



St Paul's Juniors

Assessment Policy

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This policy is available on the Handbook page of the School Intranet and policies page of the School website and can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required; such requests can be made by email to: policyquery@stpaulsschool.org.uk

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent approach to all forms of assessment, feedback, recording, and reporting across St Paul's Juniors (SPJ). Its intrinsic aim is to provide support to teachers in making informed decisions based on pupils' learning, supporting continuous and sustained academic progress and achievement.

Whilst assessment is an essential tool, it is important to recognise that assessment alone does not improve learning; instead, it is the actions taken based on assessment that make a difference in enhancing learning outcomes.

An annual timetable is published in this policy setting out assessment and reporting procedures. (Appendix 1)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Policy (which includes the approach to homework), the Learning Support Policy and departmental assessment procedures contained within departmental handbooks. It should also be understood in the context of the school's commitment to pupil wellbeing, equity, and inclusion.

2. Principles of Assessment

Our approach to assessment includes the following key principles:

- Aligning assessments closely with learning objectives and outcomes, providing the opportunity for all pupils to demonstrate their progress and achievements;
- Using assessments to inform planning and responsive teaching;
- Providing constructive, meaningful and timely feedback in various forms to support pupil progress;
- Supporting continuous progression, by building upon pupils' prior learning, structured to scaffold development over time;
- Challenging pupils appropriately;
- Ensuring all pupils have equitable opportunities to demonstrate their learning, with consideration for reasonable adjustments as necessary;
- Identifying pupils in need of specific/additional Learning Support, providing timely and targeted support;
- Promoting consistency in assessment practices to ensure reliable evaluation of pupils' progress and performance, enabling effective tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress as they transition through SPJ and onward to the Senior School;
- Providing necessary information for parents/carers, teachers, SLT and governors
- Engaging pupils in the assessment process through opportunities for self-reflection, goal setting, and response to feedback.

Staff involved in assessment receive ongoing continuing professional development to uphold assessment standards and promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices.

3. Types of Assessment

At St Paul's Juniors, our assessment approach encompasses the following types:

- Formative assessments: Evidence-informed strategies teachers use to support learners' progress, identifying gaps in knowledge and understanding for targeted feedback and instruction during the learning process. These include questioning, low-stakes quizzes, observational notes, and pupil self-assessment.
- Summative assessments: Infrequent tests under standard conditions, aiming to test a sample of a wide domain of knowledge and distinguish performance levels relative to peers, mainly used for formal recording and reporting at the end of the learning process.
- Nationally standardised summative assessments: Standardised tests administered uniformly across the country to evaluate students' performance and compare their achievements on a national level. Staff are supported in understanding the limitations and appropriate interpretation of such data.

In addition to the assessments above, in consultation with appropriate specialists and parents/carers, the school will make use of additional diagnostic assessments to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils in need of specific/additional Learning Support. Assessment procedures are adapted where needed to meet the needs of pupils with SEND or EAL, ensuring accessibility and fairness.

4. Feedback

Feedback should support all pupils in making progress in their learning, whilst making the assessment and feedback process manageable for teachers.

The below principles outline the general principles that departments apply in their departmental feedback policies.

The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring consistency in the standard of feedback across the department, and supported by the Deputy Head Academic.

In providing effective feedback, the following guidance should be considered:

- Pupils should receive regular feedback. The appropriate level of regularity is determined by the Head of Department and is expressed in the departmental feedback policy. Justifiable pedagogical reasons should be given for this regularity;
- All feedback provided should be understandable, helpful and actionable;
- Feedback should be designed to encourage active engagement and self-reflection from the learner; teachers should allocate time for pupils to respond and where appropriate/necessary, model how to respond;
- Feedback should focus on moving the pupil forward, emphasising what's next rather than focusing on what has passed;
- Feedback should be part of a system – prioritising its importance over the intensity of the process; not every single piece of work needs to/should be marked/given feedback;
- Praise should be given deservedly, appropriately, and related to factors within the pupil's control, avoiding excessive/lavish praise.

- Where appropriate, feedback may also involve peer assessment, verbal conferencing, and whole-class review to build evaluative skills.

5. Summative assessments

Throughout the year, summative assessments are conducted at regular intervals. The following provides an overview of the summative assessments/tests administered in each year group. These assessments are used not only for reporting but also to inform teaching and learning.

5.1 First Years

Pupils in the First Years sit CPI (Cambridge Primary Insights) assessments in the Autumn term. These standardised assessments support the identification of learning needs and they focus on six developmental areas linked to later academic outcomes: reading; spelling; mathematics; mental arithmetic, developed ability and attitudes. Results are stored in iSAMS and are not typically reported to parents/carers. Pupils sit school assessments in mathematics and English towards the end of the Summer term. Results may be taken into consideration when awarding grades in the final grades session.

5.2 Second Years

Pupils in the Second Years sit CPI assessments in the Autumn term. These standardised assessments support the identification of learning needs and they focus on six developmental areas linked to later academic outcomes: reading; spelling; mathematics; mental arithmetic, developed ability and attitudes. Results are stored in iSAMS and are not typically reported to parents/carers. In the Summer term, pupils sit School Examinations in English and mathematics in the Lower Second Year and English, mathematics and science in the Upper Second Year. Results are reported to parents/carers and stored in iSAMS.

5.3 Third Years

In the Autumn term, pupils in the Lower Third Year sit standardised, computer-adaptive ability and aptitude tests (MidYIS), which are designed to help identify strengths and areas for development, in addition to internal examination results and teacher assessment. These exams also provide an indicator of likely success in future public exams. Results are stored in iSAMS and are not typically reported to parents/carers. Pupils sit School Examinations in classics, English, French, geography, history, mathematics, science, and theology and philosophy (Upper Third Years only) in the Summer term. Results are reported to parents/carers and stored in iSAMS.

6. Study skills/revision guidance

To support the wellbeing of pupils, the school has developed and designed a study skills programme. As part of this, pupils are provided with the tools and strategies to support their independence and metacognition, and are provided with specific revision guidance for formal exams which is available to pupils in the Lower Second to Upper Third Years on Google Classroom.

The timing of sharing these resources is considerate and supportive of pupils' wellbeing.

Study skills sessions may include: how to plan revision, memory techniques, managing exam stress, and time management. Content is reviewed annually for age-appropriateness and impact.

7. How assessment outcomes are collected and used

Pupils' progress in all subjects is closely monitored to ensure they are achieving at a level commensurate with their ability. As expressed in departmental handbooks, departments offer various strategies for monitoring and recording pupil progress in subjects, following Assessment Policy guidance and reflecting the nature of the subject. Results in informal formative/summative assessments are held by subject teachers; block test results across whole year groups are held by departments centrally and are used to support correct setting and the accurate award of attainment grades.

Assessment outcomes are interpreted in the context of each pupil's starting point, educational background, and individual needs, particularly for those with SEND, EAL or other relevant factors.

7.1 Attainment grades

The assessment cycle at St Paul's Juniors focuses on providing regular planned points for grades to be awarded based on formative and summative assessment throughout the academic year. Grades are a measure of a pupil's attainment. They do not reflect one test or examination result.

These points where grades are awarded (see the SPJ Handbook for the grades and reporting deadlines) provide an opportunity for the extent of learning and progress that a pupil has made to be clearly communicated to the pupils and parents/carers; this is in addition to the regular formative feedback opportunities within lessons.

No quota is assigned to the number of grades which can be awarded and since the grade assessment is based on a combination of formative and summative assessment, it is not linked to a percentage average.

Subjects awarding an attainment grade use a five-point scale as indicated below and given the highly academic nature of the school, a pupil will be doing well if he is 'meeting expectations' at SPJ. When a grade of "some concerns or not meeting expectations" is awarded, teachers are expected to write a brief comment to provide some context. This comment should be constructive, avoid overly general language, and where appropriate suggest next steps.

- Well above expectations
- Exceeding expectations
- Meeting expectations
- Some concerns
- Not meeting expectations

7.2 Effort grades

As an academic community, we attach as much importance to a pupil's approach to their work as we do to their results. In order, therefore, to support good scholarly working habits, to motivate pupils and give better, more objective feedback we measure how much a pupil:

- **takes care over work:** all forms of work submitted; hand-written; typed; slides; video; presentations; practical and creative work;
- **demonstrates high levels of personal organisation:** consider punctuality to lessons, work submitted correctly and on time, timely communication with a teacher when there is a question or problem, and arrival with the appropriate equipment;
- **actively engages in lessons:** consider evidence of self-motivation, paying attention, following instructions, asking sensible questions;
- **contributes to lessons:** consider all possible opportunities for contribution, such as paired work, small or larger group activities. Acknowledge voluntary contributions and those given when asked directly by a teacher. Take into account one-on-one interactions, ensuring an equitable consideration of contributions of more introverted pupils.

These criteria are measured by frequency:

- always
- mostly
- sometimes
- rarely (triggers explanatory text which should offer insight into how the pupil can improve)

The award of an effort grade is used to encourage pupils wherever possible. It is based on the model used in the senior part of the school. Effort grades should be discussed with pupils to encourage reflection and goal-setting.

7.3 Grade moderation

Within departments, specific time is allocated for staff to meet and discuss pupil assessments and moderate outcomes. These moderation meetings take place as appropriate to ensure that assessment is accurate, robust and timely. Cross-year or cross-departmental moderation may be used where appropriate.

7.4 Academic Work Issue

All staff are responsible for logging concerns about a pupil's academic progress, attainment, or other academic work issues via CPOMS using the category "Academic Work Issue".

7.5 Data analysis and tracking

An analysis of assessment and tracking data is undertaken by the Deputy Head Academic, Head of Assessment and Heads of Year. Where appropriate, information is passed to Heads of Department, Form Tutors, the Head of Learning Support, subject teachers and the SPS Deputy Head Academic and Director of Admissions. The

Heads of First, Second and Third Years disseminate information to parents and at any time a pupil may be recommended for further learning support.

After every grade session and following the end-of-year examinations in the Summer term, the Academic Progress Group (comprised of the Head, the Deputy Head Academic, the appropriate Head of Year, the Head of Assessment, the Head of Learning Support and the SPS Deputy Head Academic and the Director of Admissions) meets to review the progress of all pupils at St Paul's Juniors.

Assessment data is collated and analysed according to SPJ's self-evaluation cycle, providing opportunity for the review of individual pupil, group, subject and cohort progress. The Senior Leadership Team uses this assessment information along with all other relevant information on areas of accountability to support comprehensive pupil support, support professional development initiatives and inform the strategic development of the school's development plan.

In addition to quantitative data, teacher insight, pupil self-reflection, and parent communication may be used to contextualise assessment outcomes.

7.6 Transfer to St Paul's School

Pupils at St Paul's Juniors hold a place at St Paul's School and transfer automatically at the end of Year 8 subject to good work, conduct and them being able to comfortably meet the academic standards of St Paul's School; there is no particular exam or hurdle which pupils have to pass to move from the Juniors to the Seniors. See St Paul's School Admissions Policy for further details.

If concerns about suitability for transfer arise, they are shared with parents/carers as early as possible, and a clear programme of support is agreed.

8. Setting and Forms

Pupils who enter St Paul's Juniors at 7+ (Lower First) are split into forms and pupils are largely taught in these groupings. Lower First Years transferring to the Upper First Year join new 8+ entrants in classes comprised of a mixture of 7+ entrants and 8+ pupils. Once again, pupils are mainly taught in their forms. During our pupils' time at St Paul's Juniors, we strive to broaden their educational experience and all pupils are encouraged to participate in our co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes. Rearranging form groupings regularly further broadens the attitudes and outlook of pupils.

Pupils are set in mathematics from the Lower Second Year and in French from the Lower Third Year. Setting is reviewed regularly to ensure pupils are placed correctly according to their ability. English, geography, history, science, Latin, Greek and theology and philosophy (T&P) are taught in form groups.

Pupils are split into smaller, mixed ability groups for engineering. Drama is taught in form groups until the end of the Upper Second Year and in the final two years, pupils are split into small, mixed ability groups that are rotated with engineering.

When setting occurs, it is based on multiple sources of evidence and is regularly reviewed to support both academic development and pupil confidence. Decisions are communicated sensitively and are not publicly displayed or ranked.

9. Reporting to parents/carers

At St Paul's Juniors there are three methods of communicating pupil progress to parents: grades, full written reports and parents' evenings. Parents are informed regularly of their child's progress throughout the academic year.

Pupils receive full written reports from relevant subject teachers, as well as comments from the Form Tutor and Head annually. In addition, new pupils joining the school receive a brief report at the end of the Autumn term. Reports are produced and stored using the school's information system, iSAMS and disseminated to parents via the Parent Portal.

Teachers are encouraged to write reports that are specific, balanced, and provide clear suggestions for next steps. Language should be professional, constructive, and accessible.

9.1 Autumn term

Effort grades are issued before the Autumn term remedy and parents/carers meet with form tutors to discuss the pastoral progress of pupils.

Towards the end of the Autumn term, effort and attainment grades are issued.

At the end of term, new pupils receive reports which are made available to parents via the Parent Portal. First Years receive a Form Tutor report with a comment from the Head and new pupils in the Lower Third Year receive subject reports in addition to a Form and Head's report.

9.2 Spring term

Effort and attainment grades are awarded during the term. There is a subject parents' evening for pupils in the Lower Second to Upper Third Years and a Form Tutor parents' evening in the Lower and Upper First Years. Pupils in the Upper Third Year receive a full set of written reports including a comment from the Head at the end of term.

9.3 Summer term

There are School Examinations for pupils in the Lower Second to Upper Third Years. All examination results are stored electronically in iSAMS and made available to parents via the Parent Portal, as are those grades which are issued in non-examined subjects.

A full set of written reports is made available to parents via the Parent Portal at or towards the end of term for Lower First to Lower Third Years. The Head of First Year comments on the Lower First Year and new Upper First Year pupil reports. The Head of Second Year comments on Lower Second Year reports. The Head

comments on 'old' Upper First Year and all Upper Second Year reports and the Head of Third Years comments on the Lower Third Year reports.

10. Parents'/carers' evenings

There are two designated evenings each year for parents/carers to meet with staff.

These events are intended to support collaborative dialogue between school and home. Clear guidance is provided to staff on preparing for and conducting these conversations.

10.1 Form Tutors' evenings

At the end of the first half of the Autumn term, after the award of effort grades, parents/carers have the opportunity to discuss their child's pastoral progress with Form Tutors. Subject teachers supply appropriate comments for Form Tutors to inform the discussion. To assist with a pupil's progress, parents/carers and Form Tutors need to work in partnership. Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss concerns and common problems.

10.2 Subject Teachers' evenings

In the Spring term, Lower First and Upper First Year Form Tutors meet with parents again, as they teach younger pupils for the majority of the time. In the Lower Second to Upper Third Years, there are meetings with subject teachers in the Spring or Summer terms. In these meetings, progress in particular subjects can be discussed in greater depth. Five-minute appointments are allocated, as time is limited.

If parents/carers wish to make a longer appointment, or to see any of their child's teachers at another time, they may contact the school to arrange an alternative appointment.

11. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Assessment is used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' learning support/SEND needs and any requirements for support and intervention. See the Learning Support policy for further information.

The school uses meaningful ways of measuring progress and has high expectations of all pupils, accounting for effort the pupil puts in, as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning support needs.

Assessment and reporting for pupils with SEND or EAL is designed to reflect strengths, scaffold improvement, and avoid deficit-focused language.

12. Training

Continuing professional development, through the School's Teaching & Learning CPD programme, supports teachers to be well-equipped with the latest assessment practices and methodologies. All teachers receive ongoing training and support to enhance their understanding and application of assessment practices. Responsibility for providing access to professional development opportunities on assessment lies with the Deputy Head Academic, who collaborate closely with the Head of Assessment and Heads of Departments to tailor training programs to meet specific needs and evolving educational standards. To stay informed about current best practices, the school actively seeks out research-based approaches. Additionally, through the Teaching & Learning CPD programme, St Paul's Juniors has established robust mechanisms for sharing knowledge and best practices across our teaching community, helping to ensure that all staff are equipped to implement effective assessment strategies in their classrooms.

Staff are also encouraged to reflect on the equity and inclusivity of assessment practices as part of their professional development.

13. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head Academic.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The Deputy Head Academic is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The Deputy Head Academic will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices within departments through:

- Moderation
- Lesson observations & learning walks
- Book scrutinies
- Academic progress meetings
- Review of feedback samples and assessment design

14. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to our:

- Curriculum policy
- Learning Support policy
- Teaching & Learning CPD framework
- Equal Opportunities policy

Appendix 1 – Reporting and Assessment Outline

Please see the Staff Handbook for a more detailed version of the “Grades and reports deadlines 2025-26”.

| | Lower First NC Year 3 | Upper First NC Year 4 | Lower Second NC Year 5 | Upper Second NC Year 6 | Lower Third NC Year 7 | Upper Third NC Year 8 |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Autumn | Effort Grades | | | | | |
| | CPI | | | | MidYIS | |
| | Learning Support Screening (new pupils) | | | | | |
| | Autumn Pastoral Parents’ Evenings | | | | | |
| | Autumn Grades, and New Pupil Subject & Form Tutor Reports | | | | | |
| Spring | Spring Parents’ Evenings with Form Tutors | | Spring Parents’ Evenings with Subject Teachers | | | |
| | Spring Grades and Reports | | | | | |
| Summer | Summer Assessments | | Summer Examinations | | | |
| | Optional Parents’ Evening with Form Tutors | | | | | |
| | Summer Grades and Full Report – All Subjects | | | | | |