



Caistor Grammar School: philosophy for assessment.

Caistor Grammar School works on the principles that assessment must be meaningful and proportionate. Assessment can take two forms: summative and formative. Summative assessment identifies what a student has achieved. Formative assessment informs a teacher's planning, and identifies the next steps for students. It tells teachers what students know and can do, and what they do not yet know and cannot yet do.

Assessment data can provide staff with information about the pace of future learning and about the order in which learning is sequenced, as well as the appropriate level of task difficulty. One of the most important factors influencing progress is what the learner already knows. Effective teaching ascertains this, either through formal means such as our baselines, or through more informal means in everyday lesson tasks and assessment. Teachers also identify and address any misconceptions encountered.

Our assessment philosophy encompasses five main strands:

1. *Successful assessment requires identifying learning intentions and criteria for success.*

If students do not know what they are supposed to be learning and how their work will be judged- what a successful outcome will look like- then their ability to learn and make progress will be hampered. We establish with students where they are, where they are going and how they can get there. Students are taught what they are trying to achieve and should be able to articulate this.

2. *Effective assessment requires effective questioning.*

Closed questions can be a great way to provide information about learning and progress. Students' ability to understand the next concept being taught is contingent on them having understood the last. Teachers therefore assess mastery before moving on. This could be through a range of means, including multiple-choice questions, shows of hands, whiteboards, engagement with students on an individual basis around the class, or traffic light cards. These can all help to unearth misconceptions, and let the teacher know if the class is ready to move on to the next topic.

3. *Feedback is only valuable if it moves students forwards.*

Feedback can be written or verbal (which is usually more time-efficient), and can come from teachers or peers. At Caistor Grammar school, one piece of work needs to receive written feedback per half-term. Other feedback can take any form as determined by the teacher. As well as an Attainment and an Attitude to Learning grade, the written feedback should focus on how the student can improve. We ask students questions to consider their work as a valuable form of feedback, for instance starting with a line like: '*have you thought about...*'. Crucially, the quality of feedback is revealed in students' subsequent improvements, which we monitor. We do not require or endorse 'tick and flick' marking.

4. *Peer- and self-assessment can be valuable and time-efficient strategies.*

Students can be a valuable instructional resource for each other. Peer assessment can be a helpful way of developing this. When students analyse the work of others, they have access to a variety of examples that can help them better see gradations in quality. It encourages collaboration and reflection, enables students to see their progress and how they can improve. Students can also self-assess at the end of a unit of work, or in the middle of it. For example, students can reflect using questions like: *what have we found out?; what remains unanswered?* A lesson can be started by asking students the most burning questions they have on a particular topic. At the end, they might reflect on how far their questions were addressed.

5. *Assessment can be used to make students the owners of their own learning.*

When students are taught to take a more active role in monitoring and regulating their learning, the pace of their progress can increase. Students can use assessment to develop a self-profile of their

strengths and weaknesses as learners, whereby they address how they learn best, what strategies work for them, what kind of learning is most difficult, and what they need to improve upon. These metacognitive strategies can help students to move on in their understanding.

Acknowledgements: Caistor Grammar School's philosophy for assessment draws heavily on the work of Dylan Wiliam and Matt Bromley. For further reading, see 'Effective assessment: strategies for the classroom', www.sec-ed.co.uk April 2020. We have also drawn on the EEF's 'Teacher feedback to improve student learning', and 'What might the content of effective feedback look like in the classroom'.