote student confidence and to recognise they can achieve regardless of their starting point.
- Helps students to recognise the standard of work they are aiming for.
- Provide feedback that is informative and helpful to students in knowing what they do well and targets for the next lesson.
- Involves both teachers and students in the reviewing and reflecting of the learning .

Educational research demonstrates that assessment of this nature can have a significant impact on raising achievement. Indeed, there is evidence that it can improve the performance of students in all levels of examination.

Reporting To Parents

Parents play a very important part in the way that students learn and celebrating their achievements. To help you stay informed Blackfriars Academy will keep you updated on the progress of your child. You can expect to receive:

- An annual full report
- Progress reports which map your child's progress throughout the year
- Progress Review Evenings where you can talk to individual staff about your child's progress.



Every moment is a learning opportunity

As parents you play a vital role in your child's achievement at school, so as a parent or carer you can help us personalise and improve your child's learning by:

- Liaising with school, using the home school diaries, email, meetings and phone calls, letting school know about your child's range of experiences, new interests or developments in their learning;
- Working on the same learning intentions in school and at home;
- Looking at the things your child is learning at school and helping your child to experience it in a different way e.g. if they are learning about numbers at school – then at home, looking at the numbers on doors/cars/price labels/costs etc; and
- Providing activities that will contextualize learning at home and school and will enable learners to develop lifelong skills, e.g. writing the shopping list, (or arranging/choosing the symbols or pictures) going to the shops, finding the items, carrying them home and putting them away and later using them to help cook dinner.