Assessment Policy

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Our Vision:

A British curriculum school, rooted in the values of the UAE, creating the leaders of tomorrow. A premium community school, empowering learners to achieve excellence and make a difference.

Our Mission: *Nurturing our Community, Empowering through Excellence*

Nurturing by including all learners, prioritising their safety and happiness and promoting their character development rooted in the national values of the UAE. Empowering by providing an exciting, enriching and ambitious learning experience where students excel by fulfilling and exceeding their academic potential.

1. **Introduction**
   1.1. Assessment lies at the heart of the process of promoting children's learning at GEMS National School Al Barsha.
   1.2. It provides a framework within which educational objectives may be set and students' progress expressed and monitored.
   1.3. This should be done in partnership with the students.
   1.4. It is a progressive process done alongside each student, enabling the teacher to collect holistic evidence (both individual and comparative).
   1.5. Assessment should therefore make children successful learners by identifying their stage of development and achievement against age related expectations.
   1.6. Assessment should be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies in order to highlight any next steps required and map progress.
   1.7. It supports the school to strengthen learning across the curriculum and helps teachers enhance their skills and judgements.

2. **Aims and Objectives**
   2.1. Using the principles and processes of assessment, we aim to monitor progress and attainment and support students' learning.
   2.2. Teachers and leaders use assessments to guide future planning, teaching and curriculum development and recognise the achievements of our students.
   2.3. Other aims of assessment include:
   - To communicate accurate information about the student, that is useful to teachers, the student, parents and other educational agencies.

- To comply with statutory requirements.
- To actively engage students in their own learning.
- To ensure early identification of students with barriers to learning and more able children.
- To create learning experiences where students excel by fulfilling and exceeding their academic potential.

3. **Strategies for Assessment**
   3.1. Teachers must be clear about what they are aiming to measure and why, in order to select the right tool to achieve our purpose.
   3.2. Teachers should consider the following:
   - The Construct: What is the specific knowledge, skill or understanding (drawn from the curriculum or framework) that we intend to assess?
   - The End Use: What do we want to do - the interpretation, the decision or action - with the information generated by the assessment process?
   - The Best Tool: What and when is the most appropriate, effective and efficient way to assess in this instance?
   3.3. Assessments enable teachers to measure and provide valuable and appropriate information to make decisions about students' learning and their next steps.
   3.4. Assessment tasks and opportunities which are standardised/consistent across a cohort and within a context.
   3.5. Assessments are administered consistently over a period or in a context to provide valuable, accurate information.
   3.6. Assessment opportunities need to be carefully planned for and impact further planning.

4. **Formative and Summative assessment at GNS**
   4.1 Our assessments allow both the student and teacher to assess what the student can do, and how he/she can use knowledge and concepts.
   4.2 They measure the application of knowledge.
   4.3 Assessments reflect student achievement against criteria for the learning objective.
   4.4 They provide students with an opportunity to analyse their own learning and to recognise what areas need improvement.
   4.5 Our assessments are informative for students, parents and teachers, providing direction for further learning.
   4.6 They provide a chance for students to take responsibility for their own work, learning and actions and reflect on these actions to improve.

5. **Summative Assessment throughout GNS**
   5.1. Summative assessments are performed each half term.
   5.2. Summative assessments measure the standards reached by students using specific criteria.
   5.3. Summative assessments are used to gauge student attainment at that moment in relation to age related expectations.
   5.4. Summative assessments are used to compare students' results from year to year within the school or to compare the school's results with those of other institutions worldwide. **See Appendix 1.**
   5.5. Our summative assessment terminology allows for consistency and alignment **See Appendices 3-5.**

6. **Formative Assessments throughout GNS**
   6.1. Formative assessment is consistent and ongoing, to guide development through teacher, self and peer assessment.
   6.2. For examples of Formative Assessments in each Phase, please see **Appendix 2**
   6.3. During Formative assessment, results should be used to alter the instructional methods to meet the students' needs and inform future planning.
   6.4. Formative assessment is not used in calculating a grade for a student. It enables the teacher and each student to know where they are in their learning and what the next steps are to further improve.

7. **Analysing assessment data to inform teaching and learning.**
    7.1. The school analyses assessment data to inform teaching and learning in numerous ways
       - in the classroom
       - at the department level
       - school wide level.
    7.2. Teachers collect and analyse information on how well students are achieving, so that the effectiveness of teaching and learning can be evaluated.

8. **Student Tracking and Target Setting**
    8.1. End of year expectations are set for all our students at the start of the academic year.
    8.2. FS Attainment Targets: All students in FS have the target of achieving ELG in all 17 areas. Students are tracked throughout FS1 and FS2. See Appendix 3.
    8.3. Primary Attainment Targets: These targets are informed through baseline assessments, previous end of year grade and CAT 4 Data. See Appendix 4.
    8.4. Secondary Attainment Targets: These targets are informed through baseline assessments, previous end of year grade and CAT 4 Data. See Appendix 5.
    8.5. Post-16 Attainment Targets: These targets are based on attainment in formal GCSE assessments.
    8.6. Students progress through yearly expectations by gaining a greater depth of understanding of each objective / grade point.
    8.7. As students move through their education, it is expected that they will progress through expectations to a similar depth in subsequent years.
    8.8. Progress is measured from students' Current Working Grade compared to their target. The target gives expected GCSE and A Level achievement grades.
    8.9. Three progress descriptors are used to report progress:
       - Making more than expected progress
       - Making expected progress
       - Making less than expected progress.
    8.10. In the absence of EOY data for new joiners, CAT4 and internal assessments are completed during the students' induction to provide data for target-setting.
    8.11. Progress at our school is primarily measured against End of Year (EOY) grades, emphasizing students' ability to maintain or exceed their grades in more challenging year curricula, securing expected progress if the grade is maintained or better-than-expected progress if they secure an attainment judgment 1 or more grades above the previous year.
    8.12. In recognition of the broader perspective and the importance of triangulation, the school also evaluates progress against personal targets (see 8.1-8.5), integrating this data into termly reports and Professional Development meetings to support teachers in raising progress consistently year on year.

9. **Moderation**
    9.1. The process of moderation is an essential part of the assessment system.
    9.2. Teachers are involved in the moderation process to ensure agreement on criteria for levels with colleagues in the school and with colleagues from other schools within the cluster.
    9.3. Teachers attend moderation training sessions to ensure their judgements are in line with other schools and external materials.
    9.4. Moderation of summative assessments takes place termly.

10. **International Benchmarks**
    10.1. GNS uses information on local and international benchmarks as part of its data analysis.

10.2. Data on performance benchmarks is used to assess annual performance on the part of GNS students and set performance targets for the school. The data also enables the school to identify performance trends and is used to inform the planning and delivery of courses.

11. Marking and Feedback

11.1. Regular and focused feedback to students about where they are in their learning is crucial to successful learning and teaching.

11.2. All marking needs to be accompanied by feedback suggesting appropriate means to improve.

11.3. The school provides students with regular oral and written feedback to inform and improve their learning across all Year groups.

11.4. Teachers are expected to look for evidence of what students know and understand.

11.5. For further details, please see the school's Marking and Feedback Policy.

12. Reporting

12.1. The school regularly updates parents on the progress of students.

12.2. There are three reports sent home to parents during the academic year.

12.3. In most cases, these are progress reports with a summary of the key data for each subject each term.

12.4. We include an annual written report that includes key data, plus additional comments including strengths and areas of improvement for each subject and a pastoral comment.

12.5. Upon request, parents are also sent a CAT4 report, which is personalised and individual for each student.

12.6. Parents are invited to a minimum of 3 Parent Teacher Consultations throughout the year. Reporting on progress data and attitude to learning forms an integral part of these.

13. Special provision/accommodations in the conditions of assessment

13.1. All students are entitled to show their knowledge, understanding, and skills in response to assessments.

13.2. Accordingly, schools and teachers support all students to participate in assessment and demonstrate the full extent and depth of their learning.

13.3. Special provisions in the conditions of assessment reflect differentiation, or adjustments, made in teaching and learning.

13.4. Special provisions are not adjustments to the standard on which student work is judged. They do not involve compensating for what the student does not know or cannot do.

13.5. Special provisions in the conditions of assessment are applied consistently across the school and depending on individual student needs.

14. Types of special provision, modifications and accommodations

14.1. Special provisions in assessment are made through the way the assessment is presented, the way students are allowed to respond, the physical conditions, and/or the time allocated for the assessment tasks.

14.2. Special provisions in the conditions of assessment may include:

- Modification: minimising the assessment study content, minimising the number of questions, reducing the complexity of some questions, changing the font, changing the word size or changing the type of the questions.
- Presentation: changing how an assessment appears or is communicated to a student from the regular format. For example, being read to the student except if reading itself is what is being assessed.
- Response: allowing students to complete assessments in diverse ways such as using computer software or an assistive device to solve and organise problems when this does not compromise what is specifically being assessed.
- Setting: changing location including the physical or social conditions in which the assessment is completed.
- Timing: allowing the student a longer time to complete the assessment or changing the way the time is organised or when the assessment is scheduled.

15. Students who are considered for special provision/accommodations

15.1. Any student who has a special educational need may be considered for special provision. The Inclusion Department provides a specific list of the accommodations and/or modifications required for students in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

15.2. This includes students:

- Who are diagnosed and documented to have learning disability such as those of a sensory, motor or neurological nature.
- Who have educational needs arising primarily from socio-economic, linguistic or cultural factors.
- For whom English is a Second Language.
- With short-term impairments such as fractured limbs.
- With life circumstances that impact on equitable assessment, e.g. death of a relative or unavoidable travel plans.

15.3 **EAL Students:**

- All EAL students are assessed in line with National Curriculum levels using whole school assessment procedures.
- All EAL students undergo an additional assessment in line with The Bell Foundation International EAL Assessment Framework. This is broken down into FS, Primary and Secondary and therefore allows a consistent shared language of EAL Bands as the student progresses across the phases.
- Following the initial assessment, if an EAL need is identified, students will be assessed regularly with the tracker updated termly. Support strategies will be identified and recorded here also.
- EAL students in Phase 2 will be given support in writing assessments by reading and extra time when required.
- Formative assessment of EAL students tracking their progress through the phases of language learning is maintained until the student reaches age-appropriate language levels.
- It is acknowledged that children make progress in acquiring English as an additional language in different ways and at different rates.
- Assessments should be carried out wherever possible in a situation which is familiar to the learner.
- Teachers should use their professional judgment regarding the assessment procedure and should ensure that the assessment does not cause distress or discomfort to the learner.
- Assessment of EAL needs is necessary to ensure that these needs are adequately and rapidly met, and students are not misdiagnosed as having low cognitive needs.

Appendix 1: Summative Assessment throughout GNS

Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post 16
Termly Teacher Assessments	PTE/PTM/PTS	PTE/PTM/PTS	PTE/PTM/PTS
	NGRT	NGRT	PIRLS/TIMSS/PISA
	PIRLS/TIMSS/PISA	PIRLS/TIMSS/PISA	CAT4
	CAT4	CAT4	Internal End of Unit Assessments
	Internal End of Unit Assessments	Internal End of Unit Assessments	IAS / IAL Exams
	Target Tracker Baseline	IGCSE Exams	EmSAT
	Termly Teacher Assessments		BTECs

Appendix 2: Formative Assessment throughout GNS

Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post 16
Target Tracker Observations	Self-Assessment	Self-Assessment	Self-Assessment
Big Write	Peer Assessment	Peer Assessment	Peer Assessment
Questioning Strategies	Questioning Strategies	Questioning Strategies	Questioning Strategies
Exit Questions	Marking and Feedback	Marking and Feedback	Marking and Feedback
	Exit Questions and Think Pinks	Key Piece of Work	Key Piece of Work

Appendix 3: Foundation Stage Attainment Judgements

Good Level of Development	FS Attainment Judgements	FS Attainment Descriptors
Emerging	WT 3	Working towards core objectives with additional support
	WT 2	Working towards core objectives with support
	WT 1	Achieving many core objectives with support
Expected	EXP 3	Achieving some core objectives independently
	EXP 2	Achieving core objectives independently
	EXP 1	Achieving almost all core objective independently

Appendix 4: Primary Attainment Judgments

Stanine	Primary Attainment Judgement	Primary Attainment Descriptor
1	WT 3	Working towards core objectives with additional support
2	WT 2	Working towards core objectives with support
3	WT 1	Achieving many core objectives with support
4	EXP 3	Achieving some core objectives independently
5	EXP 2	Achieving core objectives independently
6	EXP 1	Achieving almost all core objective independently
7	EXC 3	Achieving all the core objectives and some exceeding objectives independently
8	EXC 2	
9	EXC 1	

Appendix 5: Secondary Attainment Judgements

Year Group	Working Towards	Expected	Exceeding
7-11	Grade 1-3	Grade 4-5	Grade 6-9
12-13	Grade E-D	Grade C	Grade B-A*