

1. Policy Rationale

Central to the ethos of Roedean Moira House Girls School is the value of each and every girl – the maintenance and enhancement of each girl’s self-esteem and confidence. As such, any method of assessment must respect and uphold each individual girl’s self worth. Teachers not only have a duty to each girl but also to her parents/carers, to keep them informed so that they may assist the school and the girl in realising her full potential.

Assessment plays a crucial role in the development of a positive self image by giving positive and constructive feedback. It helps girls know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Whenever possible girls are praised for their achievements and it is the feeling of success that can encourage further achievement and enable girls to enjoy learning. The knowledge gained from assessment is used to inform teaching and to direct learning.

‘Assessment – defined in its broadest terms – can make a significantly enhanced contribution to raising standards in schools if the focus is placed on the professional skills of teachers’. (QCA)

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning; the benefits to be gained from this include:

- an aid to girl progression by providing accurate evidence of the individual girl’s progress
- improved focus on the quality of teaching and learning.
- to help teachers evaluate the success of their teaching strategies.
- information and analysis from assessment constitutes a sound basis for making decisions about subsequent learning and teaching.
- to support girl progression and provide continuity throughout the Key Stages.
- greater clarity of objectives and expectations in the classroom.
- clearer understanding of national standards.
- greater consistency and rigour in the assessment process.
- to reinforce the concept of a partnership between the school, girl and home.
- to provide accurate and helpful information for girls, staff, parents and the wider community, concerning the experience and achievement of the individual girl.
- regular feedback to girls on their progress, and improved understanding among girls of how they can learn most effectively to help them work better.
- better appreciation among parents of how they may support their girlren’s learning.
- to be understood by all those involved and to be easily manageable.
- to assess progress in terms of value added using baseline testing (e.g. Midyis, Yellis and Alis).
- to identify girls with additional needs, leading to further assessment and support.

This policy establishes assessment in Roedean Moira House Girls School as a common procedure to:

- provide opportunities that will assist a girl in realising her full potential.
- give teacher judgements which are valid and reliable, and consistent both within the school and with national standards.
- promote a common interpretation of grade descriptors and criteria.
- give teachers confidence in their professional judgement and skill.
- provide consistency within and across Faculties and Key Stages.

2. General procedures

2.1 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment must take place in all lessons at all levels. Schemes of work must clearly identify the learning objectives for a lesson. To satisfy good practice and inspection criteria, girls must be involved in their learning.

For the teaching staff:

Every moment in the classroom is an assessment opportunity. Assessment is carried out through:

- Careful observation and maintaining an “overview” of how individuals are doing;
- Questioning which is “open” and allows girls to give thoughtful, detailed answers at a level appropriate to them, including identified Higher Order Thinking Skills ‘HOTS’ questioning;
- Feedback to girls as they are working as to how they doing - this can take the form of verbal feedback or written constructive marking. Verbal feedback (which research has shown is the most powerful feedback for girls) will be indicated in books using a stamp/initials;
- Close liaison between teachers and teaching assistants (who may have a more detailed knowledge as to the needs and progress of the less able, especially in regard to intervention programmes and I.E.P. targets), and between teachers and the Lead TA, and EAL support;
- I.E.P. reviews are carried out twice-yearly and involve input from the class teacher, the teaching assistants, the Lead TA, parent and girl;
- Regular discussion with parents as to girls’ confidence/difficulties as they are expressed at home, and the progress which is evident to parents. This includes the sharing of girl targets at parents’ evenings;

In order to involve girls fully in their learning, teachers must:

- explain clearly the reasons for the lesson or activity, in terms of the learning objectives;
- share the specific assessment criteria with girls;
- help girls to understand what they have done well and what they need to develop;
- show girls how to use the assessment criteria to assess their own learning.
- employ tasks that exploit a wide range of modes and presentation, operation and response in order to take into account the wide range of the girls’ abilities and learning styles.

It is important that teachers share with their girls examples of work so that they can see the standards they are aiming for. Girls who study the completed work of others will develop their reflective skills and find out what it is like to take an active part in the assessment process.

Opportunities for this include:

- encouraging girls to listen to the range of girls’ responses to questions; showing girls the learning strategies;
- showing girls how the assessment criteria have been met in some examples of work
- encouraging girls to review examples from anonymous girls that do not meet the assessment criteria, in order to suggest the next steps to meeting the assessment criteria.

Feedback is an essential part of assessment for learning. Teachers need to develop methods to interpret and respond to assessment information in a formative way. It is important that there are safe and secure relationships so that trust is established between teacher and girl, prior to giving feedback.

Girls benefit from opportunities for formal feedback through group and plenary sessions. Where this works well, there is a shift from teachers telling girls what they have done wrong to girls seeing for themselves what they need to do to improve and discussing it with the teacher.

Therefore, giving feedback involves making time to talk to girls and to teach them to be reflective about both the learning objectives and their work/responses.

Characteristics of effective feedback:

- Feedback is more effective if it focuses on the task, is given regularly and while still relevant.
- Feedback is most effective when it confirms the girls are on the right tracks and when it stimulates correction of errors or improvement of a piece of work.
- Suggestions for improvement acts as “scaffolding” i.e. girls are given as much help as they need to use their knowledge. They are not given the complete solutions as soon as they get stuck so that they must think things through for themselves.
- Girls are helped to find alternative solutions, if simply repeating an explanation continues to lead to failure.
- Feedback on progress over a number of attempts is more effective than feedback on performance treated in isolation.
- The quality of dialogue in feedback is important and most research indicates that oral feedback is more effective than written feedback.

For the girls:

- It is essential that girls know at all times what high achievement will “look like” so that they can monitor their own progress. In accordance with the principles of Assessment for Learning, we ensure that girls have an understanding of the learning target and then have an opportunity at the end of each lesson to assess their learning against the learning targets identified at the start of the lesson. This may take the form of a very quick “thumbs up/thumbs down” to show the teacher roughly how well the girls think they have done and how confident they are in their learning, or may be more detailed, as in the drawing of a small face and the writing of a short comment;
- Opportunities for girls to give feedback to each other, as in Talk Partners for writing tasks. It is essential that girls are explicitly taught the skills for this;
- Opportunities for individual girls to discuss how they are performing and what they need to do to improve are regular and form part of verbal feedback with all teachers. Girls are encouraged to monitor their own progress and establish when they are ready to move on. Success criteria are shared with girls to enable them to see what good learning looks like and to know what to aspire to;
- The sharing of good work and the using of it to raise expectations;
- The marking of their own work, for example in plenary sessions in English and Maths;
- Quick quizzes and games that provide a fun recap or assessment of key facts/skills.
- Girls need to have the skills to ask for help and the teacher must encourage them to do so.

If girls are to learn, they need to identify any gaps between their actual and optimal performance. Girls need to be able to work out why these gaps occur and they need to identify the strategies that they might use to close the gaps. This is something that has to be done by the girls and cannot be done for them by the teacher, although the teacher’s interchange is crucial to the girl’s understanding of what needs to be done next.

Girls must be given opportunity for self assessment, they must:

- Be aware of the assessment techniques being used so they can review their own work.
- Reflect on their own work.
- Be supported to admit problems without risk to self-esteem. Be given time to work problems out.
- Be given time and encouragement to act on the staff comments e.g. do corrections.

2.2 Summative Assessment

The summative assessments are the Internal Examinations. All these assessments should be:

- Standardised across the department.
- Detailed in the schemes of work.
- Moderated or have specific marking criteria to ensure there is consistency of assessment.

Internal Exams take place during the designated week in the school diary and consist of formal assessments.

- They should be of a similar nature to external tests and as far as reasonable with similar rubrics to ensure girls are fully prepared for the final assessments.
- Presentation of the test question papers must be of the highest standard.
- One exam/task may not cover every aspect of a level descriptor/grade criteria but the assessment can be based on those aspects covered.
- Girls must be made aware of the assessment criteria for all exams/tasks; they must be given revision lists of specific topics or areas of the course to be assessed.
- Active revision must take place in all subjects to prepare girls for the exams. Girls should be taught a range of revision techniques such as mind maps, cue cards, acronyms (making up a word from initials of other words which need to be remembered), chunking (splitting facts into small groups), verbal memory recall and practice questions. More imaginative techniques are encouraged such as making 'PowerPoint' presentations, flowcharts or role play to illustrate concepts/methods to be learnt.
- If girls are absent from an exam, the subject teacher should arrange for them to sit the paper on their return.
- Results must be returned to girls as soon as possible and included on the following report to inform parents. All girls must be assessed, if for any reason girls have not sat a test then a teacher assessment must be recorded on the report with in appropriate comment to indicate this has been done.
- Girls must be given positive and specific feedback to show them how they can reach the next level or grade. This can be written, orally individually or orally with the class group.

2.3. Target-setting

- Personalised learning targets are set regularly. Girls begin each piece of work with a learning objective which they self-assess and are assessed against at the end of each lesson. Steps to Learning are identified to support self-assessment where appropriate.
- Targets need to be specific, realistic and attainable (therefore differentiated), relevant, and measurable in the time agreed (e.g. three-days; a week; ongoing target for the term);
- Girls should be involved in reviewing their progress towards targets set.

3. Marking

3.1 Marking Girls' Work

Marking of work is a regular means of communication with girls about their individual progress. The aims of assessment cannot be met without marking in a form which is comprehensible and clearly understood by girls. Marking is usually the main method of giving feedback although verbal and other methods of feedback are just as important and can be more powerful (see above).

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The main purpose of marking any girl's work is to improve learning. Other purposes of marking are to monitor progress and to determine the standard of knowledge and understanding of the girl. The response by teachers to the girl's work should also provide motivation towards future learning, help the girl understand the progress made and provide the girl with a clear understanding of the next step to be taken in the learning process. Responses are normally written but consideration is given to providing girls with a range of responses at different times in order that they fully understand the demands placed upon them.

Regular marking of girls' work:

- Contributes to the quality of teaching and learning
- Checks what girls have learnt and monitor progress
- Gives both girls and parents feedback
- Evaluates teaching and helps plan for future lessons
- Can motivate the girls
- Identifies under-achievers

Marking in Roedean Moira House Girls School must:

- Motivate girls to further effort by praising current achievements. A range of stickers can be used in girl books to encourage and register achievement, especially if a particular level is reached or improved upon.
- Be thorough enough to spot errors and inaccuracies in line with departmental policy.
- Take place daily in the Pre-Prep and Lower Prep; weekly/fortnightly for Upper Prep/Seniors depending on the number of lessons; weekly for Sixth Form work.
- Be consistent and use the common marking policy.
- Be easily interpretable by girls, teachers and parents.
- Assist girls by giving clear diagnostic comments to focus on aspects of work where further development is needed.
- Set SMART targets for longer pieces of work
- Provide the teacher with feedback on how well girls have understood the current work and enable him/her to plan the next stage of teaching and learning.
- Enable the teacher to make judgements about attainments, particularly with regard to teacher assessment levels within the curriculum.

In order for marking to be effective:

- Work must be collected regularly and returned quickly to girls.
- Responses on work must be constructive, acknowledging what has been achieved as well as highlighting areas for improvement.
- Correcting every mistake can be disheartening, so it is often better to focus on particular aspects of the work at different times. Girls need to be aware what aspects are being made a focus.
- Correcting Spellings: in the first instance, as part of the drafting process, girls should identify for themselves words they are not sure of by underlining them in pencil. With words associated with topics girls should be encouraged to find the correct spelling from wall displays, lists of topic words etc. Other misspelt words will be corrected with the help of the teacher. Where girls are able to they should be encouraged to use a dictionary. At the end of the piece of work the teacher may select words to be practised and learnt. All SEN girls identified with spelling needs should have access to a spell checker. Girls are taught explicit spelling rules to enable them to build up their understanding of spelling patterns.
- The marking criteria must be made explicit both in terms of subject knowledge and the literacy objectives.
- In GCSE and A Level work, marking must follow the appropriate assessment criteria.
- Girls must respond to marking by completing corrections, e.g. spellings, correct calculations, complete omissions etc.

- Steps must be taken by staff to ensure missed work or poorly presented work is completed or repeated.

For classwork and homework, teachers should:

- Write legible comments that only relate to the learning outcomes / success criteria for that specific piece of learning. The comments should focus on examples of where the success criteria have been met by the girl and guidance on how to improve. This implies that the learning outcomes / success criteria must be shared with girls before they start the piece of work.
- Return the books promptly and give the girls time to:
 1. Look carefully at the learning outcomes / success criteria to remind them of what they were learning.
 2. Read and act on the teacher's comments to make an improvement.
 3. Acknowledge the improvements the girl makes to their work.

For key pieces of work, teachers should also:

- Award a grade. When girls are receiving grades, it is important that they are reported in a way that puts them in the context of the girl's targets. Target setting needs to focus on making improvements within a grade-consolidating progress and building a springboard for advancement.

Heads of Faculty monitor exercise books / folders, interview girls and complete learning walks / lesson observations as per the Academic Monitoring and Self Review Policy. Heads of Pupil Progress monitor exercise books / folders, interview girls and complete learning walks for each year group at least once a term. Standard forms for monitoring purposes can be found in the Academic Monitoring and Self Review Policy.

3.2 External exams (PTM/PTE/GCSE/AS and A Level) and CATs

The following procedures must be followed for any work that contributes towards external qualifications.

- Heads of Faculty and Heads of Pupil Progress must be fully aware of the up to date examination board requirements for the course. They must use syllabi, examination reports and any information given by the examination board including QCA / exam board web sites.
- Heads of Faculty and Heads of Pupil Progress must ensure that all staff teaching relevant courses understand fully and follow the requirements.
- Girls must be given every reasonable opportunity to achieve their best possible marks.
- Girls must be made fully aware of all deadlines.
- Marking criteria must be explained to girls so they understand what is asked of them and how they will be assessed.
- Girls must be informed how marks are allocated to various sections of the CATs.
- As appropriate, CATs tasks must be broken down into sub-sections to help girls structure their work.
- If work is carried out over a period of time work must be marked regularly so girls are aware of the progress they are making and their work monitored carefully by staff.
- Once work has been marked all marks must be stored safely and shared with the Head of Faculty.
- CATs must be annotated as prescribed by examination boards.
- All CATs must be stored in school in a secure place.
- Heads of Faculty must ensure the moderation procedures are followed.
- Arrangements for sending marks to the examination board and sample work to moderators must be followed in good time to meet deadlines. If work is to be sent by the Examination Officer it should be submitted at least 3 working days before the deadline.

3.3. Homework, Assessment and Marking Schedule

	Homework frequency	Assessment frequency	Marking frequency
Pre Prep	-	Every 6 weeks minimum.	Daily
Lower Prep	Years 3-5: English, Reading and Maths each week. Occasional Foundation subjects project work.		
Upper Prep Year 6	Year 6: One piece of English and Maths per week. Occasional Foundation subjects project work.		English and Maths daily. Other subjects weekly.
Upper Prep 7 & 8	Years 7 and 8: 1 piece of homework a week for English, Maths, Science, MFL and Humanities. Art & Music homework as set.		English/Maths/Science weekly. Foundation subjects fortnightly.
Seniors	Years 9-11: 2 30-minute-pieces of homework a week for all subjects.		Weekly for Core and option subjects.
Sixth Form	Years 12+13: five hours per subject, per week on homework and wider reading.		Weekly

4. Recording

Staff must ensure that all records made support learning and enable them to monitor girl progress, provide appropriate information for reporting to parents and to others and for girl guidance. Results for end of unit tests and examinations must be recorded in the mark books. All end of unit tests are matched to end of year outcomes. Before tests and when returning tests and examination results, teachers must explain what the girls have to do to meet the criteria and what has to be learned to move up to the next level. All girls who have passed assessments should be rewarded.

The records kept enable staff to make summary judgements about girls' progress as a basis for assessments and reports to parents.

Staff planners and markbooks will be monitored by Heads of Faculty at the end of each term.

Where a class is shared between two colleagues, it is BOTH teachers responsibility to record and mark work. One teacher is to have a strategic overview of homework setting.

5. Reporting

Reporting is an important form of communication with girls and their parents. Assessments and reports should be:

- a key tool to support learning with appropriate feedback and advice.
- a celebration of achievement and so help motivate and reward girls where due.
- an assessment of the progress made by girls.
- a quality, accurate, professional document.
- be clear and provide specific targets

Staff have different roles to ensure that we achieve these aims. Producing reports is a team effort and it is essential that all roles are carried out professionally and to the published deadlines. Staff must ensure that only accurate reports go out.

Teachers should:

- write accurate, personal reports in the format provided, using the girl's official name.
- summarise the girl's progress in the subject. Strengths and particular progress should be highlighted, together with any weaknesses, which should form a target for development.
- make positive and constructive comments.
- make 'specific' rather than 'general' comments.
- comments on areas such as thoroughness and punctuality with homework, presentation of work, preparation for class, involvement within class, attitude, behaviour, general interest.
- encourage a girl to improve performance by setting them targets for the future.
- ensure that they meet the expected standard showing an early sample of reports to their Head of Faculty.
- stick to published deadlines.

The Head of Faculty should:

- induct new colleagues into report writing procedures and examples.
- be available to guide Faculty members if necessary.
- sample and monitor to ensure that high quality reports are produced on time.

The Head of Pupil Progress should:

- sample and monitor to ensure that high quality reports are produced on time.
- ensure that reports are published to parents on time.

The personal tutor should:

- check on the completion of and proof read their personal tutees' reports and take any necessary action.
- check that all names are correctly spelt in the body of the report.
- check that all the appropriate grades are included.

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- check that all the relevant subject/music/speech/activity reports are completed.
- check that all spelling and punctuation is correct.
- check that there is a brief description of work covered is given for each subject.
- write personal tutor reports.
- undertake report reading with each one of their personal tutees; once this is done, an entry should be made on PASS under “Personal Tutor Meeting”.

The Head of Teaching and Learning should:

- publish a schedule of reporting.

The personal tutor, Heads of Pupil Progress, Heads of Faculty or Head of Teaching and Learning may put a girl whose work or attitude is giving cause for concern on weekly report. Subject staff must sign this report after each lesson and this will be monitored by the personal tutor in the first instance.

It may also be decided that an action plan needs to be drawn up if a girl’s work or attitude is giving cause for concern. This action plan will be written in collaboration with parents.

Related policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Employee Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Health Safety Handbook
- Boarding Staff Handbook
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools
- ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, Regulatory Requirements
- Teachers’ Standards
- Departmental Handbook
- Academic Monitoring and Self Review Policy
- Complaints Policy (Pupils)
- Complaints Policy (Parents)

POLICY REVIEWED BY SCHOOL: June 2018

POLICY REVIEWED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL:

NEXT REVIEW: