

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School

Assessment and Reporting Procedures



St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

At St Thomas the Apostle Primary School, fundamental to teachers becoming responsive to individual and collective student learning needs, is the availability of detailed information about what students know and can do. Ongoing, high-quality assessment data can provide that information.

Assessment is an ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements with the aim of improving student learning and achievement. Accurate and comprehensive reporting of school and student performance aids in establishing open communication, helps to improve student learning, assists in establishing future direction, and helps to identify areas of exemplary performance, as well as those in need of support and assistance.

This section sets out the steps that are taken at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School to adhere to the Assessment and Reporting Policy.

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School Assessment and Reporting Procedures

1. Methods used to assess student learning progress and achievement

1.1 Formative assessment

Teachers use a variety of formal assessments to ascertain their students' current level of learning achievement as a basis for planning their ongoing learning programs and to provide our students with timely and effective feedback e.g., items on our Assessment Schedule, standardised tests such as PAT-R/PAT-M, rubrics and unit pre-tests, as well as informal assessments such as observation and quizzes. Our students also use self-assessment to reflect on and monitor their own learning, informing their own future learning goals.

1.2 Summative assessment

Teachers use a variety of assessments to evaluate each student's level of progress, learning achievement and skill acquisition against learning outcomes, as well as to inform the effectiveness of our learning and teaching programs. This gives teachers the information they need to make accurate, consistent judgements about a student's learning progress over time in relation to curriculum standards or other defined learning objectives, and to make adjustments to learning and teaching programs. Teachers use a variety of formal, summative assessment tools including items on our Assessment Schedule, standardised tests e.g., PAT R/PAT M, rubrics, unit post-tests and interviews. Teachers may also use informal assessments such as observation, quizzes and questioning. Summative assessment data is reported to parents formally through our reporting processes, parent/teacher conferences, PLPs and PSGs

1.3 Students with additional learning needs

Students with additional learning needs receive adjusted assessment tasks in line with their learning tasks and their Personalised Learning Plans. Students with additional learning needs may also receive extra time and the support of their teacher or Learning Support Officer to complete assessment tasks so that they are able to demonstrate their learning progress and achievement.

2. Process for developing assessment tasks

Assessment tasks are continually developed to ensure that timely and reliable data is collected and analysed throughout the year. Our Assessment Schedule is reviewed annually to ensure that the content and timing of formal summative and formative assessment tasks are optimal. We implement assessment tasks that are standardised and commercially prepared, and those that are teacher-made, depending on their purpose.

3. Cycle of review and assessment practices

3.1 Student data – cycle, methods, storage, dissemination

Individual and collective student data is collected formally as documented in our Assessment Schedule – see Appendix 1. This data is recorded on the yearly Assessment Data Sheet which is stored in the shared Google Drive. This used in planning team meetings, attended by the Principal, Learning and Teaching Leader, Learning Diversity Leader early in Term 1, to discuss student progress and to identify students ‘at risk’ and who may benefit from intervention or other support. The data is entered into students’ PLPs to track progress against goals and to inform future learning. Other data is collected and recorded by class teachers, including pre- and post- test results, which are used to plan learning programs, track student performance and growth, and to inform students’ written reports.

3.2 Analysis and Interpretation of data

Throughout the year, regular Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings are held which focus on student data. Led by our Learning and Teaching Leader, Literacy Leader, Mathematics Leader and/or Learning Diversity Leader, individual and collective student data is analysed and interpreted to identify both learning progress and gaps in student learning, as well to monitor improvement over time and growth across the years of school (trend data). The results of pre- and post- tests, as well as items in our annual Assessment Schedule, are compared and are used as objective data on student achievement as evidence of successful teaching. Priority is given to professional development aimed at building teachers’ and leaders’ data literacy skills.

3.3 Use of data to inform teaching and assessment practices

Teachers collect evidence of student learning – what students say, make, do or write across all learning areas. Teaching teams supported by literacy and numeracy leaders then identify what the students are ready to learn and discuss how to set learning objectives, decide on an instructional focus and select effective strategies within each learning area.

We believe that moderation can be carried out at multiple points within the teaching and learning cycle. It supports consistent assessment based on evidence-based evaluation of student progress and generates reliable data that teachers can confidently discuss with students and their parents. Moderation is a key opportunity for teachers to participate in powerful professional conversations, leading to improved student outcomes.

Teachers at St Thomas’ continuously monitor and assess student’ progress. WE believe that tracking student growth across the year and through the years, provides us with an increased ability to build each student’s learning history. At our school we understand that data informs our teaching, teaching guides our assessments and assessments provide us with more that in an ongoing cycle.

4. Reporting practices

4.1 Formative Assessment

Ongoing formative assessments at our school include observations, samples of work and pre-assessments for a learning sequence which make up the body of evidence teachers use to track student learning.

We create visual data walls which are used to identify students and monitor their progress. The Maths Assessment Interview and Success in Numeracy Education (SINE) assessments are used to gather specific diagnostic information in mathematics. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System is used to establish the highest instructional reading level of the students in English.

Teachers provide students with regular feedback in order that each students knows how they are going and their next steps in learning. The sense of continual growth is important for students to know why and how they are being challenged and to celebrate their successes.

4.2 Summative assessment

In order to accurately place students along the curriculum continuum, teachers at St Thomas’ take multiple samples to triangulate their data. When we triangulate data we use at least three sources of assessment data to guide us as we capitalise on strengths and reduce weaknesses that can stem from using a single source. At our school we acknowledge that summative assessment is essential, however we endeavour to keep this type to a minimum or source assessments that can be used for both formative and summative purposes. Some examples of our summative assessments include: NAPLAN, Progressive Achievement Tests in Mathematics and Reading, and the South Australian Spelling test.

4.3 Written reports

Our written reports comply with the Legislative and Regulatory Framework requirements as well as meeting the minimum requirements of the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA) and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV). Parents are provided with written reports twice a year in line with the Australian Government requirements, at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of semester 2. The structure of the written reports is as determined by school-based requirements, any mandated Australian Government requirements and in line with any updates as documented in the 'Reporting Student Progress – Guidelines for Victorian Catholic Schools' (CECV). The written reports contain clear, detailed, explicit and personalised information about student progress and achievement in the learning areas taught and assessed in each semester. The 'Semester Reports' module of Compass is used for electronic reporting of student achievement at the end of each semester. Student Files are maintained to include all assessment data and work samples as evidence of student achievement

In addition to written reports, we at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School are committed to providing our parents and guardians with opportunities to discuss their child's progress with the school at any time.

4.4 Student/teacher/parent conferences

At St Thomas the Apostle Primary School, we conduct two formal student/parent/teacher conferences within the school year with the first opportunity offered early in Term One. This provides students, parents and teachers with an opportunity to discuss ways that they can work in partnership and highlight possible goals for the student which can be either academic or personal. Goal setting conferences are also held at the end of Term Two to provide an opportunity to discuss student learning growth and opportunities for improvement. Students take an active role in these sessions, sharing their learning with their teacher and parents.

4.5 Students with additional learning needs

At St Thomas the Apostle we understand that students have a diverse range of needs as well as a diverse variety of learning styles. At our school we offer additional support when a student has been identified as:

- performing below the expected level
- performing well above the expected level
- benefiting from targeted teaching in small group environments to consolidate learning

If a student has been identified as having additional needs, our school will communicate with parents to explain the support their child will receive and the duration of the support. Students receiving extra support are reviewed every five to six weeks and adjustments are made to the support being offered accordingly. Parents are continuously updated.

Additional support offered at St Thomas the Apostle includes:

- Extension Mathematics Groups
 - Learning Sprints in Mathematics and English
 - Reading Recovery
 - Levelled Literacy Intervention
 - GRIN Maths Intervention
 - Seasons Program
 - Learning Support Officers supporting NCCD students within the classroom
 - Case Management
 - Facilitated Planning
-

5. Students with additional learning needs

5.1 Personalised Learning Plans

Students at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School may have enrolled with a previously diagnosed learning need or may undergo tests during their enrolment which identifies a specific learning need, either physical, cognitive, sensory or social/emotional. At St Thomas' the Learning Diversity Leader coordinates and assists staff and parents to ensure these identified students have access to education equitably. Teachers support students through the development of a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) which includes adjustments that are put in place for students with additional needs. SMART goals within the PLP's are reviewed and revised termly.

5.2 NCCD data

Students at our school identified with additional learning needs are supported through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD). As a school we address a student's specific individual education requirements, arising

from their disability, within quality differentiated teaching practice and/or monitoring the student or providing a 'supplementary' or higher level of adjustment or support. We use Personalised Learning Plans (PLP's) to set achievable goals, assess progress and report back to all stakeholders. Formal meetings between school and home are scheduled each term to review the learning plans and to set new goals.

At St Thomas the Apostle, we:

- ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability
- make or provide 'reasonable adjustments' for students where necessary to enable their access and participation
- provide reasonable adjustments in consultation with the student and/or their associates; for most students, this means their parents, guardians or carers

The Principal verifies and confirms NCCD data for each student. Data is submitted after a rigorous moderation has been undertaken to ensure consistency of decision making and all stakeholders have been notified.

6. Participation in national testing programs such as NAPLAN, PISA

NAPLAN test results provide information on how students are performing in the areas of literacy and numeracy and support improvements in teaching and learning. In May of each year, our Year Three and Year Five students participate in online NAPLAN testing. We ensure that the protocols and guidelines developed by ACARA are followed in order to facilitate a smooth rollout of the tests as well as to protect the integrity of the data collected. As a school we communicate to respective families to ensure that they are aware of the basic facts that they need to know about NAPLAN, including dates of NAPLAN tests. A comprehensive report is sent home to each parent in August, which provides families with further information about how their students are progressing compared with students across the nation. As a staff we engage in a school wide interpretation of the NAPLAN data in order to support and evaluate our teaching and learning.
