Assessment Policy

Rationale:
At St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, the approaches to learning and teaching are based on the view that all students are capable of learning, that learning should take place in inclusive classrooms where the central purposes of learning and teaching strategies are to encourage students to be effective learners, to empower students to value their own learning and to pursue personal excellence. Assessment is an integral part of this learning cycle at St Joseph’s and is given direction through the Contemporary Learning Framework. Students’ achievement of the syllabus outcomes is the goal of planning, programming and assessing.

Teachers at St Joseph’s use assessment experiences to:
- clarify student understanding of concepts
- plan how to remedy misconceptions and support critical thinking
- collect data to analyse and direct their planning for individuals and groups
- provide rich feedback to all students from the data collected to identify strengths, areas for improvement and guide learning and teaching goals for both teachers and students
- encourage students to actively monitor and evaluate their own learning using self and peer assessment strategies – empower the learner
- record aspects of students’ performance
- make judgments about where a student is placed against levels of achievement.

What assessment means
Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students’ learning. The purpose is to provide information and rich feedback on students’ achievement and progress and to set directions and goals for subsequent learning and teaching.

Assessment ‘for’ Learning
Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students’ learning. The central purpose of assessment is to provide information on student achievement and progress and set the direction for ongoing learning and teaching. Typically, this process is referred to as ‘assessment for learning’ and is designed to enhance teaching and ultimately improve learning outcomes.

Assessment for learning at St Joseph’s:
- is purposeful, meaningful and relevant
- multimodal
- critically engaging
- is an essential and integrated part of learning and teaching
- reflects a belief that all students can learn and improve
- involves providing rich feedback that leads to setting SMART learning goals with all students
- helps students know and recognise their strengths, areas needing attention and standards they are aiming for
- involves students in self-assessment and peer assessment
- involves reflecting on assessment data by teachers, students and parents that lead to meaningful and relevant learning experiences
Assessment ‘of’ Learning
The process of communicating information about student achievement and progress gained from the assessment process is typically referred to as ‘assessment of learning’. Teachers use the information gathered from ‘assessment for learning’ to summarise student achievement. This is completed in written semester 1 and 2 reports to parents.

Diocese of Lismore Curriculum Guidelines K-6
These guidelines are located on the CSO Intranet and in our workroom. The guidelines highlight best practice in programing and assessment. Teachers are required to refer and adhere to these guidelines.

St Joseph’s Assessment and Reporting
Assessment and reporting at St Joseph’s is produced and communicated in the following ways:

Assessment

Formative assessment
Formative assessment drives the learning and teaching cycle at St Joseph’s. Teachers provide rich feedback to assist students learn from their experiences with the aim to improve student learning. Students are very aware of the success criteria and what they need to do to achieve it.
In Professional Learning Teams, teachers examine information derived from both formative and summative assessment to guide planning for individuals and groups.

Whole School Tracking
The student assessment overview cards are to be completed throughout the year and stored in the student record cards by the class teacher. Updated reading levels, standardised test results; Blake Reading (K-2) PAT Comprehension 3-6, Astronaut Spelling K-2, PAT Spelling 3-6, PAT Maths 2-6, and NAPLAN are to be recorded.

NAPLAN
NAPLAN assessments are conducted in May each year for our year 3 and 5 students. These results are kept in the student record card. The results from NAPLAN will be examined to determine strengths and weakness and guide our planning by utilising the SMART data.

Student Goals
Students along with their teacher and parent construct personal SMART goals based on syllabus outcomes that allow them to plan, track, assess individual goals and provide constructive feedback.

Best Start
All Kindergarten students at St Joseph’s will undertake the Best Start Assessment at the beginning of their schooling year. The students Kindergarten teacher will facilitate the assessment with them. This assessment then provides valuable information in learning and teaching for each student. At the end of Kindergarten the Early Learning Continuums are digitally updated and available for the year one teacher.

Reading Levels
Student reading levels are to be tested regularly and recorded on the student assessment cards. It is important to ensure student comprehension levels match their fluency levels when recording their results.

Syllabus Requirements
Common Assessment Tasks across the Stage is planned for in Mathematics and English each Semester and copies of these assessment tasks are located in teacher programs. PLTs plan for and examine assessment results.
Learning Support
Learning support staff meetings are held once a term. Students are discussed in relation to their achievements, goals, areas of concern, guidance, support etc. Our Additional Needs Teacher leads these meetings.
If a teacher has concerns regarding a student then a meeting will be arranged with the ANT, principal and teacher to identify concerns and examine possible areas of support for the student.
IEP meetings are conducted with the regional ANT, school ANT, principal, teacher and parents of the student.

RE Test
The Diocesan Religious Education test is conducted for Year 6 students each year.

Reporting
Reporting is the process of communicating information about student achievement and progress gained from the assessment process. The purpose of reporting in all its forms (formal and informal) is to support teaching and learning by providing feedback to students, parents and teachers.

Students' learning achievements and progress are also available to other schools. This information about students' achievements is valuable for school and system wide planning and reporting. Further information can be found in the diocesan guidelines on Plain English Reporting.

School reports are issued each semester. Government regulations require reporting of student achievement in each Key Learning Area using an A – E grading scale with the exception of Kindergarten. Students on IEP's will be exempt from this grading process unless a parent or guardian makes a request.

Teachers are to use common assessment tasks across the grade to ensure objectivity in their reporting. When the quality of a student’s achievement has been rated, teachers must ensure they have work samples to substantiate their judgement.

Teachers will hand electronic versions and cohort spread sheets to the Principal before finalisation of Semester Reports. Discussion of the spread of A – E rankings across the cohort of students may need to take place with the Principal.

Teacher, Parent and student conferences are offered at the end of Semester 1 and 2 after reports have been handed out. Students are encouraged to lead these conferences depending on their age and confidence. Student work samples and goals are reviewed and from this new goals are set.

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