

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY (Primary School)

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

At ICS we believe 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
- the decisions to take action

ICS's approach to assessment recognises the importance of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the products of inquiry.

The main aim of assessment at ICS is to provide feedback on the learning process and the development of the five essential elements to inform further learning.

Students and teachers are actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-assessment skills.

The assessment component in the school's curriculum can itself be subdivided into three closely related areas.

- Assessing – how we discover what the students know and have learned
- Recording – how we choose to collect and analyse data
- Reporting – how we choose to communicate information

ASSESSING

The assessment of the students' development and learning is an essential component of the curriculum, and helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching.

Students are observed in a variety of situations and a wide range of assessment strategies are implemented.

The classroom employs a range of formative and summative assessment, which demonstrates student development.

Summative assessment: aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned.

It can assess several elements simultaneously: it informs and leads to improvement in student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea, and prompts students towards action.

Formative assessment: provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together.

Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognise the criteria for success. There is evidence that increased use of formative assessment particularly helps those students who are low achievers to make significant improvements in their understanding.

Assessment in the PYP classroom includes:

- engaging students in reflecting on their learning (e.g. journals/discussion/specifically identified trans-disciplinary skills/profiles/attitudes)
- students assessing work produced by themselves and by others (self/peer assessment)
- using samples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning and development (e.g. for parent/teacher conferences)
- collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking (e.g. student reflections in portfolios/journals)
- reflecting on learning processes of groups and individuals (e.g. class discussions)
- developing rubrics with students
- giving constructive feedback (e.g. written/oral)

REPORTING

Reporting on assessment includes communicating students' knowledge, understanding and application of skills in social, physical and academic areas. This is a holistic approach

involving parents, students and teachers as partners, thus providing a comprehensive view of students' development.

Reporting to parents, students and teachers occurs through:

- **Conferences**

- **Parent-teacher (December and March)**

- To share information and create common goals

- **Student-teacher**

- Informally in the classroom on a regular basis

- **Student-led (May)**

- Student-led conferences are formal reporting sessions with parents, led by the students themselves. The teacher's role is to guide and prepare the students for this important role. The emphasis is on the discussion between a child and his/her parent.

The focus of the Student-led conference is on students' progress / development – academic and social. The process is designed to give students ownership of their individual assessment of their learning, so they can become more actively involved and committed. These conferences encourage student accountability and responsibility for their own learning as well as promoting student/parent communication.

Other benefits are that students learn to evaluate their own progress and build critical thinking skills, self-confidence and self-esteem. Parents become active participants in their child's learning and skills, and have an opportunity to help their child set positive goals. Students are trained to become confident participants. The development of their training will naturally be progressive as students move through the year levels. Our aim is however for a building of skill development beginning in Nursery and moving through the year levels. Parents will be supported and guided with suggested prompts so that they get the most information possible from their child.

- **Written Reports (December and June)**

- A written summary of students' development in all areas of the curriculum.

- **Additional Written Reports – as required**

- English as Additional Language

- Student Support - a summary of progress relating to a student's International Individual Learning Plan (IIEP) targets.

- **The Portfolio**

- Portfolios are an important element of the school's reporting program, providing an accumulation of student, peer and teacher selected items in all areas of the school curriculum and life. It is an effective and dynamic means of three-way communication between parents, students and teachers.

Portfolios are taken home two times a year. It is also used as a focal point when Student-led conferences take place in May during Term three, the school will be closed to enable parents and students to have uninterrupted quality time.

The Portfolio is sent home during the penultimate week of term one and two, to be returned to school before the end of the term.

- **The Exhibition**

Students in the final year of the PYP carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry – the PYP Exhibition. This takes place towards the end of Year 6 in term three.

One of the purposes of the PYP Exhibition is to provide a forum for student driven reporting.

STANDARDISED ASSESSMENTS

Standardised assessments are used as a part of the whole school assessment policy in an effort to gain as much information as possible about the student as a learner. The types of assessment used in the school are many and varied and like the “jigsaw” analogy the information gained goes towards making up the whole picture.

Standardised assessments are specifically used for the following reasons:

- As a part of the reporting process, information, which shows growth over time, is useful.
- The collection of standardised assessment information provides information that helps teachers to form groups and plan the most effective program.
- To demonstrate the progress students make over extended periods of time for school-wide planning and professional development as well as reporting to external educational bodies
- To demonstrate impact of teaching on learning.

Standardised assessment currently used: PM Benchmarks - Reading, IB PYP Scope and Sequence documents (for all subject areas) Number recognition, Letter / sound identification, EAL Acquisition of Language.

ASSESSMENT ESSENTIAL AGREEMENTS

- Assessment should be **planned at the beginning of the unit** and should demonstrate **clear links** between the trans-disciplinary theme and the central idea, inquiry lines, key concepts, trans-disciplinary skills, IB learner profile and attitudes identified within the unit of inquiry as a result of carefully planned learning activities.
- Assessment strategies and tools should be **varied** and can include pre and post assessment tasks and formative and summative assessments.
- Assessments should include **peer and self-assessments** where appropriate.
- **Students should be involved** in the development of some of the assessment activities and tools (e.g. rubrics) for both whole class and individual criteria. When students are not involved in the development of assessment activities they need to be informed of assessment requirements.
- Assessment will inform and direct future learning.
- Assessment at the school is working towards addressing all five of the essential elements (knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action) and the IB learner profile.
- Teachers will be familiar with the assessment policy of the school.

Reporting

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

- Initial Parent/Teacher conferences will take place in Term 1, the second at the end of Term 2
- IEP meetings will take place in Term 1 and 2
- Student-led conferences will take place in Term 3

Portfolios:

- Each student has their own portfolio, which is taken home two times a year to share with their family or care-givers
- Portfolios contain a variety of student, peer and teacher selected items providing a view of student's interests and development.

Student-led conferences:

- Students are involved in choosing what is shared with parents
- Students should be able to report to parents addressing all five of the essential elements (knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes and action)
- Teachers should meet and greet parents and roam around the room throughout the conference
- All year levels should be consistent in their approach
- Student-led conference dates to be published in the school calendar at the beginning of the year, followed up with a student created invitation, with letter attached, 2 weeks prior to the conference
- Portfolios may be sent home with students whose parents were unable to attend after the conferences have taken place – these should be returned by students remaining the following year and may be kept by students not returning.

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