Assessment, Marking and Feedback at The Acorns School

This Assessment statement reflects our commitment to our students to learn to achieve.

Rationale

Assessment should make children successful learners by identifying their stage of development and achievement (academic, social, creative and spiritual) and developing their skills in order for them to achieve their maximum potential. It is a progressive process which, by the collection of holistic evidence (both individual and comparative), assists adults and teachers in their planning so that each child is equipped with the skills, attitudes, and abilities to succeed in this challenging world. We ensure that the targets set for students are both realistic and aspirational.

Principles of Assessment followed at The Acorns School

- Assessment at The Acorns School aims to develop learners' capacity for self-assessment so that they can become reflective and self-managing. Independent learners have the ability to seek out and gain new skills, new knowledge, and new understandings. They are able to engage in self-reflection and to identify the next steps in their learning. Teachers should equip learners with the desire and the capacity to take charge of their learning through developing the skills of self and peer assessment.

- Assessment should take account of the importance of learner motivation. Assessment that encourages learning, fosters motivation by emphasising progress and achievement rather than failure. Motivation can be preserved and enhanced by assessment methods, which protect the learner's autonomy, provide some choice and constructive feedback, and create an opportunity for self-direction, including target setting.

- Assessment for learning should be part of effective planning of teaching and learning. A teacher's planning should provide opportunities for both the learner and teacher to obtain and use information about progress towards learning goals. It also has to be flexible to respond to initial and emerging ideas and skills. Planning should include strategies to ensure that learners understand the goals they are pursuing and the criteria that will be applied in assessing their work. Teachers annotate plans and use this to inform the next step of learning. Children should be proficient with using a variety of assessment strategies.

- 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 for learning should promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed. For effective learning to take place, learners need to understand what it is they are trying to achieve – and want to achieve it. Understanding and commitment follow when learners have some part in deciding goals and identifying criteria for assessing progress. Communicating

assessment/success criteria involves discussing them with learners using terms that they can understand, providing examples of how the criteria can be met in practice and engaging learners in peer– and self-assessment.

Baseline assessment and target setting
Students are assessed on entry to The Acorns School, regardless of the reason for being placed on roll. Many students arrive with no prior attainment information. Many students have not attended school for several months/ years. Many students have attended several schools. It is crucial that some baseline testing occurs to enable correct and appropriate targets to be set. All students will do online CATs and Dyscalculia tests. Some will undergo WRAT and reading age testing. All students will do a baseline assessment activity for core subjects English and Maths. All baselines are recorded in Excel tracking document. Curricular targets for different subjects are set against their starting points.

Individual Needs
The responsibility for identifying assessing and monitoring children with special educational needs, or, who are 'more able', is the responsibility of the class teacher. The Senco and outside agencies are there to support the class teacher in providing a differentiated curriculum in order for the child to achieve their potential. Assessment procedure supports all the aims and practices for the SEN policy in helping each child achieve his/her own potential.
(See SEN policy)

Marking for Literacy
All subjects have integrated the teaching of literacy into their planning and have adopted a whole school approach to the marking and assessment of literacy as this complements and supports the focus on subject knowledge and understanding. The purpose of marking for literacy is to provide feedback to students that will help them improve their use of literacy in all subjects and to motivate students to communicate their subject knowledge and understanding effectively.

Interventions
Assessment of progress against targets involves a range of strategies including teacher, peer and student self- assessment. For those students who have not met a target, an intervention will be put in place dependent on reason for not meeting a target. If there is no external factor – such as a school or lesson attendance factor (alternative providers etc.) - then various waves of intervention will be considered. Examples could be:

- Personalisation of the curriculum (especially if the issue is with effort and/or engagement)
- Adaption/further differentiation of work to address key areas causing underachievement/ underperformance.
- Additional 1:1 support (in and/or out of lesson) utilisation of TA/ 1:1 tuition.
- Progress review – tiered approach.
- Appropriate external support
- An alternative to current programme of learning.

Reviewed and updated July 2018
It is intended that this statement will be reviewed at the end of the academic year in line with the evaluation of school improvement processes.