**PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL February 2018**

**Assessment Policy**

**Introduction**

The assessment policy is expected to be used in conjunction with the marking policy to provide students and teachers with information about their academic progress and what they need to do make further progress. The marking policy is separate from the Assessment policy and makes reference to the frequency and quality of marking expected to be found in student books and folders.

The assessment policy covers the formal assessment cycle and how it is used to show progress, attainment and inform future planning.

**Rational**

Since the abolishment of levels, the school has sought to implement a system of formal assessment that progresses seamlessly from baseline assessment in school to the end of Key Stage 4 (GCSE). The old system of levels and grades had two different sets of criteria and therefore there always appeared to be a dip in student attainment and progress as students moved from KS3 to KS4. In reality however students were beginning a new and more challenging course and therefore learning new skills and knowledge that weren’t necessarily a logical progression from previous learning. It was felt that Portal House needed a system that was easy to understand, showed even the smallest amounts of progression and provided a linear progression from arrival in year 7 to leaving in year 11.

**The Assessment System**

With the ability to create an assessment system unique to the school, it was decided to focus, from the outset, on the end result, which is a GCSE grade. Therefore, in all subjects the strands that are assessed at GCSE level are used to assess throughout years 7 to11 and applied to the learning that students have been exposed to up until that point. Therefore, in year 7, for example, although the assessment would follow the same style and format of a GCSE paper, the questions and tasks would be simplified to cover only what students had learned so far. Where an assessment would be ungraded on a GCSE paper, the U grade has been replaced by grades H, I and J. This is so that the younger students still achieve a grade.

Alongside this there is a points scale that runs from 0 (J-) to 100 (9). This gives teachers the ability to fine grade within each numbered and lettered grade. The intended outcome of this is to provide smaller increments of attainment so that students will be able to see progress from assessment to assessment.

**Assessment Cycle**

All students take a baseline assessment when they arrive at Portal House School and progress is measured from this point. Currently, assessments are taken in all subjects during terms 2, 4 and 6. In addition to this, assessments in Maths and English are also taken in terms 1, 3 and 5. It was felt that bi-termly assessments would be more suitable as this would enable students to have attended enough lessons to be able to show progress. However, it was deemed to be more suitable to assess Maths and English every term due to the importance placed upon these subjects and the fact that progress should be evident in light of the fact that currently students attend 10 lessons per fortnight in English and 9 in maths.

**Use of Assessment**

The assessment cycle will inform teaching staff of current attainment and in conjunction with previous attainment data will provide information on progress over time. Subject leaders are then able to identify students who are not making sufficient progress and put in place interventions.

Subject teachers are expected to share the attainment and progress information with the students and discuss the areas in which they achieved well and which areas will need to be developed further. The subject teacher also has the responsibility of planning future lessons to ensure that areas identified as needing further development are addressed. Subject teachers are also responsible for identifying and implementing individual interventions in conjunction with the subject leader and / or the Deputy Headteacher.

Student flight paths that record the progress over time in graphical form are to be found in the front of books or folders.

**Responsibility**

The Deputy Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the assessment system is in place and that the cycle is applied at the appropriate times. The Deputy Headteacher is also responsible for scheduling progress analysis meetings with subject leaders and reporting to the Headteacher with reference to all matters relating to academic progress.

Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that assessments are age appropriate and challenging, accurately reflecting the current attainment as a GCSE grade. Subject leaders are also responsible for moderating grades both internally and externally to ensure the robustness of the system.

Assessment data is to be recorded in PHPs and entered into the SIMS database. Responsibility for maintaining the SIMS database at this time falls with the Head of Science.