Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy

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	Signature	
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Chair of Governors	Parker	L Parker
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Contents

Timothy 1:10: "For this I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles,"

Blue Coat Church of England Academy is an inclusive Christian learning environment, our school values underpin all of our policies: Wisdom, Endurance, Service, Kindness and Hope.

Assessment Policy

Rationale

At Blue Coat Church of England Academy, we strive to introduce Christian aspects of teaching into all that we do, promoting care, respect and high standards in all aspects of Academy life. We aim to build self-esteem and to foster an environment where achievement, in all its forms, is recognised and celebrated.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy aims to equip all learners with the skills needed to succeed in a changing world. We aim to encourage all of our students to achieve their potential through a culture of high expectations for everyone, fostering a commitment to learning that is not based solely on the acquisition of knowledge but on the development of the skills, attributes and values needed to encourage life-long learning and to become active participants in society.

We recognise that assessment is central to effective teaching and learning, student motivation and self-esteem. We are therefore committed to ensuring that our assessments are:

- **Valid**; that tasks and associated criteria effectively measure student attainment and progress against intended learning outcomes, at the appropriate level;
- **Inclusive and equitable**; tasks and procedures should not disadvantage any group or individual. Knowledge of the learner, their culture, background and experience, is vital to ensure that assessment is appropriate and fit for purpose;
- **Informative**; provide students with a picture of what they have achieved and what they need to do in order to improve;
- **Reliable and consistent**, with clear processes for the setting, marking, moderating and standardisation of assessment tasks;
- **An integral part of curriculum design, supporting the development of the whole child.** Assessment tasks should reflect the core principles of the subject but should also ensure that students are provided with the opportunity to develop and reflect upon cross-curricular skills and capabilities, including literacy and numeracy;
- **Timely**, promoting progress in learning and facilitating improvement over time;
- **Manageable**; the scheduling of assessment tasks and the amount of assessed work required should provide a reliable and valid profile of achievement, without placing undue burden upon staff or students;
- **Transparent**; clear, accurate, timely and consistent information regarding assessment tasks and procedures should be made available to students, staff, parents and carers, examiners and other external assessors.

Assessment without Levels

Following the removal of National Curriculum levels, Blue Coat Church of England Academy has adopted a continuum model of assessment at Key Stage 3. Within every department, curriculum strands of knowledge, understanding and skill are identified, against which, students are assessed. These assessment strands, based upon GCSE Assessment Objectives, encompass breadth of study within a given subject. They allow for the recognition of students' strengths and areas for development, providing a comprehensive academic profile of their attainment and progress within each subject area.

Under the new system of assessment without levels "the purpose of statutory assessment (has) change(d) from assigning a 'best fit' level to each student to tracking which elements of the curriculum they have adequately achieved and those which require more attention." (*Report by the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum Review December 2011*). Although at Blue Coat GCSE grades 1-9, or entry levels 1-3 for those working below age related expectations, are assigned to each assessment strand, by assessing individual strands on a learning continuum, we acknowledge the fact that progression does not always take place in a linear fashion. Students may move far ahead in one area whilst retaining significant learning needs in another. High quality teaching supports students to build upon strengths in order to meet needs, and provides students challenging, yet achievable steps towards their learning goals. Within a given subject, teachers need to monitor, report and record such strengths and weaknesses as part of their on-going feedback to students and to inform teaching and learning and intervention practices, to meet the specific development needs of individuals, groups and whole classes.

Assessment strands are mapped across the curriculum within each subject area, with each strand assessed at a particular point in the year. Assessment recognises evidence from the full range of what students know and can do; teachers take into account classwork, homework and specified assessment tasks, when assigning a summative working at grade (WAG) at specified points in the year.

Assessment Methods

To ensure that the achievement of students is maximised, we make use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment methods.

Formative Assessment

Teachers make use of their observations, classroom discussion and analysis of each individual student's work, including homework and tests, on a day to day basis. They adopt teaching strategies and set learning intentions to meet the needs of all students. Formative assessment focuses on enabling achievement, examples of which include:
- Sharing learning intentions and success criteria with students;
- Appropriate and effective questioning, which develops the learning;
- Focusing oral/written feedback around the development of learning intentions;
- Setting learning goals and success criteria so that students' achievement is based on previous achievement as well as the next step;
- Involving students in self and peer evaluation.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment focuses on measuring attainment. It is our policy to formally assess students regularly and to use the results to assist in the setting process. Summative working at grades are recorded and reported to all students, their parents and carers termly.

By sharing expectations and learning goals with students, summative assessment *of* learning can also contribute to assessment *for* learning. Following summative tests and mock examinations, students are given the opportunity to mark, moderate and review test papers, review their performance against test criteria and set personal targets.

Every department has in place standardised, structured and systematic assessment systems for making regular, useful, accurate and manageable assessments of students and for tracking student progress. This involves calendared formative and summative assessments, which take place within each unit of work, as specified in departmental assessment policies, which set out long, medium and short term assessment procedures, based upon the principles laid out within this document.

Diagnostic Assessment

Ongoing diagnostic assessment allows for those requiring intervention to be identified and for appropriate learning support to be put in place.

Diagnostic assessment is used in each department on an ongoing and regular basis, to identify those students who require additional support in order to master particular areas of knowledge, understanding and skill. These assessments may take the form of specific pieces of classwork or homework, 'mini-mocks' or formalised pre-public examinations.

Diagnosis of areas for development should be followed by 'therapy'; opportunities for students to re-learn key facts and processes, to practice a particular skill or to further develop their understanding of a concept or concepts. Opportunities for this should be provided in class, although students may also be provided with additional or personalised home learning tasks, related to their own areas for development, as part of that 'therapy'.

Further testing should then take place to assess the extent to which students have mastered the areas of knowledge, understanding and skill covered by therapy sessions.

Opportunities for the cycle of *'diagnosis – therapy – testing,'* are built into all schemes of work, with ample time afforded for 'therapy' to ensure that students are able to address misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Assessment for Learning

"Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there". *Assessment Reform Group, 2002*

Assessment for learning at Blue Coat is underpinned by the belief that every student can improve if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim (or close the gap in their knowledge). Assessment procedures and practices should support the planning and delivery of each student's learning journey. Therefore, assessment for learning is a central part of everyday classroom practice at Blue Coat.

Learning goals, teaching strategies and assessment criteria should be carefully matched. Students should know in advance what they will learn, as well as how and why they are to be assessed. The most effective feedback guides students through the next teaching and learning steps, providing clear, descriptive, criterion-based information that enables them to determine their position on a learning trajectory in relation to their targets. At Blue Coat Church of England Academy, common student-speak assessment criteria within each department aids this process. Students may also be provided with personalised learning checklists for units of work, enabling them to track their progress and to identify strengths and areas for development in the acquisition of subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills.

Assessment for learning should:
- Allow teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on students' knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Encourage teachers to become reflective practitioners;
- Recognise and acknowledge students' progress over time;
- Aid teachers in diagnosing individual learning needs to inform future planning;
- Reinforce expectations and students' sense of purpose;
- Motivate students to improve their performance;
- Enable students to identify and understand the criteria against which their progress can be measured, developing their ability to become independent learners;
- Develop students' ability to reflect upon their learning through the use of praise and goal setting;
- Allow students to show knowledge, understanding and progress through the implementation of feedback and guidance;
- Enable students to engage in a learning dialogue with their teachers and their peers.

Marking and Feedback

At Blue Coat Church of England Academy, we recognise that feedback to students on their progress and attainment is central to effective teaching and learning. Also important is students' assessment of their own and one another's progress and attainment.

Effective marking and feedback is directly related to the learning outcomes given to students at the beginning of teaching sessions or sequences of learning. It is therefore part of the assessment process which informs teachers' short term planning and feeds directly into whole school monitoring and target-setting.

Marking and feedback should be clear and constructive in its guidance to individual students, being consistently applied. It should point to strengths as well as areas for development in order to build students' confidence. Marking and feedback should require a response from students, allowing for them to

act upon guidance and targets set as a way of measuring and celebrating progress. It should also enable students to develop skills of self and peer-assessment by making clear the criteria against which they are to be assessed.

Effective feedback aids teachers, students and parents. The purposes of feedback and marking are as follows.

For students:

- To motivate them to improve their performance;
- To enable them to identify and understand the criteria against which their progress can be measured, developing their ability to become independent learners;
- To develop their ability to reflect upon their learning through the use of praise and target setting;
- To allow them to show knowledge, understanding and progress through the implementation of feedback and guidance;
- To allow them to engage in a learning dialogue with their teachers and their peers.

For teachers:

- To inform them of the progress that students are making;
- To diagnose individual learning needs to inform future planning for whole classes, groups and individuals, including 'therapy' or interventions;
- To evaluate the impact of their teaching on students' knowledge, understanding and skills;
- To become reflective practitioners;
- To reinforce expectations and students' sense of purpose;
- To measure progress in students' knowledge, understanding and skills over time;
- To recognise and acknowledge achievement.

For parents and carers:

- To inform them of students' attainment, progress and attitude towards their learning;
- To enable them to provide guidance and support at home.

The Practice of Effective Marking and Feedback

Effective marking takes a variety of forms, depending upon the demands of particular tasks within particular subjects over a period of time. The principles that follow, however, provide a framework for staff across all departments to work within.

There should be a combination of 'comment only', graded marking and literacy marking, alongside opportunities for peer and self-assessment. Feedback and next steps should be matched to the learning needs of the individual student and contextualised according to the task set and criteria being used. Occasionally, rapid marking, to monitor that work has been completed to an acceptable standard, may be appropriate, in addition to the use of highlighters to identify where learning intentions or success criteria have been met, partially met or not yet met. Highlighting to indicate that a student has not yet met a learning intention should be followed up by diagnostic feedback.

Key pieces of work should be summatively assessed, with feedback based upon GCSE grade 1-9 criteria, entry levels 1-3, or other appropriate criteria in order that students understand the grades that they are attaining and the progress being made towards their grade targets. Exercise books or folders should provide evidence of graded work at least once each term, in response to tasks set/units/schemes completed. A holistic grade should be reported to students and to parents once every term.

Marking should also tie in with the Academy's reward systems, which include the use of points and praise postcards.

Verbal feedback should be regular and focused on assessment criteria. Periodically, where relevant, it may be recorded to track progress, particularly in practical subjects such as art, design technology, music, drama and physical education.

Students must be given the opportunity to self and peer-assess regularly to develop understanding of assessment criteria. This should include allocated time for students to respond to feedback in order to make progress. Peer or self-marking could involve marking for specific features of content or presentation or marking work for errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar (according to student ability).

The frequency of marking will depend upon a variety of factors, namely the frequency of teaching. However, for subjects taught more than two periods per week, there should be some evidence of fortnightly marking of pupil work, whether this be rapid marking, comment only, highlighting, graded marking, literacy marking or peer/self-assessment.

Red Pen Response

Assessment for learning is a reciprocal process, based on quality interaction between students and teachers. Therefore, to be most effective, feedback and marking should require a response from students. At Blue Coat Church of England Academy, students are provided with opportunities to self-correct their work, respond to teacher questions and comments and to redraft where appropriate, in red pen, making their progress over time clear and measurable. All students must be given the opportunity to improve their work by acting on the feedback and guidance given by their teacher and their peers. The process of red pen response is part of the teaching and learning sequence and time should be given for this accordingly.

Whole School Literacy Marking

Symbol	Meaning
C	There is a missing capital letter somewhere on this line.
.	There is a missing full stop somewhere on this line.
,	There is a missing comma somewhere on this line.
sp	You have made a spelling mistake. Use a dictionary to correct it.
ww	You have used the wrong word. You need to re-read the sentence and correct it.
?	This sentence doesn't make sense. It might be too long.
//	You need to start a new paragraph here.
∧	There is a word missing here. Re-read the sentence and write in the missing word.

Our whole school literacy marking policy is used by all staff at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. At Blue Coat, the standardised literacy marking symbols opposite are used to identify errors in students' written work.

These symbols are stuck in all exercise books and on display in all classrooms. They are used in the margins of students' written work and are written in green pen. Time in class is allocated for students to use these symbols to find their own errors and to correct them, using red pen.

Where persistent errors are made, literacy targets are set and activities planned for, and delivered to, individuals and groups of students to address their areas of need and development.

When assessing the work of students for whom low literacy levels are a barrier to learning, staff should be mindful of the potential over-use of the literacy marking symbols. Where individuals or groups may struggle with many aspects of spelling, punctuation or grammar, staff are advised to focus on just one or two key areas, such as the misuse of capital letters or the misspelling of commonly used words, for example, rather than attempting to address all areas within one piece of work, which could prove demotivating.

Reporting of Student Progress

Working at Grades (WAGs) are collected, analysed and reported to parents 3 times a year in accordance with the school calendar. These are based on all data available to the teacher, including summative assessments and other aspects of student performance particular to each subject. A final grade for the academic year is recorded in July, following whole school examinations, and this provides the starting point for tracking progress in the following year. Although a final grade is recorded, students also have a clear record of the areas in which they need to improve for each continuum strand within each subject area, based on teacher feedback and assessment over time.

Appendix 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

All teachers will:
- Plan lessons to incorporate questioning, explanation and feedback to students, which are focused on the learning intentions of the lesson;
- Share clear and unambiguous learning intentions with students and engage in a dialogue about how students can be successful in achieving these by making the success criteria explicit;
- Differentiate learning intentions to ensure that all students can make progress towards the learning intention;
- Use oral and written feedback to encourage students to think about what they have learned and how they might improve their work. Feedback will relate directly to the shared learning intentions/outcomes/success criteria as appropriate;
- Plan opportunities within lessons for students to reflect on and respond to written feedback that they receive;
- Plan opportunities for students to assess their own work and the work of others;
- Set and mark homework according to the whole school homework policy;
- Provide data and set subject specific learning goals as part of the whole school recording, monitoring and reporting process;
- Regularly review student progress against GCSE grade targets, setting realistic yet challenging learning goals for individuals, groups and whole classes.

The SEND Co-ordinator will:
- Ensure that the assessment of SEND students against the SEND continuum is timely, fair and accurate, drawing upon a range of evidence of what they know, understand and can do;
- Communicate assessment information to all staff to inform teaching and learning, differentiation and intervention practices;
- Use assessment information to inform intervention practices, the deployment of support staff and resources;
- Regularly review the progress and attainment of SEND students against targets set across the curriculum;
- Communicate assessment information to parents and carers and external agencies as appropriate.

EAL Teachers, supported by the EAL Co-ordinator and their SLT line manager will:
- Ensure that fair baseline testing takes place for all New to English students, upon entry to the school;
- Wherever possible, carry out assessments in a student's home language, to ascertain their prior knowledge,
  understanding and skills in their first and/or home language, to inform the setting process;
- Ensure that regular assessments of students who are New to English are carried out, against the EAL continuums in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and that timely assessment information is communicated to all staff;
- Ensure that opportunities are provided to standardise and moderate assessments;
- Use assessment information to inform intervention practices;
- Provide data and set subject specific learning targets as part of the whole school reporting process;
- Regularly review the progress and attainment of EAL students against targets set across the curriculum;

- Communicate assessment information to parents and carers and to other external agencies, as appropriate.

The Whole School Literacy Co-ordinator will:
- Ensure that NGRT testing is carried out twice each year for students at Key Stage 3 and 4 and for all level 1 students in Key Stage 5;
- Communicate reading age data to all staff in order to inform teaching and learning, differentiation and assessment practices;
- Regularly review the progress and attainment of students in reading against age-related expectations and targets set;
- Use assessment information to inform intervention practices, the deployment of support staff and resources;
- Oversee the communication of reading assessment information to parents and carers.

Heads of Department and Heads of Faculty will:
- Monitor the quality of feedback on a half termly basis through work scrutiny;
- Create or agree standard activities focused on agreed objectives with agreed and standardised criteria for assessment, drawn from GCSE continuums or A Level (and equivalent) level criteria;
- Monitor the breadth of curriculum at Key Stage 3 to ensure that there are learning opportunities to engage students and develop them as learners;
- Monitor the regular setting and assessment of homework;
- Provide opportunities for department or faculty based moderation and standardisation of assessment;
- Establish recording systems which: support teaching and learning; support the effective identification of learning needs/goals for individuals, groups and whole classes, to inform intervention procedures; enable effective monitoring, tracking and reporting of student progress towards grade targets;
- Co-ordinate target setting across their department or faculty;
- Monitor the accuracy of working at grades during whole school termly data collection.

The Data Team will:
- Ensure that data collection systems are in place and information is provided in order to meet the schedule for target setting and reporting published in the school calendar;
- Present the data collected for each year group in a format agreed with SLT to meet published deadlines.

Progress Managers and Teaching and Learning Managers supported by the Assistant Principal: Teaching, Learning and Assessment will:
- Support Heads of Department and Heads of Faculty in the regular monitoring and quality assurance of assessment practices within their departments or faculties;
- Meet with Heads of Department to regularly review assessment continuums, assessment calendars and assessment tasks to ensure that these are fit for purpose and adhere to the principles set out within this policy;

- Support the School Leadership Team in the sharing of good practice in assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning;
- Ensure that appropriate systems are in place for the sharing of assessment information and procedures with parents and carers;
- Monitor and update the assessment information that is published on the Academy website.

The School Leadership Team will:
- Monitor the quality of feedback through line management processes;
- Monitor the application of Assessment for Learning principles through lesson observation, book walks and learning walks;
- Ensure that departments are provided with opportunities to moderate and standardise assessments at key points in the academic year;
- Promote the sharing of good practice through line management, meetings and INSET.

Links to other policies

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Exams Policy
- Remote Learning Policy