Nurture ~ Believe ~ Discover ~ Achieve

Safa Vision

At SCS we aim to enable our learners to have success for today and to be prepared for tomorrow.

نحن في مدرسة الصفا كوميونيتي نسعى الى تأهيل طلابنا للنجاح اليوم وتحضيرهم لمواجهة المستقبل

Assessment Policy 2021-2022

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Safa Community School

Contents

1. **Aim of Assessment at SCS:**
- Provide baseline information for all students
- Identify specific strengths and areas for improvement for all of our students for all of their subjects
- Assist with target setting
- Monitor the academic performance of students as they move through the school
- Develop the use of assessment as a tool in students' learning
- Encourage students' to become more independent learners through their ability to use peer and self-assessment
- Ensure all departments are consistent and in line with the flightpaths in regards to assessment
- Data and assessment information is used to inform teachers' planning so that it responds to the needs of the students

2. **Aim of the new National Curriculum 2014:**

Following the announcement, by the Department for Education, of the removal of levels for the attainment and progress of children (2013) and the relaxation of restrictions on centrally led reporting requirements (Department for Education and Gibb, 2015 and Ofsted, 2015), schools have now been given the opportunity to conduct more '*assessment of the right kind*', to offer task specific, personalised feedback and to become '*Assessment Professionals*' by creating an assessment system that supports the learning of the individual children in their school. (Tim Oates, Chair of the expert panel for NC review).

Ofsted has stated the following:

- Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to pupils, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of pupils in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning.
- Ofsted does not expect performance - and pupil-tracking data to be presented in a particular format. Such data should be provided to inspectors in the format that the school would ordinarily use to track and monitor the progress of pupils in that school (Ofsted inspections – clarification for schools, March 2015, No. 140169)

3. SCS Alignment with the UAE National Agenda Parameter:

KHDA introduced the UAE National Agenda Parameter in 2015-16 as a method for measuring and monitoring Dubai's private schools' improvement towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets. All schools are required to use the parameter as an international and external benchmarking assessment on an annual basis (other than TIMSS and PISA), and use it to monitor progress in meeting their targets. In general, it is advisable to test students' cognitive development every two to three years.

The UAE National Agenda requirements for the academic year 2021 -22 include three mandatory components. To ensure the most effective preparation for TIMSS and PISA tests and for consistency of data analysis, the UAE National Agenda Parameter covers all Years 4 to 10.

Assessment at Safa Community School

Assessment is the opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities. Therefore, any opportunity that students have to demonstrate their learning is used as an assessment, whereby a students' level of understanding can be judged. Classroom assessment is central to the teaching and learning process. It must therefore be collaborative in nature. At SCS, assessment is an interactive process where teachers identify strengths and challenges and can adapt their work to meet the individual needs of students.

Assessment is the process through which all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents and the board of directors) are able to make judgments that allow them to monitor progress and evaluate learning experiences. This allows them to improve planning, diagnose difficulty, identify progression and assist with the personalisation of learning.

Within education there are four key strands of assessment:

Summative assessment - often referred to as assessment of learning. This covers those assessment events that aim to provide information about how much a student has actually learned at the end of a particular section or unit of work. End-of-year exams are summative assessments.

Ipsative assessment – assessing a student's performance based on their previous attainment, normally over a number of assessment events. This can be highly motivational as there is no direct comparison with other students.

Formative assessment - often referred to as assessment for learning (AfL). It is often viewed as more of a natural part of the teaching and learning process. It can include strategies such as observations, having students read out loud, questioning in class, as well as the use of different digital platforms. Formative assessment is at the heart of effective teaching.

Diagnostic Assessment – Any assessment event that seeks to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses.

5. Difficulty or Quality Assessment

Students are assessed through 'quality' assessments or 'difficulty' assessments or a combination of both depending on the nature of the subject. For example, subjects such as Maths and science tend to use assessments based on difficulty, whereas subjects like English and history tend to use assessments based on quality.

For 'difficulty' assessments, grade boundaries set by the HODs will be used in line with the flightpaths to determine the level.

Where the quality of a piece of work is being assessed, a marking rubric is used. This has been developed by the HOD to ensure consistency of marking and feedback. Students are issued with this at the beginning of the task so that they can self-assess throughout the process and ensure they achieve or exceed their flightpath.

Both forms of assessment are reviewed in line with the moderation policy.

6. Key Stage 3 and 4 Target Setting

The skills and knowledge which students require for success at A Level and life beyond school begins in KS3. As such, SCS ensures that the assessment, curriculum and reporting system is focused on the key skills and knowledge that students are developing, rather than giving a numerical level at KS3. This means that all students are provided with a 'flightpath' which shows the progress we would expect them to make based on their CAT4 'if challenged' potential grade. A flightpath indicates expected GCSE grades at the end of year 11. Their Target Grade) is their CAT4 'if challenged' predicted grade. Targets are realistic but challenging and aspirational.

Students are given a 'flightpath' at the start of the year and are aware of these for all their subjects. Lessons focus on the skills and knowledge required to achieve or exceed the flightpath. This will allow all students to develop a greater understanding of the skills/ knowledge that they are required to develop in order to fulfil their potential in each subject. Students can work both above (exceptional progress), and below (below expected progress) their flight path. However, a student making good progress would work within their 'flightpath' throughout the year. Maintaining their flightpath would indicate that the student is making 'expected' progress as the work over time becomes more challenging. Teachers will provide students with feedback which will inform them of which 'flightpath' they are on, the key skills/ knowledge that they have demonstrated and new skills/ knowledge to focus on.

Safa Community School Flightpaths
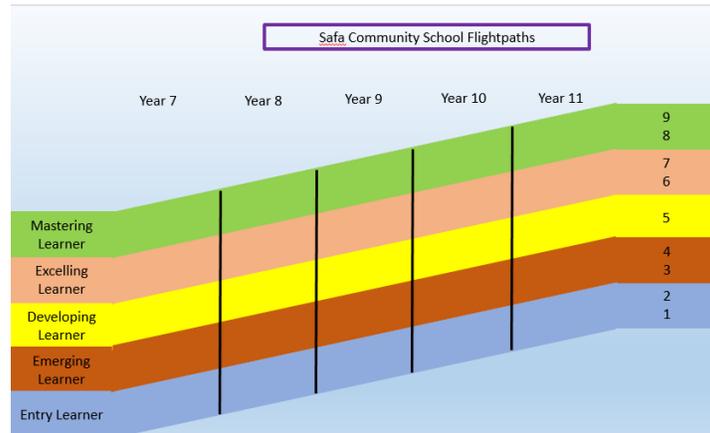
At each data capture, reports will indicate whether or not students are working within their 'flightpath' or not. It will also highlight the key skills/ knowledge that students have demonstrated (successes) and how to improve (next steps).

There are 5 flightpaths: Launching (Entry) Learner, Emerging Learner, Developing Learner Mastering Learner and Excelling Learner. Flightpaths will be used to explain progress.

Within lessons, learning objectives are colour coded to indicate the flightpath they relate to. This will help students become aware of the skills/ knowledge they need to develop and the expectations they need to meet to make progress in their learning. The skills and expertise required to progress through a flightpath have been developed by subjects. The successes and next steps will be clearly communicated to students through marking and feedback to assist them to continue to make progress.

7. KS5 Target Setting

In line with what is practiced at KS3 and KS4, A Level and BTEC grades are again aligned with a flightpath. Students are given a 'flightpath' at the start of the year and are aware of this. Lessons focus on the skills and knowledge required to achieve or exceed the flightpath. This will allow all students to develop a greater understanding of the skills/ knowledge that they are required to develop in order to fulfil their potential in each subject. Students can work both above (exceptional progress), and below (below expected progress) their flight path. However, a student making expected progress would work within their 'flightpath' throughout the year. Teachers will provide students with feedback which will inform them of which 'flightpath' they are on, the key skills/ knowledge that they have demonstrated and new skills/ knowledge to focus on.

At each data capture, reports will indicate whether or not students are working within their 'flightpath' or not. It will also highlight the key skills/ knowledge that students have demonstrated (successes) and how to improve (next steps).

There are 5 flightpaths: Launching (Entry) Learner (D Grade), Emerging Learner (C Grade), Developing Learner (B Grade), Mastering Learner (A Grade) and Excelling Learner (A* Grade). Grades will be used to report on progress at KS4 and KS5..

We are also working with ALPS to integrate their data into our predictions to ensure that we make informed decisions. The platform provides multi-level analysis including whole school, department, subject, teaching set, tutor group and student level, plus other useful cohorts such as ethnicity, gender or disadvantage, as well as custom groups. At the moment we are building our data sets with the use of CAT4 data and GCSE grades and will roll this out to staff once our reports are complete. We will train staff in the use of the reports and will use these to monitor and assess performance following each data capture. It will also be used in HOD external examination review meetings. The target is to integrate the use of ALPS into our normal practice, which can then be rolled down to KS4 level for streamlining purposes.

8. Record Keeping

Effective record-keeping is ongoing, cumulative, accessible, informative, easy to interpret and evidence based. It is accessible to line-managers upon request. Teachers at SCS will use the Go4Schools platform for record keeping and reporting.

Departmental records are the responsibility of individual teachers and departments. They must follow the following principles:
- Enable departments to be aware of students' progress
- Enable HODs to identify patterns and trends of individuals and groups
- For use in formative assessment and to assist with future planning
- To be able to pass on information to other staff, parents and the student
- To assist with target setting

9. Reporting

The school provides regular updates to parents on the progress of students. Within the first 3 weeks of the academic year, parents will receive an Attitude to learning (Settling in) grade. There then follows three grade cards and one full report per year for Year 7-13. Mock exam results are also communicated to parents through a mock results day. There are two parent/teacher meetings per year for each year group to discuss the progress of their child with the subject teacher. The schedule of reporting/meetings is available on the Assessment and Reporting Calendar.

The grade cards contain information about the current flightpath, Target Grade (MEG) and attitude to learning (ATL). The full report also has a written comment and information relevant to the year group, for example ECAs and community service.

Quality assurance procedures planned and guidelines are provided to improve the quality of reports. All grade cards and reports are released to parents through the Go4Schools platform.

10.Inclusion

Safa Community is an inclusive school and we ensure we meet the needs of all students through the triangulation of data and high quality learning and teaching. Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class and all additional support is deployed effectively. Where a child is not making the expected progress the class teacher will work alongside the *Inclusion Leader*, parents and external agencies (where appropriate) to plan tailored support. We follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to ensure all children are monitored closely and make progress. We use Individual Learning plans, where appropriate, which are reviewed with the child and parents termly. Nadine Hutchinson, Inclusion Leader, is available to provide advice to staff and families. We also maintain a list of focus children who we monitor closely. We do not label any child by so called 'ability'. See separate SEND policy for more information.

11.Responsibilities and Roles

The Senior Teacher leading on Assessment will work in conjunction with the Heads of Key Stages to ensure assessment is timely, robust and meaningful.

Key responsibilities of this role are:

- To organise and lead CPD opportunities on the implementation of the assessment policy and practice throughout the school

- To review data for the whole of secondary and analyse data at a student, cohort and whole school level

- To analyse and interpret relevant national, local and school assessment data, plus research and inspection evidence, to inform policies, practices, expectations, targets and teaching methods.

- To assist the Head of Secondary in monitoring and evaluating how the school assessment data compares to comparator schools

- To assist the Head of Secondary in reviewing, implementing and drafting the School Development Plan

- To monitor student progress regularly and implement intervention strategies

- To assist the Head of Secondary in providing short, medium and long term plans for the development and resourcing of individual, cohort and whole school level