ASSESSMENT & REPORTING POLICY

Rationale
St. Joseph’s Primary School believes that assessment and reporting are integral to planned approaches to teaching and learning.

St. Joseph’s Primary School achieves its educational mission by transmitting the Catholic Heritage; and making the values of the Gospel the mainspring of everyday teaching and learning. This vision is reflective of our school motto “In God We Trust” and is evident throughout this Policy.

Aims
The purpose of this policy:
- to identify and maximise student learning and achievement.
- to develop appropriate learning programmes to meet student needs.
- to enable realistic feedback to and from students, teachers and parents.
- to show accountability to CEC (Catholic Education Commission of NSW) Policy, State and Australian strategies and initiatives with regard to determining, recording and reporting student competencies.
- to identify strengths and weaknesses of programs.

Implementation
Assessment:
Assessing the full range of learning outcomes taken from the Australian Curriculum Framework, for NSW, requires a variety of assessment methods, given that achievement of different types of learning outcomes will be demonstrated in a variety of ways. The different forms of assessing students are:
- Assessment FOR Learning; so as to inform planning for future learning
- Assessment AS Learning; so as to identify specific needs and difficulties
- Assessment OF Learning; so as to record systematically student achievement.

Assessment should be ongoing and provide a cumulative record of student progress. It should assist in the diagnosis of student’s strengths and areas of need and provide students with the opportunity to participate in all settings. Assessment techniques developed should recognise individual differences and take into account Individual Learning Plans for students who are deemed ‘at risk’. Assessment should build on a student’s previous knowledge and experiences. An integral part of utilising assessment for learning is constructive and appropriate feedback to students. Ongoing Professional Development will be provided to teachers in the area of assessment.

Reporting:
Parents/guardians are also encouraged to discuss their child’s progress throughout the year at the request of the teacher or parent. Parents will be given the opportunity to attend at least two formal interviews (Mid and End of Year), after receiving the two annual written reports.

Informal and continuing reporting to parents/guardians through interviews, student diary comments and telephone conversations should be encouraged as it assists the development of a dialogue between home and school, enhancing student learning. These informal situations should be recorded in the teacher’s day program or diary and referred to school executive if required.
The reports should:
- be written or spoken in a clear and comprehensive manner, using the language of Plain English Reporting
- be positive in nature expressing strengths and areas of achievement and need for improvement.
- be confidential.
- be based on the Australian Curriculum for NSW and BOS Syllabus.
- take into account student social and behavioural development.
- be graded using the Common Grade Scale. Kindergarten will receive a modified report.
- be modified at the request of a parent who has a child with the highest level of verified funding.

**Guideline Indicators**

**Assessment:**
The following methods of assessment may be used:
- **Rubrics:** Criteria based assessment.
- **Tests and assignments:** Students’ knowledge, ability to solve problems or think logically.
  Students will participate in NAPLAN testing (Years 3 and 5) unless authorised by a parent/guardian.
- **Projects:** Students’ skills in collecting and analysing information and in writing reports.
- **Portfolios:** Students’ ability to apply their skills in a range of situations or to write for a range of audiences.
- **Performance observations:** Students’ skills in, for example, playing a musical instrument, speaking to an audience, participation in a group activity or manipulating equipment.
- **Product observations:** Students’ skills in, for example, painting, drawing or model building.
- **Student/teacher discussions:** Students’ understanding of concepts and acquisition of skills.
- **Standardised testing:** eg. TORCH Reading
- **Competence testing:** eg. Swim 50m
- **Anecdotal records:** eg. Running Records
- **Formative:** A range of ongoing assessments to inform teaching.

Teachers have the responsibility to provide relevant information to parents on the progress of their child, to develop achievable goals for the assessment of each individual child.
Standardised Assessment tasks will occur at times outlined in the School Formal Assessment Plan, with the results to be recorded in teacher’s Assessment Book and Student’s Individual Formal Assessment Record sheet. Data from these Standardised and Anecdotal tests will be used to create up to date Data Walls.

**Principles of Assessment for Learning**
Teacher’s assessments will be based on the following principles;
- teachers reflect on the purposes of assessment and on their assessment strategies
- teachers use assessment to identify what a student can already do
- assessment is embedded in learning activities or tasks and informs the planning of future learning activities or tasks
- assessment activities or tasks allow for demonstration of learning outcomes
- students understand the learning goals and the criteria that will be applied to judge the quality of their achievement
- students receive feedback that helps them make further progress
- assessment is an integral component of the teaching-learning process rather than being a separate activity or task
- feedback is directed to the achievement of the Board of Studies K-10 Curriculum Framework standards and/or the Board of Studies Literacy or Numeracy Continuums and away from comparisons with peers
- assessment against these standards and continuums provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their best and grow as a learner
- Use of the Common Grade Scale as a reporting tool is based on a consistent understanding by all teachers of the expectations of achievement for each A – E grade.
Reporting:
Consequences of this Policy being implemented are that the school has the responsibility to:

- Provide parents with written reports (Mid and End of Year) on student achievement. Reports to include the Common Grade Scale (A to E marking) for Years 1-6. Reports will be Year Level based.
- Provide parents with an opportunity for a formal interview at mid and end of year, to discuss their child’s progress.
- Be available to discuss a student’s progress with parents after the December Report is sent home.
- Review reporting practices regularly.
- Allow parents the opportunity to view anonymous comparative results within a year level, protecting a cohort of four or less.
- Record NAPLAN Test results in Student’s Individual Formal Assessment Record sheet with copies of results to be filed in Student Record Cards.
- Keep a hardcopy of all student reports.
- Initiate IEP’s (Individual Education Plan) for all students with a verified disability and meet each semester with their parents.
- BEST START Assessment will be completed by Kindergarten teacher/s at the beginning of the school year. Parents will be provided with a report from assessment and an opportunity to meet with teacher in Term 1. Learning Plans will be established for each student and will be passed onto their new grade teacher the following year as a continuation of Best Start.

DATE POLICY WRITTEN: September 2012
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