



Assessment and Conferencing Policy

2023 - 2024

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Sept 2020	1.0	Reviewed and reformatted for staff handbook and drive.
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Assessment

Oaks Primary Academy (OPA) is an IB World School, offering the Primary Years Programme (PYP). Our approach to assessment reflects the philosophy and objectives of the programme and is an ongoing process. Pupils, through conferencing (see page 5), are given agency in the assessment process. This means that we encourage pupils to not just self-assess, but to self-adjust. In other words, pupils at OPA are expected to take action to bring about improvements in their learning as a result of engaging with the conferencing and evaluation process.

For pupils, assessment should:

- Motivate them through success
- Support their learning
- Provide pupils with training and conferencing opportunities to self and peer assess their work
- Inform them about their achievements and progress to date
- Identify areas of strength and development needs
- Actively involve them in their own learning and the feedback process; helping them set targets for improvement and development
- Develop motivation and self esteem thus enabling pupils to achieve success more readily

For teachers, assessment should:

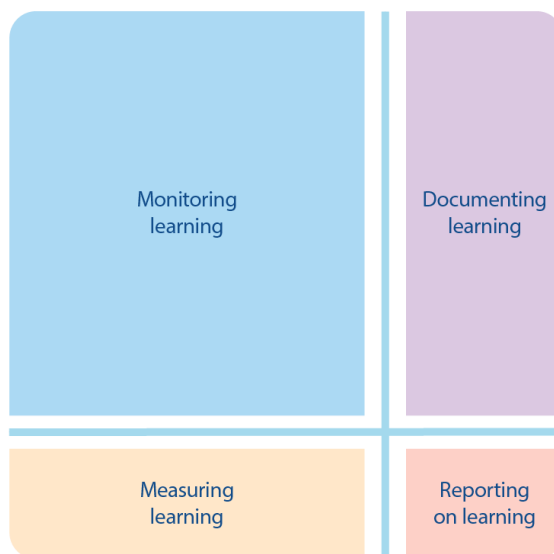
- Use a variety of both summative and formative strategies
- Inform pupils of their successes and areas for improvement
- Provide opportunities to keep track of progress and teachers' expectations
- Provide reliable, continuous information as a basis for monitoring and evaluating attainment
- Enable them to evaluate their own practice
- Indicate next steps in teaching and learning
- Take account of the needs of all the pupils
- Help to monitor the appropriate use of resources
- Provide information on class/ group organisation
- Actively involve pupils in the feedback process through conferencing

For parents, assessment should:

- Inform them of their child's progress and achievements on a regular basis
- Inform them of strengths and development needs
- Provide evidence of achievement and attainment
- Actively involve them in the feedback process

At Oaks Primary Academy, we integrate assessment of, for and as learning in order to foster a culture of improvement within the school. We assess pupils' knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding through a variety of tools and strategies that are bespoke to the context of each class and the individuals within it. This evaluative process has four distinct dimensions: Monitoring Learning, Documenting Learning, Measuring Learning and Reporting

on Learning (IBO 2019). The weightings of the four dimensions that make up our practice can be seen in the diagram below:



Monitoring Learning

Adults make good use of assessment for learning to monitor pupil progress and attainment. This occurs daily throughout all learning experiences and the information gathered is used to inform and adjust learning and teaching, ensuring that pupils are retaining and building on their knowledge, understanding and skills. Because of our culture of improvement, which is centred around conferencing, this dimension of assessment is the most important and impactful one we engage in at Oaks Primary Academy. The strategies and tools primarily used to monitor learning are:

- Conferencing (adult-led, peer and self)
- Strategic use of questioning
- Observation
- Visible Thinking Routines
- Peer and self-assessment
- Low-stakes testing
- Curriculum Coverage, Foundation Subject Tracker and curriculum website.

Teaching staff at OPA have regular opportunities to improve their own assessment capabilities through our collaborative training sessions. We ensure that both staff and pupil wellbeing informs all evaluation practices and that all assessment activities are meaningful and manageable.

Documenting Learning

Oaks Primary Academy recognises that evidence of learning takes many different forms, including work in books, on display, digital evidence and what pupils themselves know, show and can do. When we refer to documenting learning, we mean the compilation of examples of pupil work that tell the story of learning and progress over time. Choosing work to include is a highly selective process and staff think carefully about how each piece of evidence adds to the narrative. Over time, responsibility for documenting learning will be shared with pupils.

The purpose of this dimension of assessment is to make the learning journey visible. Some examples of documenting learning include:

- Digital portfolios on Class Dojo (for classes and subjects); see our Portfolio Policy and Agreements at the end of this document for more information.
- Writing wall displays
- Class pages on the OPA website
- Twitter and Facebook posts linked to learning
- Pupils' or adults' selections of work in books when conferencing

Measuring Learning

Assessment of learning (AoL) takes place frequently throughout the academic year, the timing and purpose of which is shared with all staff through our assessment calendar. We ensure that the type and frequency of measurements of learning are manageable and meaningful and that the information gathered is shared with pupils and used formatively to inform learning and teaching. The results of measurements of learning are also collaboratively analysed at a class, school and trust level to identify patterns and trends in pupil progress and attainment over time and to allow for the strategic allocation of resources. Oaks Primary Academy employs the following tools for AoL:

- Internal summative testing (custom schedule for each year group)
- SOLO Taxonomy (to assess conceptual understanding)
- Teacher Assessment (data drops are scheduled to inform either Pupil Progress Meetings, LAT Module Reviews or both)
- Moderation and standardisation exercises
- National Assessments (Phonics Screening Check, Multiplication Check, and Key Stage 2 Tests)

Reporting on Learning

Oaks Primary Academy involves all stakeholders in the reporting of pupil progress and attainment. All aspects of the Profile for Success are reported on: Learner Profile Attributes, Approaches to Learning, and Academic, Social and Personal Development. This allows all parties to reflect holistically on pupils' successes and also to identify areas for growth and improvement. The following are the learning communities we communicate with and the methods used to report learning:

Senior Leadership: Pupil Progress Meetings (Once per term)

Trust Leadership: Module Reviews (Once per term)

Governors: Academy Development Group and Academy Board Meetings

Parents: Parent/teacher/pupil conferences (Two formal conferences per year and ad hoc conferences throughout the year) and Pupil Reports (Term 6)

Pupils: Daily conferencing, and parent/teacher/pupil conferences (Two formal conferences per year and ad hoc conferences throughout the year)

The following assessments are statutory from the government:

- EYFS Reception Baseline - Term 1
- Year 1 Phonics Assessment - Term 6
- Year 4 Multiplication Check - Term 6
- Year 6 End of KS2 SATS - Term 5

Conferencing

Pupil Conferencing

Conferencing is the primary form of feedback at Oaks Primary Academy. In its simplest form, conferencing is a conversation about improvement, learning and reflection. It can be pupil-led or adult-led and can take place in a 1:1, small group or whole-class context. Teaching staff conference with pupils about their work during lessons and throughout the school day in order to give in-the-moment feedback. Conferencing is also used in social situations as a tool to promote self-regulation and reflection.

Benefits of Conferencing

Verbal feedback has been conclusively proven to have the greatest impact on pupil's progress. It opens up an immediate conversation with the child, allowing you to pinpoint and address misunderstandings or misconceptions, or indeed to challenge the pupil. Feedback in this form becomes more personal and comprehensive than written marking.

In addition to this, because pupil conferencing gets pupils to think more deeply about their work, their learning, and their personal development, it helps develop their independence and motivation within the context of a 'growth mindset'. Pupils value the 1:1 time with teaching staff and peers; they make more rapid progress as they become more aware of what they are doing that is successful and what it is that is holding them back. Pupils are able to articulate what they need to do to improve.

Approaches and Purpose of Conferencing: Assessment as Learning

Conferencing is a discussion between adults and pupils, between peers, or with oneself through metacognition.

Shute (2008) and Butler and Winne (1995) have identified that the timing of feedback is central to its effectiveness. Consequently, conferencing at Oaks Primary Academy can take two forms: immediate ('in the moment') feedback or delayed feedback. Immediate feedback and skillful use of questioning allows a teacher to quickly and decisively pinpoint where the misconception lies in the application of a specific skill and intervene accordingly. Delayed feedback promotes the development of metacognition, independence and reflective learning.

In order to promote self-regulation, the pupil is encouraged at all times to take responsibility for the learning conversation – to discuss what they were successful with, what they found challenging, what they need further help with, how they can further apply their learning, and what their next step is, for example.

Traditional marking in books is not a component of the conferencing process. Self and peer marking can take place during lessons, if required and when appropriate, as this process in itself opens up opportunities for discussion and formative assessment. Peer assessment is an integral component of the process: pupils are enabled to support one another, particularly through the editing and redrafting process. Allowing the majority of marks in exercise books to be made by pupils themselves encourages pupils to take greater ownership of their work, become more aware of how they are doing in that moment (as they are not waiting until the

next day to receive written feedback), and more aware of their levels of understanding. Teachers still, however, review pupils' work each day to inform their assessment for learning, to build up a picture of each pupil's progress and attainment, and to inform future planning.

Many studies have shown that feedback has a significant influence on learning (e.g. Hattie 2009) and research has also been carried out to determine what it is that makes feedback effective (e.g. Bangert-Drowns *et al* 1991; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Shute 2008). Pajares and Graham's study (1998) found that pupils themselves prefer specific, constructive feedback rather than simple praise, encouragement or description (such as "good work today" or "you haven't checked your spelling"). If a pupil has indeed met their learning goals, they will already be aware of their success in this; similarly, if they have not been successful, simply stating what is wrong does not necessarily lead to improvement if pupils' understanding is lacking. In all cases, conferencing is well-placed to deliver feedback that is effective, meaningful and impactful.