McKinnon Primary School
Assessment Policy

1. Rationale

1.1. Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning.

1.2. Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process.

1.3. Assessment identifies a leaner's next point of need, diagnostically targeting their individual needs to improve student performance through informed and consistent judgement.

1.4. Assessment is an essential part of the instructional cycle as it provides information about student learning and development, as well as a framework for planning, self-reflection, and collaboration.

1.5. Assessment is central to the Primary Years Program [PYP] goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

      1.5.1 The acquisition, of knowledge

      1.5.2 Conceptual understanding

      1.5.3 Mastering of Transdisciplinary skills

      1.5.4 Embodiment of attitudes

      1.5.5 Decision to take action

1.6. The ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgments, enables differentiation and collaborative planning for the varying needs of all students.

1.7. Effective assessment practices enable staff to make balanced judgments and accurately communicate student learning and growth.

2. Guidelines

2.1. At McKinnon Primary School all stakeholders concerned with assessment (students, teachers, parents and the school leadership team) must have a clear understanding of the reasons for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success, and the method by which the assessment is made. At McKinnon Primary School there is an understanding of the specific need for effective assessment that demonstrates what students know, understand, and are able to apply.

      2.1.1. Assessment **FOR** learning – *Using inferences about students' progress to inform next steps in learning and teaching.* (Formative and/or Summative Assessment)

      2.1.2. Assessment **AS** learning – *students reflecting on and monitoring their progress to inform their future learning goals.* (Formative and/or Summative Assessment)

      2.1.3. Assessment **OF** learning – *using evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.* (Summative Assessment)

2.2. Assessment should include a broad range of approaches that have been selected to provide a balanced view of a student's learning and the effectiveness of the teaching and learning sequence.

2.3. Assessment provides evidence of progress along a continuum of criteria that are clearly known and understood in advance.

2.4. Assessment design/implementation should show awareness of learning style, cultural, gender, linguistic, and racial differences of learners.

2.5. Student growth will be monitored, with individual consideration for their capabilities and needs, reflecting the complex and multi-dimensional process of learning, student progress is revealed over time.

2.6. At McKinnon Primary School both students and teachers are actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking, reflection and self-evaluation skills to revise or advance performance.

2.7. Moderation of assessment ensures consistency and reliability of teacher judgment.

2.8. School-wide data management systems and processes support teachers to record and analyse student data. This fosters a culture of differentiation at a classroom, cohort and school level.

2.9. Written and oral reports provide information to parents, students and teachers on student progress in each of the learning areas.

2.10. The PYP and Victorian Curriculum form the basis for assessment and evaluation.

3. Implementation

3.1. Assessment at McKinnon Primary School encompasses the following three areas:

      3.1.1. **Assessing** – How we discover what the students know and have learned

      3.1.2. **Recording** – How we choose to collect, store and analyse data

      3.1.3. **Reporting** – Communicating student learning, performance and progress

3.2. Across these three areas we have an emphasis on:

3.2.1. **Effective Feedback** for learning is ongoing, timely and respectful of the learner. Feedback is specific to the learning goals and aimed at providing information for the learner to improve learning outcomes. These are established at the start of a sequence of learning to ensure assessment is transparent and authentic.

3.2.2. **Reflection** is recognised as an essential component of the learning process. Embedded within learning and teaching, metacognitive processes are modeled, taught and independently practiced from Foundation to Year Six as an essential and integral part of self, peer and teacher assessment.

3.2.3. **Goal Setting** is critical to the process of learning, teaching and assessment. Through explicit teaching, modelled and independent practice students build their capacity to set and monitor learning goals each term. Student goals and reflection form an integral part of the beginning and mid-year three-way conference.

4. Types of Assessments

4.1. **Formative assessment** provides teachers and students with information about how the learning is developing. It helps the teacher to plan the next stage of learning for each child. All assessment practices offer formative opportunities to diagnostically interpret data at a classroom, cohort or whole school level.

4.2. **Summative Assessment** occurs at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned (with assessment structured to target the learning outcomes) by applying their knowledge in new and authentic contexts. As part of the 'backward by design' approach, summative assessments are determined and planned for, before learning begins.

4.3. **Standardised Assessment** as outlined in the Whole School Assessment Schedule identifies standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy that are implemented in an academic year. Year Three and Year Five students participate in the NAPLAN assessments in May of each year.

5. Assessment Strategies

5.1. The following assessment strategies are an expectation of teacher practice when gathering information about students' learning and performance:

5.1.1. **Observations** of all students occur regularly with a focus on the individual, the group, and/or the whole class.

5.1.2. **Performance Assessments:** Students are presented with a task that represents the kind of challenges that adults face in the world beyond the classroom. It requires using a repertoire of knowledge and skills to accomplish a goal or solve an open-ended problem. In addition, it entails the thoughtful application of knowledge rather than recalling facts. It has an identified purpose or audience, involves a realistic scenario, it has an established criteria and requires developing an authentic product or performance.

5.1.3. **Open-Ended Assessments:** Students are presented with a challenge and asked to provide an original response.

5.1.4. **Selected Responses:** Completed independently these single-occasion assessments provide a snapshot of students' specific knowledge e.g. tests or quizzes.

5.1.5. **Process Focused Assessments:** This involves the observation and recording of student responses and actions through the completion of a task.

6. Assessment Tools

6.1. The previously identified assessment strategies are put into practice at McKinnon Primary School using a variety of assessment tools including:

6.1.1. **Rubrics:** Rubrics are established sets of criteria used for scoring or rating children's tests, portfolios, or performances. The descriptors tell the child and the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by children as well as by teachers.

6.1.2. **Benchmarks/Exemplars:** These are samples of children's work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Benchmarks/Exemplars can be used in conjunction with rubrics or continuums. Benchmarks should be appropriate and useable within a particular school context.

6.1.3. **Checklists:** These are lists of information, data, attributes, or elements that should be present.

6.1.4. **Anecdotal records:** Anecdotal records are brief, written notes based on observations of children. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.

6.1.5. **Continuums:** These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a child is in a process.
6.1.6. **Transdisciplinary Skills Assessments** (research, thinking, communication, self-management and social skills): The focus is on the process and skill application rather than on the product. These skills are regularly observed in real contexts using checklists, anecdotal notes, and inventories as part of summative assessments and can also be peer and self-assessed.

7. Reporting
7.1. Reporting is a means of communicating what students know, understand and can do.
7.2. Effective reporting should:
    7.2.1. communicate clear, individualised and accurate information about student learning progress related to curriculum outcomes.
    7.2.2. clearly identify the areas of strength and areas for improvement for each individual student.
    7.2.3. communicate assessment information to help students, parents, teachers and the school.
7.3. Reporting to parents will include:
    7.4.1. a written report for each semester
    7.5.2. two formal conferences (Three-way and/or student-led conferences)
    7.6.3. Portfolios.

8. Written Reports
8.1. Written reports are provided to families in June and December of each year.
8.2. Written reports follow a consistent school-wide structure, clearly communicating student performance in subject specific learning and Transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry, ensuring consistent judgements and language is used.
8.3. The Transdisciplinary Skills, Attributes of the Learner Profile, and PYP Attitudes are reflected in the comments that teachers write on every report.
8.4. The staff at McKinnon Primary School strive to communicate, share, and reflect on student learning at the end of each Unit of Inquiry. This information is collected as part of the Portfolio and can also be reflected upon in the report comments.

9. Conferences
9.1. Parents, students, and teachers are all valued partners in the conferencing process, sharing the responsibility for learning and student improvement. Pathways for communication need to be open and reciprocal.
9.2. McKinnon Primary School builds into the school calendar two parent-teacher-student conferences - also known as three-way conferences and/or student-led conferences. We provide opportunities throughout the school year for additional conferences enabling parents, teachers, and/or students to participate, depending upon the purpose.

10. Student Demonstrations of Learning
10.1. **Portfolios:** Portfolios are an ongoing, purposeful collection is composed of selected student work and is designed to demonstrate growth, creativity, and reflection.
10.2. **Year Six Exhibition:** In the final year of the PYP students participate in a culminating project requires each student to demonstrate engagement with the five essential elements of the program (knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action). Students are required to engage in a collaborative transdisciplinary inquiry process that involves them identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real life issues or problems.

11. References
11.1. Easley, Shirley-Dale and Mitchell, Kay. Portfolios Matter. Pembroke Publishers Ltd., Ontario, Canada. 2003.
11.2. Hattie, J. Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning. Taylor and Francis Ltd., London, UK. 2013.
11.3. Hattie, J. and Timperley, H. The Power of Feedback. Review of Educational Research, March 2007. Vol. 77. No. 181-112.
11.4. International Baccalaureate Organization, Programme Standards and Practices. Cardiff 2014.
11.5. International Baccalaureate Organization, Making the PYP Happen. Cardiff 2009.

11.6. Marzano, Robert J; Pickering, Debra J.; Pollock, Jane E. Classroom Instruction That Works. ASCD: Alexandria, VA. 2001.

11.7. Tomlinson, C.S. The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners. ASCD: Alexandria, VA. 1999

11.8. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The Australian Curriculum in Victoria. http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/. 04/10/16.

11.9. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Victorian Curriculum Foundation - 10 http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/ 04/10/16

11.10. Vygotsky, L. (1978) Interaction between learning and development. From: Mind and Society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

11.11. Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J. Understanding by Design: Professional Development Workbook. ASCD: Alexandria, VA. 2004.

12. Evaluation

12.1. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Review Date: October 2019

This policy was last ratified by School Council in: October 2016