



Prep School Assessment and Homework Policy 2024-2025

This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by Head of Prep

Date of review 12.12.24

Date of next review 01.09.25



Prep School Assessment Policy 2024-2025

Introduction

At Runnymede, we believe in fostering a holistic approach to education, where student growth and development are measured through a range of assessment methods. We are committed to providing a rigorous and comprehensive assessment systems for all students. Our assessments are used to support and inform teaching and learning and are always conducted through a systematic whole-school approach. From Year 4 to Year 8, we conduct regular assessments and give our pupils regular feedback (verbal and written). The information we gather allows us to base our teaching on detailed knowledge of each pupil. We give parents/guardians regular updates on their child's attainment and progress so that we can work together and support pupils in their learning.

Across the pupils' journey through the School, we use a variety of methods to assess their learning, appropriate for their age and stage. These assessments, in whatever form, support teachers to identify next steps for students. Additionally, they prepare students for the types of assessments and experiences they will encounter as they undertake examinations in senior school. Some assessment methods will be ongoing, such as day-to-day teacher assessment and end of topic tests which take place within curriculum lessons. Some examinations are more formal. In Years 4-8, pupils are taught to assess their own work and that of others. Pupils assess work against clear success criteria and deliver feedback in a supportive and encouraging manner. Self and peer assessment can help pupils to develop their understanding of learning objectives and success criteria. Pupils self and peer assess verbally and in contrasting pen in exercise books.

Aims and Objectives

The aims are:

- To track pupils' progress, set targets for improvements and tailor learning,
- To provide regular information for parents/guardians that enables them to support their child's education;
- To provide the Senior Leadership team with an awareness of the progress made across the school.

Runnymede's assessment philosophy is rooted in the belief that every student is unique and should be assessed in a manner that acknowledges their individual strength and weaknesses, so they can be supported as best they can. We prioritise the use of varied assessment methods that align with our education goals and promote a deep understanding of subject matter, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and other essential skills.

Planning for Assessment

Assessments are scheduled throughout the academic year to provide a comprehensive view of each student's progress. We emphasise the importance of balance of assessment, and aim to ensure they are spread out across the year to ensure pupils do not feel overwhelmed. Furthermore, we take a unified approach to assessment. Prep School assessments take place at similar times through the academic year, so data can be recorded and reviewed as a whole school, giving us better insight to trends and patterns. This helps us plan for the future to best support learners.



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We plan our lessons with clear learning challenges and success criteria. We base these upon our detailed knowledge of each pupil. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. Our lesson plans/resources make clear the expected outcomes for each lesson. This then fits in clearly with our assessments.

Assessment

We use various assessment techniques in the classroom to ensure the constant monitoring of learning progress for every pupil. Informal assessments happen throughout the year sporadically, and formal assessments from PIRA, PUMA, GAPS, AMT, ART and CAT4 assessments provide standardised age scores and enable us to track each pupil and cohort quantitatively. Assessment data is discussed with teachers in Pupil Progress Meetings and is available on Google Drive, BOX and iSams where we track whole-school data. It is used to inform differentiation measures, Learning Support, EAL and More Able and Talented provision.

PIRA and ART - reading comprehension

Administered each term in Years 4 to 6 and twice a year in Years 7-8, these assessments provide a diagnostic profile for each pupil - including a standardised age score and a reading age. We use them to reliably assess and track pupil progress in reading across the Prep School. We complete this test on paper in Years 4-6 to ensure that spellings and grammar do not affect our pupils. The tests provides a reliable range of information that supports and guides the management of effective learning. Furthermore, due to the adaptive nature, progress can be reliably tracked year on year.

GAPS Spelling and Grammar

At Runnymede College, recognising the diverse linguistic backgrounds of our students, particularly those with English as an Additional Language (EAL), underscores the significance of refining grammar skills. For students in Years 4-6, the Rising Stars Spelling and Grammar Tests are employed every term to assess and emphasize the crucial aspect of grammar and spelling within our curriculum. Grammar is intricately woven into our teaching methodology. The data collected from the Spelling and Grammar assessment is instrumental in shaping our instructional strategies. By analysing the results, our teachers gain insights into specific grammatical and spelling areas where students may require additional support. Moreover, the termly nature of these assessments ensures a continuous feedback loop. As students progress through the academic year, their development in grammar is meticulously tracked, and adjustments to teaching methods are made in real-time. This dynamic approach not only supports EAL pupils in overcoming linguistic challenges but also instills confidence and proficiency in English language usage.



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Writing

In Years 1 to 7, teachers make half termly judgments (working below expected, working towards expected, expected or greater depth) of pupils' writing. The regular assessment of pupil writing allows teachers to make judgements about pupils' progress on their way towards mastery of taught objectives. Writing assessment data is saved on Google Drive to provide summative data at particular points in time and to inform the Head of the Prep School, the English Lead and the Prep Leadership Team on pupils' individual progress.

PUMA and AMT - Mathematics

Administered every term in Years 4-6 and twice a year in Years 7 and 8, these assessments offer a standardised and reliable measure of individual performance, enabling educators to gauge the mastery of mathematical concepts over time. The PUMA and AMT assessments provide a well-structured framework that align with the curriculum, allowing for a systematic evaluation of students' mathematical proficiency. Each year group also complete regular 'Key Skills' checks and more formal exams are carried out in Years 6-8 at the end of each term. The data derived from these assessments not only assists in identifying areas of strength and improvement but also supports the formulation of targeted teaching strategies to address individual needs. The consistent use of these assessments underscores our commitment to fostering a dynamic learning environment where continuous improvement is paramount, ensuring that each student receives personalised attention and achieves their fullest mathematical potential. As well as these assessments, students are encouraged to participate in various Maths competitions both international and national to further their enjoyment of the subject.

CAT4

From September 2024, GL CAT4 tests will take place annually in years 4-8 in September/October. CAT tests are designed to help teachers understand how pupils learn and what their academic potential might be. We use the data from these assessments to identify pupils who are not reaching their potential and to plan intervention where necessary. CAT data is used by the Prep Leadership Team, Head of Learning Support and teachers. The data can be shared with parents/guardians on request, or if a teacher thinks necessary.

Science, Geography, History, Drama, Computing, Music, Art, P.E.

In all other subjects throughout the Prep School, we use topic tests to reliably assess pupil progress in the objectives taught. The data from these tests is used by teachers to identify pupils who have not understood the curriculum content and to plan intervention where necessary. Alongside this, topic sheets are completed by teachers and pupils to track pupil progress in specific skills. In Years 4-8, pupils are taught to assess their own work and that of others. Pupils assess work against clear success criteria and deliver feedback in a supportive and encouraging manner. Self and peer assessment can help pupils to develop their understanding of learning.



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Spanish

In Lengua/Spanish, whether the student is a native speaker or a second language learner, we consider it of great importance to carry out a continuous evaluation of the different linguistic skills in order to make them aware of their strengths and weaknesses so that they can evolve positively. Students are given the opportunity to correct their homework autonomously on a daily basis, in order to make them aware of their own progress. Throughout the term, different assessable activities are carried out which allow the teacher to adjust their teaching practice and personalise it for the greater benefit of their students. Reading and writing are considered key in the development of any language and therefore different tests are carried out at the end of each term. It is hoped that through the revision of these tests with the students, they will consciously enhance their language skills.

Special Requirements for Assessment

Students identified as needing additional support will receive targeted interventions to address specific learning needs. Teachers will work closely with the SENDCo to ensure that students with individualised education plans (IEPs) receive appropriate accommodations.



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Homework

At Runnymede College Prep School we believe that homework is a valuable part of a child's education. It provides opportunities for independent learning, reinforces classroom learning, and helps develop key skills such as time management, self-discipline, and personal responsibility. The school aims to ensure that homework is both purposeful and manageable, supporting the academic development of each child.

Homework Schedule

The **homework schedule** is set by the **Deputy Head Academic** at the beginning of each term and is reviewed at the start of every term to ensure that it aligns with the students' academic needs and maintains an appropriate balance with their other activities and commitments. Any changes to the homework schedule will be communicated to pupils at the start of the term.

Purpose of Homework

Homework serves several important purposes in a child's education:

1. **Reinforcement of Learning:** Homework allows students to consolidate and extend what they have learned in class. It provides an opportunity to practice skills, review concepts, and apply new knowledge in different contexts.
2. **Development of Independent Learning:** Regular homework fosters the development of independent study habits and self-motivation. Students learn how to organise their time effectively and work independently, both of which are essential skills for future academic success.
3. **Preparation for Future Lessons:** Homework can be used to prepare students for upcoming lessons or projects, giving them a foundation to build upon in class. This helps students feel more confident and engaged in their learning.
4. **Extension of Learning Beyond the Classroom:** Homework encourages curiosity and exploration beyond the confines of the classroom, allowing students to delve deeper into topics of interest.

Expectations of Homework

The expectations for homework are tailored to the age and stage of development of each year group. Generally, the following principles apply:

- **Time Commitment:** As a guide, the amount of homework should be no more than 1 hour – and is expected to be 40 mins according to the subject, and 20 mins reading.
- **Regular Independent Work:** Homework tasks are designed to encourage regular, independent work, with students expected to complete assignments to the best of their ability within the given time frame.
- **Appropriate Challenge:** Tasks will be suitably challenging, but not overwhelming, with the aim to extend students' thinking and understanding.
- **Support and Feedback:** Teachers will provide appropriate guidance and feedback on homework to help students improve and develop their skills. Parents are encouraged to offer support where necessary but should allow their child to take responsibility for completing tasks independently.