



Woodford International School **Assessment Policy**

Mission statement:

Woodford International School is a community of learners that builds on each child's strengths, drawing from our diverse local context and a rich international curriculum, to develop globally ready learners equipped to shape their future and achieve their dreams.

The Primary School assessment policy supports this mission, seeing *assessment as a fundamental component of our curriculum, that is in continuous process and essential to learning and teaching, in which teachers gain knowledge of their students' needs, strength, achievements that allow teacher to plan and refine their teaching.*

Assessment is a continuous process, essential to learning and teaching. It is how teachers gain knowledge of their students' needs, achievements and abilities, enabling planning and delivery to be more effective.

1. The purposes of assessment

- To define students' ability: what they know, understand and can apply.
- To guide future planning, teaching and curriculum development.
- To reveal student's strengths and weaknesses.
- To diagnose learning problems.
- To communicate accurate information about the students' learning that is useful to teachers, parents, students and others in the community and/or school authorities.
- To plan learning and teaching programs for individuals, groups or classes.
- To serve as basis for reporting to parents.
- To assist a child with assessing his or her own progress.

2. Principles of assessment

At Woodford International School (WIS) we use a variety of assessment strategies and tools.

For assessment to be effective, it should allow the student to:

- Demonstrate knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills.
- Participate in reflection, self- and peer-assessment.
- Know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance.
- Share their learning and understanding with others.
- Use a variety of learning styles to express their understanding.
- Base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiry.
- Analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved.

For assessment to be effective, the teacher should:

- Make sure students are aware of the learning objectives and encourage them to evaluate their progress so that they understand the next steps they need to make.

- Evaluate students learning to identify those students with particular needs so that any issues can be addressed.
- Provide clear feedback that allows students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and set goals.
- Produce evidence that can be reported and understood by students, parents, teachers, administrators and board members.
- Incorporate formative assessment opportunities in medium and short term planning.
- Take into account the different cultures and learning styles.
- Use ongoing and regular formative assessment during teaching and learning to inform teachers and support student development.
- Use informal observations to give students feedback on their attitudes and attributes and also encourage student reflection as a way of gathering information about the learner profile.
- Use a variety of tools and strategies. Quality rather than quantity are important factors in data collection.
- Engage students in reflecting on their learning
- Develop clear assessment tools
- Keep accurate records of assessment data.

How do we involve students, teachers and parents in the assessment process?

- Parents are encouraged to make appointments with the class teachers at any time during the year to ask questions or raise concerns about their child's progress.
- At the beginning of Term one, parents are invited to come into their child's class room where they will be shown around and told about the day to day running of the class.
- Formal conferences between parents, teachers and student take place through the three way conferences held at the end of term one at all year levels.
- Single subject teachers are also available at interview times or at any time by appointment.
- Student- led conferences are held across the Primary school at the end of term 3.
- All members of the WIS community are invited to attend many events throughout the year; weekly assemblies, athletic carnival, book week, PYP exhibition and end of year concert.
- The weekly email is used to inform parents of ongoing practices and gives information on dates, times and purposes of interviews and reporting.

3. Types of assessment

- **Formative assessment** provides information that is used to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning and it helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. This helps students to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to engage in reflection, to develop the capacity for self- assessment, and to recognize 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 understanding.
- **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 takes place at the end of the teaching or learning process. It can assess several elements simultaneously: it informs and improves students learning and the teaching process. It measures understanding of the central idea and prompts students towards action.

- **The PYP Exhibition** is the ultimate summative assessment which takes place in the last year of Primary school. It is a significant event in the life of a PYP school and student: an opportunity for students to showcase their knowledge and skills and exhibit the attributes of the IB learner profile. It is also a celebration of their moving from Primary to Secondary school. Our year 5 students prepare a PYP exhibition during term four. The process involves the participation of the students, parents, year 5 teachers, single subject teachers and the PYP coordinator.

See 'Making the PYP happen' pp.44-55 for more information

- **Standardized tests are used:**
 - ✓ To assess basic skills (Literacy and Numeracy) across cohort groups on an annual basis
 - ✓ To direct school resources appropriately
 - ✓ To analyse strengths and weaknesses in basic skills
 - ✓ To inform teaching and learning regarding basic skills
 - ✓ To assess individual students at the point of entry to the school where required
 - ✓ To help students to set goals.

Portfolios

Portfolios are a collection of children's work, designed to demonstrate success, growth, higher order of 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." (Page 50 Making the PYP happen)

Portfolios will:

- Include a range of student work samples from across all subject areas.
- Include formal and informal assessment, self and peer assessments.
- Be a reflective portfolio where students discuss their learning process using labels.
- Be used as a tool for reporting purposes and looking at improvements that have been made in student's learning and strategies.
- Be used and discussed during the three way conferences and the learning journeys conferences.

(See Portfolio Guidelines)

4. Keeping of individual and progressive records

At WIS it is each teacher's responsibility to keep ongoing records of the assessment made on students they teach.

5. Individual Administration files

Each student has an individual file for ongoing records to be added. It includes information from previous schools, reports from previous years, medical records and professional evaluations.

6. Assessment strategies

Day-to-day assessment involves the teacher focusing on how learning is progressing during the lesson, determine where improvements can be made and identifying the next steps. Strategies used during the lesson to develop this are:

- Questioning e.g. asking questions to assess student's prior knowledge in order to be able to adapt the learning to their needs. Asking a range of questions from literal to high order, using thinking time and pair share.
- Observing e.g. watching children and listen to their discussions to assess their learning as it is happening, making planned observations of particular students to support their learning in the classroom.
- Discussing e.g. holding brief discussions with students to ask about misunderstandings or misconceptions, have class discussions to find out what the students have learned or group discussions.
- Analysing e.g. marking and assessing written work
- Checking students' understanding e.g. conducting recall tests, brief review checks that shows what the students have learned.
- Engaging students in reviewing progress e.g. developing self and peer assessment, review lessons during which teachers carry out feedback with individuals or groups of students in order to identify the progress that has been made.

See 'Making the PYP happen' pp.44-55 for more information

7. Reporting to parents/guardians

Reporting is the means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of the student's learning, identifies areas of growth and reflects on the values and culture of our school.

Effective reporting should:

- Involve parents, children and teachers.
- Reflect what the school community values.
- Be comprehensive, honest, fair and credible.
- Be clear and understandable to all parties.
- Show growth and progress of students learning.

At WIS we have four set reporting periods to parents. They are:

- **Three way conferences.** These are carried out at the end of term one and inform the parents about their child's progress. These conferences are led by the students with support from the teacher.
- **Written report.** These go out at the end of semester one two and semester two four and give parents information about their child's progress and outlining strengths and areas that need to be improved.
- **Learning Journey.** These are held toward the end of term 3. A Learning Journey is a conference where the student leads their parents to show what they have learned and the growth they have made throughout the school year.