Assessment for and of, learning is a key foundation stone in ensuring all students experience success and optimise their achievement. Our primary purpose is to ensure that all students are well-equipped to make a positive contribution to society as active, independent, healthy and adaptable citizens, who are critical thinkers, role-versatile and self-confident.

All teachers and support staff need to know how well students are doing in terms of their attainment and progress, and how to help students to improve further. Therefore, information and data on attainment and progress throughout the school is used to ensure that resources (both human and material) are targeted effectively and adjusted as individual needs change.

Our vision for assessment at St Bede’s RC High School is summarised as follows:

To make learning and teaching outstanding so that learners become partners in the processes of assessment and understand that:

* Making mistakes and taking academic risks is an important part of learning.
* Learning how to learn is as important as acquisition of facts.
* Progress should be based on comparing their current performance with their own previous performance not by comparison with others.
* Assessment is done with them not to them.
* The purpose of feedback, whether verbal or written is to further learning, recognise success and identify ways to improve further.
* Partnership in assessment, requires that they are equally responsible for their own learning and progress.

**Forms of assessment**

At St Bede’s RC High School two main forms of assessment are used and they are (i) Assessment for Learning (AfL) which is exclusively formative and (ii) Assessment of Learning (AoL) which is exclusively summative. The more valuable form of assessment is AfL as this is integral to the day to day activity of teachers and students in the learning experience around the school whereas AoL is used periodically to ascertain the level of attainment that the students have reached and the amount of progress they have made from the previous summative assessment.

Therefore, it is helpful to think about three linked aspects of assessment. Day-to-day assessment provides a wide range of evidence of learning in specific contexts which shapes immediate next steps. Periodic review of this evidence gives a clear profile of students’ achievement across a whole subject and informs and shapes future planning and targets for improvement. When required, these judgements and insights can be more formally shared between students, parents and teachers at transitional points between year groups, schools and phases. The key feature of these three assessment viewpoints and summarised here:

**Day-to-day**

* Learning objectives made explicit and shared with students.
* Peer and self assessment in use.
* Students engaged in their learning and given immediate feedback.

**Periodic**

* Broader view of progress across subject for teacher and learner.
* Use of national standards in the classroom
* Improvements to medium-term curriculum planning.

**Transitional**

* Formal recognition of students’ achievements
* Reported to parents/carers and next teacher(s)
* Uses external tests or tasks.

In order to achieve the aims of the school’s approach to assessment, the policy has been constructed in terms of **expectations** and **responsibilities**, so that everyone involved is clear about their contribution to its implementation.

**Expectations and responsibilities**

**Governors will:**

* Have a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses of students’ achievement from Headteacher reports, the LA school profile, FFT online, RAISEonline, subject leader reports and other sources.
* Hold the school accountable by making sure that there are rigorous actions put in place to address issues related to attainment and progress.
* Monitor the overview of achievement on a termly basis through curriculum committee meetings.
* Discuss and agree realistic but challenging targets.

**The Headteacher will:**

* Ensure that there is an effective policy in place by evaluating its effectiveness and keeping achievement under regular review.
* Keep governors advised about students’ attainment and progress, including the provision of guidance on the interpretation of performance data.
* Delegate appropriately the management of assessment.
* Ensure that subject leaders present reports to the curriculum committee on request.

**The SLT member in charge of assessment will:**

* Ensure that the assessment policy is carried out effectively by all members of staff.
* Share good practice in areas such as Assessment for Learning and Learning to Learn.
* Plan and deliver whole school INSET in aspects of assessment and personalising learning.
* Oversee reporting to parents to ensure that reports are on time, accurate, positive in tone and have appropriate targets.
* Seek and respond to the views of all stakeholders about all aspects of assessment.
* Ensure that appropriate SDS opportunities are available to all cohorts of staff, including support staff, in all aspects of assessment.
* Liaise with the SLT lead on Teaching and Learning to ensure that Assessment for Learning is an ongoing area of SDS for all staff.
* Prepare a report for Governors giving a clear analysis of the performance in Key Stages 3 and 4.
* Provide Governors with clear information on student achievement using a range of data from LA, school, RAISEonline and FFT live.
* Provide Governors with clear information and data so that they can effectively judge the appropriateness of school targets.
* Assist Subject Leaders in their role, particularly in their management of pupil progress, KS2-3 and KS3-4.

**The SLT will:**

* Analyse all available data provided locally and nationally.
* Ensure that their linked departments have an understanding of, and are accountable for, their targets.
* Use Performance Management to ensure that all staff are tracking strengths and areas for development.
* Ensure that staff are making sustained and substantial progress towards their contribution to the school’s targets for achievement.
* Ensure that strategies are in place to address the needs of individual students who are underachieving in areas they manage.
* Ensure that the School Development Plan and Departmental Development Plans address areas for development whilst maintaining identified strengths.
* Ensure that the Subject Leaders they manage have self-evaluations and improvement plans that are of a high quality.
* Set achievable, realistic and challenging targets/objectives for their teams.
* Ensure that Subject Leaders use departmental time to standardise work to guarantee consistency across the department.
* Support others in the use of data to secure optimal student progress.

**Subject Leaders will:**

* Ensure that their departments use assessment fully to ensure optimal student progress.
* Use meetings to share good practice in areas such as Assessment for Learning and Learning to Learn.
* Where appropriate, use meetings to sample work, compare levels and progress across year groups/sets and highlight common issues.
* Support others, through Line Management and Performance Management, in all aspects of assessment.
* Ensure that all students receive an accurate assessment of their achievement over the whole of the Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum.
* Ensure the end of Key Stage 3 level has been reflected by previous assessments recorded in the school assessment database.
* Assessing Pupil Progress (APP), where available, is used as a basis for periodic summative assessment and used formatively to plan the next steps in learning.
* Teachers assessments are moderated.

**Class teachers will:**

* Use assessment strategies fully to ensure that students make good progress.
* Mark work, both class work and homework in line with the school’s marking policy.
* Contribute to departmental meetings focused on sharing good practice in such areas such as Assessment for Learning and Learning to Learn.
* Contribute to departmental meetings focused on monitoring attainment and progress, moderating and standardising levels and grades across Key Stages.
* Prepare samples of students’ work on request from Subject Leaders for the purpose of monitoring and marking feedback.
* Liaise effectively with others, to ensure that student progress is fully monitored.
* Ensure that assessments are entered on time so that students’ progress can be monitored accurately.
* Ensure that reports to parents/carers are on time, accurate, positive in tone and have appropriate targets.
* Use all available data to monitor student progress and use the information for planning and where appropriate intervention strategies.
* Attend and where appropriate, contribute to the training of other subject area teachers in aspects of assessment.
* Use a combination of continuous assessment and summative assessment to arrive at a level that accurately describes the students’ progress, skills and achievements in a subject at the end of Key Stage 3.
* Identify to what extent a student has securely achieved a level by the use of sub levels where C=low, B=secure, A=high.
* To collaborate in departmental standardisation activities to ensure the accuracy and consistency of their assessments.

**House Tutors will:**

* Review all data provided by the school about their cohort of students to develop a clear understanding of their abilities.
* Ensure that each student has recorded their personal targets and current assessment scores.
* Ensure that they meet with each student in their cohort to review progress towards meeting their targets.
* Use a variety of strategies to ensure, above all, that students know their targets and are supported in achieving them.
* Liaise effectively with others, in all aspects of target setting.

**Support staff will:**

* Develop their understanding of assessment and support the class teacher in undertaking assessment based activities.

**The Data Manager will:**

* Create databases via the SISRA and other electronic systems to support aspects of assessment, monitoring and reporting.
* Liaise effectively with the SLT lead and others to ensure systems used to support assessment objectives meet the needs of students, teachers and parents/carers.

**Specific guidance on key aspects of the assessment policy**

**Feedback (written and verbal)**

At St Bede’s RC High School we recognise that teachers’ feedback in relation to students’ progress and attainment and students’ assessment of their own progress and attainment are central functions in the learning process. The focus of feedback is on helping pupils gain a clear understanding of how well they have gained knowledge, concepts and skills and how they take their learning forward. Therefore, students need to understand the marking and feedback systems, both the criteria for marking as well as the comments and grades or marks awarded. We also recognise that just grading students’ work can have a negative impact on their learning and motivation. The use of grades or NC levels should therefore be used for summative purposes where the students fully understand what the grade or level means and how it relates to the progress they have made over a period of time.

Further details are outlined in the Marking and Feedback policy.

**Target setting, tracking and setting procedures**

External sources of data analysis such as RAISEonline, the LA school profile, FFT estimates and departmental estimates are used extensively for school self-evaluation and to inform school development planning and school level target setting. Periodic summative assessments provide information that informs, student target setting, tracking of progress and assignment of students to appropriate academic sets. Data on prior attainment (PA) at the end of Key Stage 2 and 3 along with Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) outcomes and internal tests (in some subjects) and assessments, form baselines from which individual targets are set, progress is measured and decisions about setting made.

**Target setting**

Estimates for attainment are not targets. Estimates are based on what can be expected based on prior attainment. Targets are a combination of estimates of expected progress plus additional challenge which reflects the schools’ high expectations and ambitions. This process also requires a measure of judgement about whether, based on all the information available, the targets are realistic in order not to make the whole process lack creditability with stakeholders. Therefore decisions about targets need to be properly considered. The guiding principle underpinning the process is `**there are no excuses for underachievement`.**

**Key Stage 3**

Key Stage 2 results and teacher assessments are used for English, Maths and Science. RE, Geography and History will use either one of the Maths or English KS2 results or an average of the two as their baseline. In ICT, MFL, PE, D&T, Art, Music and Drama the use of Key Stage 2 results is less valid and reliable, therefore these subjects will confirm their baseline within the first 6 weeks of the new academic year.

The levels awarded during Key Stage 3 are `working at` levels. These levels are sub-divided into three sub-levels: a=higher level; b= secure level; c= lower level.

In a three year Key Stage 3 the majority of students are expected to achieve 6 sub-levels of progress. Therefore in a year, teachers and students should aim for 2 sub-levels of progress. Assessments against NC levels takes place three times a year including a final end of Key Stage 3 assessment when reporting whole levels. Assessments are sent home to parents according to the schools’ assessments calendar.

Testing plays a part in assessing students’ progress but it is not used in isolation to determine progress. Subject areas incorporate a variety of assessment strategies, including APP criteria where available, which together provide an overall evaluation of students’ achievement. Therefore teachers must fully understand the criteria for National Standards in their subject but these should also be shared with students in terms that both help them understand what they have achieved and identify the next steps to making further progress.

**Key Stage 4**

All targets are based on FFT D estimates. In addition to attainment i.e. the grade achieved, targets are also set for progress in English, Maths and Science which are based on students making 3 levels of progress from the level they achieved in their Key Stage 2 tests. This means that a student who entered St Bede’s with a level 4 in English, for example, is expected to achieve a grade C at GCSE to have achieved 3 levels of progress. Similarly, a student who achieved a level 5 in Maths would be expected to achieve a grade B to achieve expected progress.

Target setting in Key Stage 4 are based on estimates of performance. These are the grades a student would be expected to reach at the end of the Key Stage based on prior attainment at the end of both Key Stage 2 and 3 combined with current rates of progress. Monitoring of progress against targets will determine if students are likely to fall below, achieve or exceed their targets and trigger appropriate support or intervention.

**Whole School Target Setting**

Although there is no statutory requirement for schools to set targets, at St Bede’s we aim to achieve the FFT D target plus 1 in all subjects. As an example, this means that if the estimate for the number of students achieving grades A\*-C in English was 80% (based on FFT D) we would aim to exceed this by at least one percentage point, i.e. 81%.

**Academic setting**

In order for students to progress it is important that they are placed in a class that best suits their ability. Currently at St Bede’s, there are usually eight or nine sets across three bands: Upper band, Middle band and the Foundation School.

**Key Stage 3**

St Bede’s classes are organised into two basic bands, an Upper band (5 sets) and a Middle band (2 or 3 sets). The Foundation School is a separate set comprising of approximately five students per year group in Key Stage 3. Students are allocated to a band and then to a basic set on entry to Year 7. The basic set includes the subjects of RE, MFL, History, Geography and Science. English and Maths set independently within the bands. Therefore, this could mean that a student is in set 5 for English but set 1 for Maths.

Initial setting in Year 7 is based on the Key Stage 2 SAT results and information from the primary schools. All primary schools are visited by the Primary Transition Coordinator who meets with the staff including the Headteacher and Year 6 teachers. During the autumn term, all Year 7 students take Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) in the first half term which provides additional comparative data. Underpinning all this data is the continuous assessment by teachers.

After this additional data is collated, parents are informed if there is a concern about their child’s performance with a monitoring and or support programme put in place as necessary. If a student’s performance continues to cause concern then a change in setting and or band may occur. In English and Maths, changes in setting can occur more regularly. This is particularly true in Year 9 Maths where additional staffing currently allows for more sets to be created and so reduce class sizes.

Parents are essential partners in the education of their children, therefore we would want to give them advanced warning about concerns in their child’s progress and if their child may be moved to another set. This enables the parent to work with their child and the school to address these concerns.

Classes in Music, Art, Drama, D&T, ICT and PE are independent of the basic sets but are done so within the bands. These departments have smaller class sizes due to the nature of the subject and health and safety issues.

Setting is reviewed after each assessment period. Changes to sets in the second half of Year 8 and in Year 9 are relatively rare. It is the aim to try and maintain consistency in a student’s education. Frequent moves can create stress and disruption to a student’s social situation and undermine their confidence. However, despite this it is important that each student is taught in the right set for their academic ability. If a student consistently struggles to keep pace with the set they are in, or if they are working at a level higher than expected for their set, then it is usually in the student’s best interest in the long term to change set. This is not necessarily an indication that the student is not working hard.

**Modern Languages**

In Key Stage 3 all students study a foreign language (French). Students in the basic set Upper 1 and 2 study a second foreign language (Spanish) from Year 8. This means that if a student is moved below Upper 2, they will normally not be able to continue with the second foreign language.

**Key Stage 4**

The numbers of students in each set can fluctuate from year to year; setting in Key Stage 4 will depend on the subject and to some degree, the timetable organisation. In English, Maths and Science we aim to have smaller numbers of students in each set. They operate within the same banding. In terms of bands, the same principle applies to Science, RE, ICT and PE.

In `option` subjects setting will depend on the numbers opting for the subject. At Key Stage 4 setting will be based on prior data for a student as well as their performance in Key Stage 3. When deciding setting, subject areas will need to take into account whether a student can achieve the minimum of three levels of progress in the set they are allocated to. Individual subject areas will decide on the setting for Key Stage 4.

Attached: Proposed Assessment/Recording Cycle 2012-2013