



*Open hearts • Inquiring minds*

**POLICY TITLE:**            **Assessment and Reporting**

**PUBLISHED:**            **January 2021**

## **1. School Context**

Opened in 1960, Red Hill caters to a diverse student clientele in the inner south of Canberra, drawing families from our local community as well as diplomatic, government, defence force, university and other backgrounds. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, Red Hill provides an inclusive, international education for students in preschool to year 6.

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) world school we aim to help prepare children and young people for high school and life and create partnerships with parents and the community that assist students to be active, compassionate, lifelong learners and internationally minded global citizens.

We aim to create a positive inquiry-based learning culture that encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning (at school and at home), meets the needs of all learners and is driven by evidence-based practice.

## **2. Beliefs that support and underpin our Assessment and Reporting Policy**

At Red Hill School we believe that assessment must provide all learners with the capacity to demonstrate what they know, understand, value and can do. We also believe that appropriate assessment and reporting practices should communicate positive expectations, acknowledge and celebrate success, inspire confidence and empower all members of a learning community to contribute to the learning process and student growth.

It is the purpose of this policy to therefore ensure that student learning outcomes at Red Hill School are improved by assessment and reporting practices which:

- are consistently integral to the teaching and learning process
- are based on valid, reliable and fair assessments
- are varied, informed and ongoing
- are inclusive
- address academic and non-academic domains of learning
- are specific
- are authentic
- encourage students to participate in and take responsibility for their learning
- provide constructive and timely feedback to students, parents and educators, and
- comply with the requirements of the student, the school, the Education Directorate (EDU) , local and federal governments, and the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program.

We acknowledge the four dimensions of assessment and reporting: monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting on learning.

### 3. Assessment

#### 3.1 The Rationale

The primary purpose of assessment is to inform learning and teaching, identifying what students know, understand, value<sup>1</sup> and can do. Effective assessment involves the ongoing process of collecting and analysing information about student learning to inform teaching practice and provide *feedback* and *feedforward* on the learning process.

#### 3.2 What Makes Effective Assessment?

Effective assessment is “both backward and forward looking”, providing feedback on students’ progress and “feeding forward to next steps in learning” (IB, 2018, p.67).

We believe that for assessment to be effective the school must foster a culture that develops stakeholder capability and active student engagement in the assessment and reflection process.

#### 3.3 Assessment capability

All members of the learning community (students, parents and teachers) can contribute powerfully to learning and teaching if they have a shared understanding and language to monitor, document and measure learning. Assessment capable stakeholders in the learning community understand what is being taught and assessed, why and how.

Assessment capable teachers understand the purpose of assessment and work collaboratively to design and moderate assessment tasks and tools. They use data and evidence to inform the next steps in teaching and learning and share this with students, parents and colleagues. They fully understand the three assessment practices - for learning, as learning and of learning- and use each appropriately.

Assessment capable teachers also support students and parents to be assessment capable by making learning visible. Teachers at Red Hill will therefore:

- set clear, explicit learning intentions and specific, measurable quality success criteria
- involve students in assessment processes, including the co-construction of success criteria and self- and peer-assessment, and
- model and provide plentiful opportunities for students to develop metacognitive skills, using assessment data and evidence to reflect on progress and set and revisit personal learning goals.

#### 3.4 Assessment for learning (formative)

Assessment for learning begins with determining students’ prior knowledge, understanding and skills in order to plan learning experiences. It continues throughout the learning process, enabling ongoing monitoring, documenting and measuring of learning that informs future teaching and fosters learning growth. Assessment for learning is informal, contextual, involves teachers and students and features qualitative and quantitative data. We believe it should also include common formative assessment tasks (Love, 2011) that are collaboratively designed and moderated to promote constructive professional dialogue and shared understanding of “what quality and success looks like for diverse learners” (IBO, 2018, p. 77).

#### 3.5 Assessment as learning (formative)

Assessment as learning is also part of the formative assessment process, continuing throughout learning and involving students and teachers. In assessment as learning students become “active agents” (IBO, 2018b, p.82). They learn to use assessment evidence to monitor and reflect on their own learning and plan the next steps towards their personal goals. Immersed in the right assessment culture, students can become powerful learners with a sense of self-efficacy, who take ownership of their own learning and independently use feedback from teachers, peers and parents to practice and improve.

Both assessment for learning and assessment as learning are “iterative and interactive” (IBO, 2018, p.82)

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<sup>1</sup> Which learner profile attributes, attitudes and values are learners showing strength in? Which are areas for development?

### 3.6 Assessment of learning (summative)

Summative assessment is used towards and at the end of instruction to report on learning progress and typically involves tests and limited student involvement. It provides all stakeholders with an opportunity to measure achievement at a point in time. At Red Hill School we restrict the use of summative assessment such as standardised tests and foster effective learning opportunities through increased use of assessment for and as learning. We also use assessment tools and strategies which search for both surface knowledge and deep understanding rather than simply for superficial recall of information. Taxonomies such as Bloom's<sup>2</sup> and SOLO<sup>3</sup> are used to design learning experiences and assessment tools that promote the acquisition of knowledge and deep thinking.

### 3.7 Assessment as a meaningful experience

We believe that learning is most effective when it is embedded in meaningful and purposeful experiences and that assessment should be contextual. As such assessment should be authentic and central to learning and learners should be very clear about what they are learning, why they are learning it, what is to be assessed and how.

### 3.8 Assessment Strategies and Tools at Red Hill School

Our focus is on the dimensions of monitoring and documenting learning because these make an immediate difference for the learner, providing opportunities for feedback that simultaneously celebrate success and move learning forward. However, we acknowledge the part that standardised achievement testing can play in providing a comprehensive picture of student learning and the effectiveness of curriculum delivery.

Teachers will use a range of assessment strategies and tools that facilitate ongoing assessment for, as and of student learning. We also believe that assessment must respect and recognise the diversity of our learners, be inclusive of this diversity and seek equitable outcomes for all learners. Therefore, teachers will consistently vary assessment strategies and tools to accommodate all students' learning styles, needs and cultural backgrounds, and include formal and informal tasks.

Teachers at Red Hill School will make assessment and learning expectations clear to students and parents, and treat assessment as integral to the planning, teaching and learning process, by:

- using the "backwards design" approach (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005) whereby the desired knowledge, skills and understandings are first identified, then the assessment is designed and finally the learning experiences are planned
- using "forward by design" to consider the development of approaches to learning and the learner profile
- clarifying the learning intentions and success criteria for all learning tasks
- valuing the learning process as much as the learning outcomes
- selecting authentic, relevant assessment tasks, and
- adhering to the school's agreed assessment schedule.

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<sup>2</sup> Bloom's Taxonomy provides a hierarchy of levels that focus on higher order thinking. It provides a framework for designing performance tasks, crafting questions for conferring with students, and providing feedback on student work.

<sup>3</sup> The SOLO Taxonomy (**structure of observed learning outcomes**) provides a simple model for three levels of understanding – surface deep and conceptual (Biggs and Collis, 1982).

MONITORING LEARNING	DOCUMENTING LEARNING
Open-ended tasks Performance assessments Authentic, rich tasks Process-focused assessments Observations (formal and informal) Oral presentations Peer assessment Self-assessment Directed and open-ended questioning Pair and small group discussion Exit cards Bus stop strategy Concept maps Interviews (e.g. First Steps reading/writing) Peer/teacher conferences	Learning logs/journals Individual portfolios of annotated work samples Rubrics Capacity matrices Anecdotal records of observations Checklists Inventories (BEE Spelling) Exemplars Conferencing notes Learning books
MEASURING LEARNING	REPORTING LEARNING
Paper and pencil tests (class) Standardised testing (e.g. PAT, NAPLAN) Benchmark assessment (e.g. SENA, running records of oral reading)	Literacy and Numeracy Progressions Reports Parent/student/teacher conferences

The following system assessment tools will also be used annually:

- Literacy and Numeracy testing (NAPLAN) for years 3 and 5
- BASE for kindergarten
- EAL/D moderation assessment tasks to determine language proficiency ratings for EAL/D students P-6
- Progressive Achievement Testing (ACER) for years 1-6 in spelling, reading, mathematics and general ability
- Progressive Achievement Testing (ACER) for years 4-6 in writing
- Social-emotional wellbeing survey for years 2-6 (ACER)

Students also have the opportunity to participate in alternative programs and assessment tasks: the UNSW and Australian Mathematics Trust (AMT) competitions for writing, English, mathematics, science and computing skills; Tournament of Minds; the AMT Maths Challenge, the ACT Science Fair and Rostrum.

**All year 6 students will participate in a culminating learning experience, the PYP Exhibition.**

This requires that students engage collaboratively in student initiated and student designed inquiry. It is a transdisciplinary inquiry conducted in the spirit of personal and shared responsibility, as well as an opportunity for students to synthesise and apply their learning. The Exhibition is also an authentic opportunity for students to monitor, document and present their own learning. Students set their own learning goals and success criteria and adjust their inquiries in response to self-assessment.

## 4. Reporting

### 4.1 The Rationale

Reporting is the communication to all stakeholders about the assessment and monitoring of learning outcomes. The primary purpose of reporting is to improve and support learning, enabling stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to student learning in a mutually respectful, informed partnership.

### 4.2 The Requirements of Effective Reporting

Reporting needs to be clear, transparent and understood by all stakeholders.

Students should receive positive, specific and constructive *feedback* and *feedforward* that helps them to reflect on their progress, set future learning goals and take steps to achieve these goals. Peer feedback contributes to the reporting process, increasing students' assessment capability, and should be modelled by teachers.

Parents should receive accurate and timely information that helps them to understand their child's progress and the learning goals that their child is working towards so that they can contribute to their child's growth as a learner. Schools will provide information to parents about accessing translation or interpreter support to read their child's report as required.

Therefore, reporting at Red Hill School will be:

- frequent and meaningful/relevant
- timely, specific and well-considered
- provide a comprehensive, informed statement of what the student has learnt and still needs to learn, in both the academic and non-academic curriculum
- utilise varied and inclusive strategies, to suit the needs of all children
- be easily understood by the intended audience, and
- promote positive dialogue and collaboration amongst all stake holders.

### 4.3 Reporting Strategies at Red Hill School

- **"Getting to Know You" Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are sent to parents in the first three weeks of the school year to initiate an effective learning partnership between student, teacher and parents/carers. In these questionnaires parents and carers are invited to share their knowledge of their children with the classroom teachers.

- **Three-way conferences**

At the end of term one, parents and carers are invited to a three-way conference with the student and classroom teacher. The interview commences with a student led conference in which the student shares some of their learning with their parents/carers. During the second part of the interview the teacher provides feedback on the student's progress and suggests some next steps for learning. The teacher, student and parents collaboratively set personal learning goals for the student and discuss how each party can support the achievement of these goals. The teacher is an integral part of the process and makes a record of the interview, which is given to parent/s.

- **Learning Journey**

Learning journeys are an opportunity for students to share a balance of student and teacher selected learning experiences with their parents/carers. With teacher guidance students are supported to reflect on and articulate their own learning.

The requirements of effective learning journeys:

- The teacher and students negotiate the content e.g. displays, charts, poems, big books, equipment, work samples, maths games.
- The class evaluates activities and what was learnt during them.
- The teacher and students plan, develop and rehearse the Learning Journey in a carefully scaffolded manner.
- At the appropriate time students present their family with evidence of and reflection on their learning.
- The student's family is invited to give positive and constructive feedback.

The learning journey focuses on the processes and work completed by students in their program of inquiry and will include:

- literacy and numeracy experiences
- unit of inquiry investigations
- developmental play-based activities
- achievement of student goals
- presentations using learning technologies and/or the arts e.g. power point, reader's theatre

- **Student Portfolios**

A portfolio is a systematic, annotated collection of work and provides a picture of students' progress and development across the curriculum over a period of time. It should reflect learning intentions, success criteria and students' progress towards personal learning goals. The online digital platform, SeeSaw, is the repository for student portfolios at Red Hill School.

- **Learning Books**

These contain work directly related to students' learning in the transdisciplinary program of inquiry. They can be viewed throughout the school year e.g. at 'three-way conferences'. Completed 'learning books' are sent home at least three times per year.

- **Written Reports**

All students will receive a written report at the end of each semester, which addresses:

- approaches to learning and community
- strengths and areas for development in literacy and numeracy and other learning areas
- any additional wellbeing concerns
- what the school and parents/carers can do to support the student.

For students with special needs who have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), the report will also describe progress against the agreed goals stated in the plan. Parents and carers will be invited to two ILP meetings during the school year (early term 2 and late term 4) to review the plan.

In accordance with the Australian Government requirements, parent/s of students in Years 1-10 will also receive two additional reports at the end of each semester. Student achievement will be reported for each learning area or unit studied, using A-E grades.

In addition to an A-E grade, the number of students in each year group (in each learning area/unit studied) attaining each of the A-E grades will be reported. Parents can withdraw their child from A-E reporting by requesting so in writing.

#### 4.4 Reporting for children with special needs.

The progress of students, who have been identified as having special needs, is reported on with specific reference to their ILP goals.

##### Term 2

In early term two, an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) meeting will be held for each child. The child’s parents and teachers, an executive teacher, and relevant consultants or other stakeholders are invited to attend this meeting. Following this meeting, the child’s teacher will formalise the goals on the ILP form and distribute copies to all parties. Student progress is discussed and reviewed collaboratively throughout the year and the ILP is modified if necessary. (See *Individual Learning Plans-ACT Guidelines*)

##### Term 4

At the end of term four an ILP review meeting will be held and a new ILP will be written for the following school year. Copies of the updated ILP will be forwarded to the parents and next classroom teacher, and also saved on the Sentral database and student file. For some students an appraisal meeting will also need to be held. A departmental representative will chair the meeting and the school psychologist will also be invited. (See Student Centred Appraisal of Need Information)

Students who satisfy the EAL/D or intellectual disability criteria may be exempt from A-E reporting. Where students meet the exemption criteria for A-E reporting, schools will provide parents with:

- an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progression Report or
- a report against a student’s Individual Learning Plan.

Students with significant learning difficulties or disability may be given personalised “P” reports which grade the students’ achievement against their individual learning plan goals and the relevant Australian Curriculum achievement standards.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING TIMELINE	
TERM 1	Information Night (February)  Three-way conferences (April)  BASE testing for kindergarten students (March)
TERM 2	NAPLAN testing for Year 3 and Year 5 students (May)  A-E Semester 1 report for Years 1-6 (June/July)  Semester 1 written report for Years P-6 (June/July)  Optional parent/teacher interviews  EAL/D moderation assessment tasks for selected EAL/D students K-6 (June-July)
TERM 4	The achievement of goals in personalised learning plans is evaluated.  PAT assessments for years 1-6 (October)  End of year BASE testing for kindergarten students (October)  Individual NAPLAN and BASE reports are sent home to parents/carers (December)

	<p>A-E Semester 2 report for Years 1-6 (December)</p> <p>End of Semester 2 written report for Years P-6 (December)</p> <p>Optional parent/teacher interviews</p>
Ongoing	<p>Learning books go home at the culmination of units of inquiry/when appropriate.</p> <p>Student work is uploaded to SeeSaw digital portfolios.</p> <p>Personal learning goals are set and reflected on.</p> <p>Formative assessment</p>

#### 4.5 Glossary

*A-E grades* is the five-point scale used for reporting student achievement against the achievement standards in each learning area/subject, and relative to the student's peer group.

- A- demonstrated **outstanding** achievement of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected
- B- demonstrated **high** achievement of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected
- C- demonstrated **sound** achievement of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected
- D- demonstrated **partial** achievement of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected
- E- demonstrated **limited** achievement of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected

For Kindergarten the five-point scale descriptors are used without grades.

**Professional Judgments** are judgments made by educators to determine:

- the progress a student has made over a relevant period of time e.g. a term, semester, year
- how well a student is progressing in relation to what is expected at that year level, in terms of national and school benchmarks
- how well a student is progressing in relation to their personal learning goals
- what the student, teacher, and parents need to do to improve the student's learning.

These judgments are based on professional experience, agreed benchmarks, the Australian Curriculum, the *Early Years Learning Framework*, *IB PYP scope and sequence documents* and professional reading. They inform reporting processes.

**Special Needs** includes the needs of students with intellectual or physical disabilities, of students who are identified as gifted or talented in a particular area, and of students from linguistically and culturally different backgrounds.

#### 4.6 Appendices:

#### 4.7 References:

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