Assessment at St Mary's

A Parent Guide

Assessment at St Mary's

We aim to foster human development in a community of faith. We believe in a holistic education that supports the development of knowledgeable, skilful, confident, resilient and ethical young people.

At St Mary's we assess the progress of our learners considering four key strands:

- **Knowledge** – helping learners progress with what they know and understand
- **Skills** –helping learners develop a range of competencies
- **Communication** – helping to develop articulacy, organisation and clarity
- **Behaviour** – helping to develop thoughtful, organised, compassionate, self-regulating and resilient young people

Assessment at St Mary's

Knowledge

We assess what pupils know and understand. This might include facts, information, concepts, processes, terminology and more.

For example (Science) learners' understanding of photosynthesis – the formula, the process, the terms…

Behaviour

We assess learners against St Mary's behaviour policy which outlines our high expectations

For example
learners' consistency with punctuality or organisation

Skills

We assess how well pupils can apply their knowledge. This might include physical processes, written work, designing calculating, summarising and more.

For example (PE) learners' ability to effectively complete an action in PE is different from the knowledge of how to do so…

Communication

We assess the clarity with which learners can express their knowledge and understanding

For example (Geography) learners' ability to effectively explain the advantages and disadvantages of renewable energy methods…

Knowledge, Skills & Communication

We support autonomy within subject areas and Heads of Department have designed curriculums that may feature some of the kinds of knowledge, skills and communication abilities below. Our range of assessments may consider these discretely or holistically. We will report holistically reflecting the teacher's evaluation of their current progress.

KS3	Knowledge				Skills						Communication		
Focus	**Subject Understanding**				**Subject skills**						**Subject Articulacy**		
Assessable Qualities (Subject Specific)	Subject **terms**, Technical **language**, specialist jargon	**Concepts,** Ideas, theories,	**Processes,** actions, events	**Formulae**, systems, relationships	**Retrieve, Give, State, Show**	**Plot, Draw, Sketch, Devise, Write Create**	**Explain, Outline, Calculate, estimate, Interpret**	**Evaluate, justify**	**Analyse, break down, clarify, simplify**	**Investigate**	**Written Articulation** Communicate in **Writing**	**Verbal Articulation** Communicate **verbally**	**Explaining, clarifying, summarising** and **reasoning**

How do we assess student progress under the four strands?

Subject teachers are best placed to evaluate the progress of learners against their capabilities. [They question them, mark their assessments, see their test results, observe their skills, read their work] Our staff know our pupils well and then…

Teachers report this progress considering the individual. They will ask themselves: "For where this student is right now, knowing their ability, how would I describe their progress?" They will assess holistically (considering all assessment materials to this point) and award a descriptor considering all the knowledge and skills below.

Knowledge	Behaviour
In each subject, departments through the design of their curriculum, have a clear expectation of the knowledge learners acquire on a yearly basis. Learners may have all, most or some of this knowledge relative to expectation.	St Mary's behaviour policy outlines our high expectations for learners. Staff model and teach behavioural habits. We congratulate and encourage when standards are met and challenge when they are not.
Skills	**Communication**
In each subject, departments through the design of their curriculum, have clear, increasingly complex or challenging skills that learners practice and attain.	In each subject staff expect learners to be able to communicate their knowledge and skills effectively. How this clarity of understanding is shown differs by subject. Eg. Investigations, performances, essays, portfolios

How do we assess student progress under the four strands at KS3?

- We assess the progress of the individual - learners progress by seeking their personal best and are not held in comparison with equally individual peers (Two learners with identical test scores could be reported with different progress – one could be attaining well, the other coasting)
- We use curriculum related expectation – so for where learners are we have an expectation of what they should know and be able to do in Y7, 8 and 9
- Our assessment system simplifies this wide range of information into a manageable descriptor – we will describe learner progress in a phrase represented by a scaled number (right)

- In our assessment of progress we consider:

1. Their knowledge against what they should know at this point,
2. Their skills against what they should be able to do at this point
3. Their ability to communicate the above in controlled conditions

For their stage on the curriculum, they are described as:	
5	Significantly above expectation
4	Above Expectation
3	In line with expectation
2	Below Expectation
1	Significantly below expectation

How do we assess student progress under the four strands?

EXAMPLE Y7 English

Each department and teacher has clear expectations about what a learner should be able show they can do for their stage on their curriculum. For example in Y7 English…

How well can students demonstrate their **subject knowledge**?

- **Understanding the different writing purposes and audiences**
- **Knowledge of plot setting and character in prose, poetry and drama**
- **Knowledge of word classes, literary devices and sentence types/moods**

How well do students engage with our SMRC **Behaviour**?

- **Be prepared for lessons and work well**
- **Work hard to produce their best including drafting and rewriting**
- **Participate in class discussion**
- **Reflect on their work and act on teacher feedback**
- **Engage effectively with Accelerated Reader**

How well can students **illustrate their skills in** their subject skills?

- **Identifying linguistic devices**
- **Commenting on writers' choices of words, phrases, sentence types…**
- **Decoding and inferring meaning**
- **Evaluating the success of linguistic and structural choices**
- **Comparing writers' decisions and/or texts**

How well can students **Communicate** their knowledge and understanding?

- **Articulate their ideas using appropriate features**
- **Use appropriate sentencing and paragraphs**
- **Organise and sequence their writing for clarity**
- **Summarise key details from texts**
- **Accurately use spelling, grammar…**

How do we assess student progress under the four strands?

EXAMPLE Y8 Science

Each department and teacher has clear expectations about what a learner should be able show they can do for their stage on their curriculum. For example in Y8 Science…

How well can students demonstrate their **subject knowledge**?

- **Label parts of the body, skeleton, skeletal muscles…**
- **Show knowledge of relevant formulae. E.g. resistance**
- **Identify the parts of a circuit**
- **Know how to structure of an investigation**

How well do students engage with our SMRC **Behaviour**?

- **Be prepared for lessons and work well**
- **Work hard to produce their best including class and homework**
- **Participate in class discussion or questioning**
- **Reflect on their work and act on teacher feedback**

How well can students **illustrate their skills in** their subject skills?

- **Explain the process of respiration**
- **Calculate resistance using standard units**
- **Accurately draw or map findings in charts and graphs**

How well can students **Communicate** their knowledge and understanding?

- **Follow subject structures for long form questions**
- **Use subject terminology accurately and effectively**
- **Understand, and refer to, the command words of the question**
- **Use accurate spelling**

Curriculum

Each subject area has detailed curricula which set out the knowledge, skills and communication as relevant to each specialism. These are available on our website and are routinely updated with any changes to curriculum.

KS3 ASSESSMENT IN MATHS

Our KS3 Maths curriculum, which follows the national curriculum and the White Rose Maths model, helps students become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, ensures that students can reason mathematically and ensures they can solve problems with increasing sophistication.

	Knowledge	Skills	Communication
Year 7	• Understand and use algebraic notation • Solving equations including those with directed number • Sequences: including term to term and term to position rules • Fractions, decimals and percentages • Number including: mental and written calculation, with integers and non integers • Measures, perimeter and area • Expressions and formulae • Angles and two-dimensional shapes • Graphs including: coordinates, straight line, time series • Statistics including: bar charts, pie charts and averages	**Work mathematically as relevant to the area of study:** • Apply numeracy skills: add, subtract, multiply and divide • Work out using written steps • Work out using calculator steps • Apply the correct order of operations (BIDMAS) • Use letter symbols effectively • Simplify and factorise effectively • Calculate mathematical formulas using standard units • Make predictions and reason deductively • Plot graphs and interpret data accurately	• Develop structured speaking, vocabulary, writing, and reading to help them solve mathematical problems. • Contribute to class discussion and questioning • Explain and justify thinking/solutions • Articulate the sequence required for an effective calculation
Year 8	• Exploring number including primes, squares, cubes, roots and indices • Transformations including symmetry and tessellation • Equations • Written and calculator methods • 3D shapes including isometric drawings and volume • Ratio and Proportion • Probability including Venn diagrams • Standard index form • Laws of indices • Angles in parallel lines and in polygons		
Year 9	• Transformations including enlargement, rotation and translation • Equations – constructing, solving and trial and improvement • Pythagoras' theorem • Graphs: straight line, gradient, and *y= mx+c* • Measures, perimeter and area • Graphs – distance and time • Constructions including triangles, bisectors and scale drawing • Probability including with tree diagrams • Testing conjecture, introduction to proof		

*This table is not exhaustive and seeks to reflect some of the major knowledge, skills and communication developed in this subject area.

Literacy, numeracy and oracy are whole school priorities. In each subject we develop students' ability to express themselves clearly. See a list of subject specific skills here.

We develop students subject skills so they can confidently apply them, both inside and outside the subject. See a list of some here.

We develop students subject knowledge so they can develop expertise. See a list here where you may find topics, components and schemes of work.