

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Rationale

The challenge of schooling in the global knowledge economy of 21st century is to equip students with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to prosper in our modern and ever-changing world. In the setting of a Catholic School the challenge is also to instil in children the skills and confidence to use their talents gifted to them by God, to make a difference in their world.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our school supports all of its students in progressing towards and achieving appropriate learning outcomes.

Definition

Teaching and **Assessment** are inseparable actions of the educator that, when purposefully planned and acted on, produce Learning. **Teaching** is the act, whilst assessment is the intrinsic measure of the **Learning** that results.

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student **learning**.

- **Assessment for learning** occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their **teaching**.
- **Assessment as learning** occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future **learning** goals.
- **Assessment of learning** occurs when teachers use evidence of student **learning** to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.

Implementation

- In order to engage with the challenges identified we have developed an agreed set of beliefs that our practice in the area of Teaching, Learning and Assessment is based upon. These beliefs are the drivers of our practice.
- These practices, defined in the following Table, are adopted by all educators at the school.
- The school will track student achievement each year through the monitoring of student assessments against school targets, paying particular attention to the development of Literacy and Numeracy.
- Assessment for, as and of learning, the ongoing processes of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence, will be used to make informed and consistent judgements to improve student learning; more specifically:
 - **Assessment for learning** occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their **teaching**.
 - **Assessment as learning** occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future **learning** goals.
 - **Assessment of learning** occurs when teachers use evidence of student **learning** to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.
- All student performance data will be analysed as it becomes available and again as further relevant data becomes available. The analysis will include identifying and seeking to understand the trends that might become evident for individual students, for particular cohorts and for the school as a whole.
- The area of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will be supported through specific Diocesan/School strategies in the Annual School Improvement Plan, as part of the school's management of its 5 year School Improvement Plan. The Annual School Improvement Plan will be responsive to the identified needs of learners in the school.
- VELS is used to structure the learning experiences for all students at our school, as well as providing rigorous standards of achievement for all learners.

- Assessment is managed at a whole school, level and individual classroom levels. All educators at our school will maintain the currency of all assessments.
- A balanced approach of assessment strategies are used across all domains. Assessment Schedules in the foundational areas of learning mandate minimum expectations of teachers.
- The Literacy and Numeracy Diocesan Assessment schedules can be accessed on CEVN-ISS under Sale/Documents/Literacy & Numeracy Assessment Schedules
- The inquiry approach is adopted at our school as the foundation for integrated curriculum planning (see the Curriculum, Planning and Programming Policy)
- This policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the parallel policies of “Curriculum, Planning and Programming Policy” and “Reporting Student Achievement to Parents Policy”.
- Policies exist for the implementation of Religious Education, Literacy and Numeracy, Multi-Domain Programs
 - The guidelines will describe the common approaches adopted to teaching and learning for the learning area
 - The guidelines are reviewed and updated regularly.
- Policies exist for implementation of curriculum intervention and support programs
 - The guidelines will describe how the program is implemented
 - The guidelines for intervention and support are reviewed and updated regularly.

The Review of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Teaching, learning and assessment is managed and monitored by the principal and curriculum leadership
- The Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy is reviewed annually by the teaching staff and adjustments made to the plan as needed
- The policy and school practices will be modified in response to new or revised curriculum requirements, in response to the changing needs of the students, and in response to the regular analysis of student performance data.
- The Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy will be subject to a major review every five years to coincide with the Catholic School Renewal Review Year.

Resources

The Literacy and Numeracy Diocesan Assessment schedules can be accessed on CEVN-ISS under Sale/Documents/Literacy & Numeracy Assessment Schedules

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s five year review cycle or as required.

Ratification

This policy was last ratified in October, 2009.

Beliefs	Principles	Practices
<p>At our school we are committed to the following beliefs about teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Because of our beliefs, the following set of principles drive the practice of teaching and learning in the classroom. At our school it is expected that:</p>	<p>Therefore educators at our school:</p>
<p>The school community believes that:</p> <p>Higher order learning is possible for all Research consistently confirms that almost all students can engage in higher order learning given the right conditions, and that all students can make progress with sufficient time and support.</p> <p>Schools and particularly teachers make a difference Research demonstrates the capacity of good schools and good teaching to make a positive difference to student outcomes.</p> <p>If students are assisted to work hard and make an effort they improve A student's ability is one factor in achievement; however, the amount of effort a student makes has even more to do with their success at school.</p> <p>An assessment culture is classrooms and schools is a critical factor in individualising learning and assuring student achievement This involves students, teachers and parents in planning how learning will occur and monitoring progress. This is often described as 'assessment for learning' or formative assessment. British research concluded that formative assessment is one of the most important interventions for improvement in student achievement.</p> <p>Failure is not an option for students, teachers or schools Patterns of inequity must be addressed. All students must succeed at school and all schools can improve.</p>	<p>1. The learning environment is supportive and productive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a consistently safe, positive and secure environment. • Acknowledge emotions and emotional contexts. • When appropriate, make use of these contexts as opportunities for learning.
	<p>2. The learning environment promotes independence, interdependence and self motivation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate positive expectations and confidence in the learners' abilities. • Acknowledge and celebrate success. • Provide scaffolds for learning to assist all learners in extending their levels of thinking and understanding.
	<p>3. Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to discover what learners already know, value and are able to do. • Build on the diverse personal, social and cultural experience, knowledge and skills that learners bring to new learning.
	<p>4. Students are challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that all people can learn. • Are passionate about learning. • Model curiosity and persistence. • Maintain challenging expectations for all learners. • Structure activities to challenge learners' suppositions and preconceptions. • Explicitly teach thinking and learning strategies.
	<p>5. Assessment practices are an integral part of teaching and learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are clear that the primary purpose for assessment is to improve learning and that assessment is in itself a central learning experience. • Use assessment to provide all learners with the capacity to demonstrate what they know, value and are able to do. • Use assessment gathered through the implementation of Diocesan Assessment Schedules in Literacy and Numeracy as a quality assurance reference to monitor students' achievements against similar cohorts / individuals. • Integrate Assessment strategies that focus on demonstrations of understanding moving beyond gathering and recalling information. • Utilise judgements that are moderated through professional collaboration to enhance fairness, reliability and validity. • Use assessment to encourage learners to exhibit their actual understandings. • Implements a balance of assessment tasks that are based on real-world contexts and embedded in recurrent learning.
	<p>6. Learning connects strongly with communities and practice beyond the classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop positive relationships with and between all involved in the learners' learning. • Build a sense of community, group identity and appropriate learning partnerships. • Plan for purposeful teacher/learner, learner/learner interaction. • Connect what is being taught to hypothetical and real-life experiences. • Relate what is being taught to learners' experiences and interests.
	<p>7. Learning can happen anywhere and at anytime, with the embedded use of ICT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that the use of ICT adds value to the intended learning • design learning programs that ensure the integrity of the learning area and the inclusion of all students • scaffold learning using appropriate technologies, content, services and environments • appraise the effectiveness, efficiencies and ethics of the use of ICT in the design of learning programs.
<p>Bransford, John D., Brown, Ann, L and Cocking, Rodney, R (Eds), <i>How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School</i>, National Academy Press, Washington DC 1999</p>	<p>Principle 1-6: PoLT © State of Victoria (Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development), 2007 Principle 7: drawn from Transforming Pedagogies, Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale, 2008</p>	<p>Adapted from State of Tasmania, Essential Learning, Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (2005)</p>