

OUR LADY OF THE NATIVITY SCHOOL

Assessment and Reporting Policy

‘Within a nurturing environment, inclusive of all its members....we aspire to develop life-long learning.’

Our Lady of the Nativity Vision Statement

At Our Lady of the Nativity school, we believe assessment is the ongoing process of collecting and analysing evidence of student learning in order to gain an understanding about an individual’s (or a group’s) current level of attainment as our basis for future learning. In order to gather comprehensive evidence of student learning, we believe that a variety of strategies and tools should be used. We believe assessment without feedback is merely judgement.

“Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning: the acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action. The prime objective of assessment in the PYP is to provide feedback on the learning process.” Making the PYP Happen, December 2009, pg. 44.

Student Reporting is the process of communicating information to a range of stakeholders about student learning—including a student’s level of attainment and the progress they have made at a specific point in time.

The fundamental purpose of assessment and reporting is to improve student learning. This is true at the system, school and classroom level. Assessment and reporting of student learning is undertaken formally and informally for all learners.

ASSESSMENT

At Our Lady of the Nativity School we believe that assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process. It is a planned for and ongoing practice necessary to track student progress in order to inform our planning for learning and to give students information about their learning. It is differentiated, informative, purposeful and is a form of feedback for students, teachers and parents.

The following Assessment principles underpin our belief:

1. Assessment should be planned for. Student learning is promoted through planning and refining the teaching and learning process to meet individual or group needs. Assessing the students’ prior knowledge and experience as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period will enable teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly. Teachers should bear in mind that a well-designed learning experience will provide data on students’ knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, and is consequently a vehicle for summative or formative assessment. Assessment tasks should measure the students’ understanding of the essential elements of the PYP: Knowledge (central idea, lines of inquiry and prior knowledge); Concepts; Transdisciplinary Skills, Action and Attitudes.

2. Assessment should be relevant. Assessment needs to provide information about students’ knowledge, skills and understandings of the learning outcomes specified in curriculum

documents and school-based standards. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity we identify the learning intentions at the planning phase; communicate the learning intention for each lesson to the students and provide appropriate feedback based on success criteria.

3. Assessment should be appropriate and timely. Assessment needs to provide information about the particular kind of learning in which we are interested. This means that we need to use a variety of assessment methods because not all methods are capable of providing information about all kinds of learning. Conclusions about student achievement in an area of learning are valid only when the assessment method we use is appropriate and measures what it is supposed to measure. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity we assess by observing students; keeping focus books, recording anecdotal notes, formally pre and post testing, keeping work samples, using work samples to plan future learning, recording discussion, taking photos / video (digital evidence), analysing data. The form of assessment chosen will be in response to the learning intention and success criteria. Assessment tasks will be administered at a time that enables the information gained to inform the learning and teaching cycle.

4. Assessment should be fair and explicit. Assessment needs to provide opportunities for every student to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Assessment must be based on a belief that all learners are on a path of development and that every learner is capable of making progress. Students have the right to know what is assessed, how it is assessed and the purpose of the assessment. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity we will be explicit about success criteria and the nature of the assessment task. We will differentiate tasks in order for all learners to show what they understand, know and can do. We will plan assessment based on the next phase of each child's learning eg literacy foci.

5. Assessment should be accurate, consistent and draw on a wide range of evidence. Assessment needs to provide evidence that accurately reflects an individual student's knowledge, skills and understandings. A complete picture of student achievement in an area of learning depends on evidence that is sampled from the full range of knowledge, skills and understandings that make up an area of learning. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity judgements of each child's learning will be based on the analysis of multiple sources of assessment/ evidence. We are consistent in the administering and collaborative in the moderation and analysis of student learning.

6. Assessment should provide useful information. The focus of assessment is to establish where students are in their learning. This information can be used for both summative purposes (assessment of learning) or formative purposes (assessment for learning) to inform the teaching and learning cycle. Assessment needs to focus in part on the depth of the student's understanding, not just on the accumulation of knowledge. Rich assessment tasks which focus on deep knowledge and understanding and higher order thinking and reflect quality learning environment assist in informing learning and teaching. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity we plan for and administer rich assessment tasks in all areas of the curriculum throughout the year. These tasks are identified on planners.

7. Assessment should be integrated into the learning and teaching. Assessment needs to be an ongoing, integral part of the learning and teaching cycle. It must allow teachers, and students themselves, to monitor learning. For the teacher it provides evidence to guide planning for learning. For the students it provides the opportunity to reflect on and review progress and provide motivation and direction for further learning. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity

the learning intention and success criteria are determined prior to activities. We bring data and work samples to facilitated planning in order for curriculum to be planned that addresses the needs of students. The information received about student learning from assessment will be used to guide planning. We will provide multiple forms of feedback to students in relation to their learning.

8. Assessment must be monitored and recorded. The strategies are the methods or approaches that teachers use when gathering information about a student's learning. Teachers record this information using a variety of tools, which are the instruments used to collect data. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity teachers will use: rubrics, exemplars, checklists and anecdotal records. From Grade Prep to 6 continua are used in Literacy & Mathematics to provide a visual representation of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

9. Assessment should be manageable. Assessment needs to be efficient, manageable and convenient. It needs to be incorporated easily into everyday classroom activities and it needs to be capable of providing information that justifies the time spent. Therefore at Our Lady of the Nativity support structures are in place to enable teachers to best meet the learning needs of our students through the planning of comprehensive, informative and varied assessment tasks to guide learning.

Standards of professional Practice for Victorian Teachers which are addressed through our Assessment Policy:

2.4 Teachers are familiar with curriculum statements, policies, materials and programs associated with the content they teach.

3.1 Teachers know the learning strengths and weaknesses of their students and are aware of the factors that influence their learning.

4.1 Teachers use their knowledge of students, content and pedagogy to establish clear and achievable learning goals for their students.

4.3 Teachers monitor student engagement in learning and maintain records of their learning progress.

4.4 Teachers select assessment strategies to evaluate student learning, to provide feedback to students and their parents and to inform further planning of learning and teaching.

6.4 Teachers provide meaningful feedback to students and their parents about their developing knowledge and skills.

8.1 Teachers work effectively with other professionals.....to provide effective learning for students.

REPORTING

Reporting on assessment is about communicating what students know, understand and can do. It describes the progress of the students' learning, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to the efficacy of the programme. Reporting may take many forms including conferences and written reports.

Effective reporting should:

- involve parents, students and teachers as partners
- reflect what the school community values
- be comprehensive, honest, fair and credible
- be clear and understandable to all parties

- allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice. (.” Making the PYP Happen, December 2009, pg.51)
- As at 2015, at Our Lady of the Nativity School we report student learning achievement via:
- Twice yearly Learning Conferences
 - Student online Learning Portfolios through SeeSaw App
 - Twice yearly formal written reports
 - Formal and informal meetings with parents when required
 - Program Support Group meetings for students requiring extra learning support
 - Personalised Learning Plans – where appropriate

Learning Conferences

Learning Conferences are conducted twice yearly, currently early in Term 2 and late Term 3. Learning Conferences are an integral part of the Assessment and Reporting cycle at Our Lady of the Nativity School and provide an opportunity for the parent and teacher to discuss the progress of individual students. In the senior classes, students are invited to participate in the discussion and share their learning achievements and challenges.

At Our Lady of the Nativity, our Learning Conferences are separated from written reports and are linked to the Student Learning Portfolios. The timing of Learning Conferences ensures that parents are receiving regular, spaced formal information about their child’s learning progress.

Learning Conferences can be conducted in three forms:

1. Parent and Teacher
2. Parent, Teacher and Student
3. Student led conferences

Student Learning Portfolios

At Our Lady of the Nativity we believe that we have a responsibility to show evidence of student learning. As an example, portfolios are one method of collecting and storing information that can be used to document and assess student progress and achievement over time.

A portfolio is a record of students’ involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work. It provides a picture of each student’s progress and development over a period of time both as individual and group learners. It enables students to reflect with teachers, parents and peers in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement, and then to set individual goals and establish teaching and learning plans.

Evidence of learning in a portfolio should be from a range of experiences and curriculum areas. The portfolio is used to show the development of the essential elements of the PYP: knowledge, conceptual understanding, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and the attributes of the learner profile over a period of time. It may also be used to document student action. Portfolio entries should document both the process of learning and the product, including images and evidence of students in the process of constructing meaning. It can be used as a tool for assessment and reporting purposes for students, parents, teachers and administrators. Student Learning Portfolios are an integral part of our Assessment and Reporting practice as they provide a snapshot of evidence of student learning. As all work samples included in the Student Learning Portfolios are annotated with Learning Intentions and, in most cases, Success Criteria, parents and students are provided with clear evidence of the learning progress made and level of achievement gained. These annotated samples also indicate areas for future learning. The samples of evidence provided in the student Learning Portfolios both

inform the parent about student achievement and form the basis for discussions at Learning Conferences.

Student Learning Portfolios are sent home on a regular basis in order to give parents and students the opportunity to study and discuss their content and help prepare for Learning Conferences.

Formal Written Reports

Formal written reports at Our Lady of the Nativity School adhere to Commonwealth Government requirements and guidelines and therefore consist of:

- Reporting to a five point scale in all curriculum areas
- Reporting against standards
- Written comments stating a student's learning achievements and areas for improvement

We believe that formal written reports should be written in parent friendly language, be easy to understand and should clearly state what a student is able to do. Our reports should contain information about what has been taught and summarise a student's current level of knowledge, skills and understandings, including areas for further development.

We further believe that Student Reports should:

- Be constructive and honest
- Show progress over time
- Show what is expected of students
- Draw on evidence that has been collected over time
- Enable parents to monitor learning

Informal and Formal meetings.

Although Learning Conferences are separated from formal written reports, parents are encouraged to make appointments to meet with class teachers should they have any concerns. It is an expectation that class teachers will contact parents to arrange a meeting should they have concerns about a student's progress or level of achievement.

These meetings may be initiated by the class teacher or a student's parent.

Program Support Meetings

Regular Program Support Meetings are conducted to address the achievements, challenges and future learning goals of children on, in the first instance, LNSLN funding and also for students who have been identified at risk and in need of intervention and further support.

These meetings are organised by the Student Services Co-ordinator and include:

- The student's parent(s)
- The class teacher
- Integration aide where appropriate
- Student services co-ordinator
- Representatives of the Catholic Education Office and other outside agencies where appropriate.

These meetings involve the invaluable sharing of information about student achievement against long and short term goals, factors that may assist or hinder future progress, future goal setting and practices that will best assist the student both at school and at home.