Policy/Procedure	Policy		
Type	Mastery Learning and Assessment		
Applies to project(s)	Watermelon Independent Schools	**Policy No**	HS/01
Created by(owner)	Z Jonah		
Status	Released		
Date	Jan 2026		
Next review date:	Jan 2027		

Change History:

Version	Description	Date issued	Reason	Approved by
1.0	New Policy	18/07/2024	New school	ZJ
1.1	Annual review	July 2025	Annual review	HL
1.2	Review	Jan 2026	Review	HL

Related Policies:

Policy Ref No.	Policy Name	Policy Ref No.	Policy Name
HS/02	Fire Safety Management	HS/07	Use of Reasonable Force
HS/03	First Aid	HS/08	Intimate Care
HS/04	Medical Needs	HS/09	Lock Down
HS/05	Managing Drugs	HS/13	Accident Reporting
HS/06	Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing		
HS/10	Risk Assessment policy		

Distribution:

Electronic copy - C:/Organisation Policies and Procedures/

Staff Shared Area Hard copies – All Employees / School Office

/ Staff Policy Reference Folder

Contents

Mastery Learning System

The Mastery Learning System focuses on reinforcing fundamental disciplinary knowledge and skills before progressing to more complex ideas in each subject curriculum to ensure knowledge is secure. The emphasis on securing information in the <mark>long-term</mark> memory combined with a carefully planned, rigorous curriculum ensures the needs of each individual pupil are met without lowering academic expectations.

What is the purpose of Mastery Learning?

- Providing different Curriculum pathways, pupils are able to move forward through the curriculum whilst ensuring the knowledge and skills they have learnt are secure.

- Opportunities to revisit content, apply learning and robustly address misconceptions are particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs, where retention of information can be more of a challenge.

- The DFE has advised to deepen and secure a pupil's knowledge and understanding rather than just moving on through the curriculum.

The 'Mastery' approach:

- Reinforces high expectations for all - all students are learning the same units, with emphasis on matching work to the needs of individual students. Achievement is not 'capped'
- Encourages scaffolding to achieve and secure aspirational outcomes; it does not promote 'unhelpful' differentiation by task or by objective
- Ensure the curriculum breaks subject matter and learning content into components with clearly specified lesson intentions (ie. the objective) which are pursued until they are achieved.
- Pupils are expected to show they have mastered a certain percentage of curriculum coverage before moving onto the next topic through a combination of on-going low stakes assessment and summative assessment.
- Formative and summative assessment play an integral role in the delivery of the 'mastery' system.

Rationale

Mastery assessment, recording, reporting and feedback is a continuous and on-going process and is part of the cycle of learning. As a school, we make use of both formative and summative assessment methods, scaffolding and checking knowledge and skills through frequent low stakes assessment.

Assessment reflects the formal and informal judgements made by teachers about standards of work and is measured, where appropriate, against nationally agreed criteria adapted for each subject, pathway and pupil.

Teachers use assessment to check pupils' understanding in order to inform teaching, and to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently and develop their understanding, and not simply memorise disconnected facts.

Aims of assessment:

Through the assessment process, we aim to gather information, which enables our teachers to:

- evaluate and record each pupil's attainment and progress
- identify individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses
- evaluate their teaching effectiveness
- plan future learning and teaching experiences
- match teaching, outcomes and curriculum pathways to the needs of individual pupils
- compare individual, class and school levels of attainment and progress using internal and external measures
- provide accurate information to parents and colleagues about the progress and development of each pupil which is consistent across the school
- ensure all pupils experience appropriate challenge and success

In all subjects assessment must:

- Include both formative and summative
- Be curriculum-driven so as to determine how much of what has been taught, has been learnt
- Be meaningful and accurate and support students in embedding knowledge and using it fluently
- Revisit knowledge cumulatively so as to interrupt the forgetting curve and draw a distinction between long-term learning and short-term performance
- Provide clarity on which students need intervention and in which areas
- Be designed with validity and reliability in mind
- Continuously inform the teachers and students as to how learning can move forward.

Types of Assessment:

Formative assessment - Assessment for Learning

- Formative assessment is a range of evidence – informed strategies that teachers can use to support learners to make progress.
- It supports learning through identifying students' progress as well as highlighting gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Core questions for retrieval practice form a strong framework for well-remembered knowledge.
- Gives teachers understanding of what instruction needs to be provided to continue to move learners forward.
- Medium term plans should provide opportunities and time to revisit pupils' learning after formative assessments. If misconceptions are identified, the planning should be

updated to reflect this. These adjustments help to ensure pupils achieve targeted learning goals within a set time frame.

Summative assessment - Assessment of Learning

- Assess key knowledge from current and preceding years (be cumulative)
- It is used mainly to measure performance and identify a standard of pupil attainment.
- It is focused on outcomes and provides accurate data for the whole school analysis including school reports.
- It is given periodically to determine, at a particular point in time, what pupils know and do not know.
- It enables teachers to identify any gaps in learning, individually or collectively.
- Needs to be signposted in schemes of work and will cover all attainment targets appropriate to the component of learning.
- Be carefully designed both in terms of the questions asked (which should assess what has been taught) and format (so as not to add to students' non-essential load).
- Prompt teachers, supported by curriculum and subject leaders, to consider what they can interpret from the data to help them to decide
  - What to do for the class now
  - What to do for the class in the future
  - What to do for future classes

Some examples of summative assessment include:
- External exam (e.g. GCSE)
- Internal exams (e.g. End of the component - unit/block/topic - tests)
- End of term/half term exam

Frequency of Assessment

Formative assessment

- It is on-going (day to day basis) and happens during the learning process. This may not be recorded, but will form part of the marking and feedback process.
- Systematic knowledge check quizzes. It needs to occur part-way through a topic (subject specific). Frequency and design will be specified in individual marking policies - these do need to be recorded.

Summative assessment

- At least three times over the course of a year: once in class and once in the form of End of Year Exams for all core and humanities subjects and across all years (in exam conditions, if possible in the Stadium for pathway A&B)

Recording of assessment:

- Evidence of summative and formative assessments should be kept until the end of key stage and recorded on Go4Schools.
- Assessments should be completed e.g. in exercise books or as a separate test.

- Assessment grids should be used to mark and give feedback on summative assessment.

Grading of assessment
- Key stage 3 – grades for summative and formative assessment to be awarded with % score.
- Key stage 4 and 5 - grading for formative assessment/knowledge checks to be awarded as percentage of successful curriculum coverage.
- Key stage 4 and 5 - grading 9-1 are awarded for summative assessment.

Assessment towards external qualifications

Exams:

Teachers ensure that all exam groups are familiar with the criteria set by examination boards in language which is accessible by pupils and broken into small steps. Subject curricula are not planned using this criteria; instead, teachers adapt and scaffold their planning to ensure the outcomes are met in a way which is suited to the needs of our pupils. We do not teach to the exam; rather, teachers guide and scaffold pupils through their curriculum journey, with the exam being an opportunity for pupils to show everything they have learned.

Pupils have regular opportunities to complete examination questions, including whole papers, throughout the course to prepare them for the demands of the exams. When exam responses are fed back, pupils are guided to identify practical steps they should take to

Coursework:

Teachers use the assessment grid that follows the mark scheme and other materials (such as examiners' reports and standardisation material) to guide pupils through re-drafting their work. Where pupils are finding it difficult to identify what they need to do to improve their work, teachers may use written feedback if the exam board guidelines allow.

Controlled Assessment:

Teachers are not permitted to give individual written or oral feedback on controlled assessments which are submitted for external assessment. Therefore, the work is marked against the externally-set criteria only when the work is completed. However, there are times where teachers decide that another controlled assessment task will need to be completed to replace an assessment in which pupils underachieved. In these cases, it is imperative that pupils learn from their mistakes. They are informed about, and guided to identify for themselves, what they need to do to make improvements on their new tasks. Where pupils are being prepared for controlled assessments by completing a practice piece (which is a different task to the real piece), pupils are given the feedback they require to achieve highly on the real controlled assessment.

BTEC:

Before pupils begin an assignment, assessment criteria are clearly shared in an accessible format. During the teaching and learning for that assignment, feedback can include areas for learner progression and what learners need to do to achieve a pass, merit or distinction. Once the assignment has been started, only general feedback and support can be given that relates

to knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils make their own notes of verbal feedback in their Exercise Books. At this stage, feedback cannot specify what they need to do to achieve a particular grade (pass, merit or distinction). Work will be marked summatively at the end of the assignment. A resubmission opportunity can only be authorised by the lead Internal Verifier in that subject.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and families may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Maplewell Hall School recognises that AI has the potential to help students learn in some instances, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Students may not use AI tools:
• During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
• To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work.
Teachers will be vigilant to potential indicators of AI misuse in students' work, such as differences in language style to the student's classroom work, lack of direct quotations and/or references where you'd expect them, and references which cannot be found or verified. For more potential indicators of AI misuse, see JCQ's guidance.

Standardisation and Moderation

To ensure that the levels of achievement for both internal and external assessments are being reported accurately and consistently, subject leaders and teachers are given opportunities for moderation and standardisation meetings to agree their judgement.

Setting targets

Targets in Key Stage 3:

All Key Stage 3 pupils despite what pathway they are on, are given a target of 70% -75%. Research suggests that 70% - 75% of successful curriculum coverage indicates a topic is 'mastered'.

- All pupils are expected to successfully cover at least 70% of the taught curriculum on the appropriate pathway and personalised assessment route.
- If a pupil successfully covers at least 70% of the curriculum. (this percentage will be taken from the average of assessments during the school year) by the end of each academic year they are considered to be making at least good progress and indicates that they should achieve their end of KS4 target by the end of Year 11 or K5.
- These levels form the basis of progress analysis and allow interventions to be directed where needed and inform future curriculum planning and whole school strategy.
- The residuals on Go4schools have been formatted to track pupil progress towards a set target:

Indication of pupils' progress on Go4Schools in KS3		
Below Target	Less than 40%	This is 'flagged' in red, (consider reviewing if a child is on the right pathway of curriculum)
On track for Target	Between 40-69%	Successfully covering less than 70 % of the curriculum.
Hit Target	Between 70% and 85%	Indicates that a pupil is making good progress. This is the minimum expectation for all pupils.
Exceeding KS3 Target	Above 85%	Performing above expected target.
Indication of pupils' progress on Go4school in KS4		
Below Target		Off Track (… grades)
On track for Target		On track to meet grade with consistent effort.
Hit Target		This is the aspirational target set for each pupil for the end of the academic year.
Exceeding KS4 Target		Above aspirational target.

Target in Key Stage 4 and 5

Pupils are set an end of the key stage target based on:
-   Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) – Taken in year 7
-   Fischer Family Trust, FFT 50 average, 20 high, and 5 very high
-   New Group Reading Test (NGRT) -Retaken every year
-   Sandwell Early Numeracy Test (SENT) – Taken in Year 7 for students who can not access year 1 National Curriculum

The target grade set in FFT and CATs4 are based on the KS2 data (DfE national pupil database), and other contextual information about a student (gender, prior attainment, ethnicity, EAL, disadvantage, SEND).

Students will be set two targets:
-   FFT target grade that is personalised with varying levels of challenge to suit individual pupils' needs (EHCP) specific to our school setting.
-   Aspirational target grade based on actual data such as controlled assessment or coursework marks and mock exams. The predicted grade will likely change

depending on a range of outcomes e.g. attendance, assessment.

Students' end of the Key Stage 4 target will be recorded as: GCSE, Entry Level, BTEC or NCF grades- subject specific. The pupil progress towards specific curriculum content will utilise - the breakdown of assessment marks: Beginning (B, 25%) , Developing (D, 50%), Secure (75%-85%), Mastered (M,88%-100%). E.g. GCSE 1B.

- The statements will accurately reflect where a pupil is on their journey through Key Stage 4 or 5. For example, we expect a pupil starting Y10 will be further away (two grades) from their target than a Y11 (one grade) pupil at the end of the year.
- Progression targets will be calculated to develop the minimum target a pupil should make by the end of Year 11 – pupils will receive an 'expected' and 'aspirational' target grade.
- Pupil progress in relation to targets will also be updated each time summative assessment is recorded – teacher judgement, in class test or mock exam. This will enable school leaders, subject leaders and all teachers to monitor pupil progress on a regular basis.
- Each half term, a monitoring 'snapshot' of all mark books is taken by the examinations officer. This process is retrospective, taking into account the previous half term's data to allow for subjects to complete markbooks at a time which suits.
- The schedule for data recording and reporting is published in the school calendar.
- All teachers are accountable for their pupils' progress.

Tracking pupil progress

Go4Schools or tracker platform to track students' progress. Individual teachers are responsible for creating the markbooks for their allocated classes. All staff are responsible for ensuring that the markbook entries are kept up to date to allow for data snapshots throughout the year.

Markbooks will include the following information:
- Student's target grade, current grade, FFT target and aspirational target.
- Formative assessment (knowledge checks) recorded in %
- Summative data, three times per year
- Assessment titles
- A 'notes' column where necessary to provide contextual information

Teachers will use this information from G4Schools to inform their planning, so that they can meet the needs of students. For each individual student, the grade or % awarded should represent to teachers how much of the taught curriculum has been learned and in which areas of the taught curriculum there are gaps in understanding.

They will make sure assessments are discussed with students with clear guidance shared of how to make further progress after each assessment cycle.

The data collected on G4schools will be communicated to parents through a printed progress report. Parents will be made aware of tracking of progress in each subject, and students' grades or % for each subject

Intervention

All teachers are committed to supporting pupils to achieve or exceed their targets. Through regular and accurate assessment, pupils who are not making the expected progress will be quickly identified. Identification will take place on a number of levels:
- by the classroom teacher
- by the form tutor
- by subject leaders
- by SLT

A range of intervention strategies will be available to suit the individual needs of pupils
This list is not exhaustive, but may include the following examples: Wave 1

- extra support from the classroom teacher in class
- in-class support from the Learning Support Assistants
- peer mentoring
- tutor mentoring

- extra tuition during non – core subjects or self study time

Wave 3
- after school tuition/revision classes
- home learning