



**The English School
Assessment Policy Guidelines and
Agreement
For
The Primary Years Programme**

The English School

General Assessment Guidelines Primary Years Programme

What is assessment?

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process. (IBO January 2001)

At the English School assessment is integral to all teaching and learning within the PYP. It is central to the PYP's goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding children through the five essential elements of learning: the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take responsible action. At the school assessment focuses on the quality of student learning during the process of inquiry and instruction and on the quality of the products of that learning.

The purposes of assessment are to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to contribute to the transparency of the programme within the school.

Student learning is promoted by assessing the children's prior knowledge and experience brought to the topic or task. Planning the teaching and learning in order to meet individual or group needs is essential for each PYP teacher to carry out. Teachers are encouraged to engage children in reflection on their learning and in the assessment of their work and the work of others.

We provide information to parents through examples of the children's work or performance. To evaluate the programme we use a variety of student assessments to assess students' performance in relation to the general and specific expectations of the programme, to assess group performance in relation to other classes or groups internally and as a means to provide information to the children, work colleagues and to the parent community.

Teachers at The English School keep in mind the following principles when assessing work within the Primary Years Programme that:

- The PYP requires teachers to be mindful of the particular learning outcomes that they intend to report on prior to the selection or the design of the assessment.

- The teachers need to employ techniques for assessing children's work that take into account the diverse, complicated and sophisticated ways that individual children use to understand experience.
- Both student and teacher self-assessment and reflection are included in the process of assessment.
- Opportunities are provided for students to consider their progress in relation to the attributes listed in the PYP student profile.
- Observations and anecdotal records of their own performance can be included in each child's portfolio of selected work.
- The student can also contribute to his/her own assessment through student-led development talks.
- Using examples put forward by the IBO and those developed within the school, that teachers use a variety of assessment strategies and tools, for example, rubrics, anecdotal records, checklists, benchmarks and portfolios of work.
- That all forms of assessment used cater for a variety of intelligences and ways of knowing.
- Where possible that authentic assessment strategies are used, for example, recording children's responses and performances in real-life situations which have real problems to solve. Such forms of assessment should be used in conjunction with other forms of assessment, such as standardised tests, in order to assess both student performance and the intentions of the programme.

Assessment Essential Agreement

Teachers within the PYP have the freedom to select how they assess both individual and group performance. School requires that certain standardised forms are used for tracking this progress, for example, check lists and assessment forms kept on file at school under PYP assessment.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and children find out what the children already know in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked: neither can function effectively or purposefully without each other. Such assessment tasks are included within the teacher's PYP planner for each of the six units of inquiry.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning processes and gives the children opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Summative assessments may include any of, and

any combination of, the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and process. Such assessment tasks are included within the teacher's PYP planner for each of the six units of inquiry.

The PYP Exhibition

An example of summative assessment is the required PYP Exhibition that takes place in PYP 5. As a small school we run an extended project in the fifth grade that takes the place of this exhibition but follows the PYP requirements and guidelines for the fifth and final year of the PYP.

The PYP Project provides the culminating experience of the learner's engagement with the PYP. It unites the teachers, learners and parents of the class in an activity that captures the essence of the PYP: transdisciplinary inquiry conducted in the spirit of personal and shared responsibility. It marks the rite of passage, both symbolic and actual, from the Primary Years Programme to the Middle Years Programme. Most importantly it is a celebration, an event which synthesises all that is best in the PYP, and shares it with the school community.

To prepare for this project the class teacher and PYP co-ordinator meet with the parents to inform them of the project and issue a detailed set of instructions as to the role of the class teacher, co-ordinator, student, parents and others within the school community. The school celebrates the event by inviting the school and parent community to view the results of the children's work. Details regarding this are always sent home from the school closer to the event.

Assessment Strategies

The following methods of assessment are used within the school and have been identified as central to the work of the PYP teachers. They cover a broad range of approaches, from the more subjective and intuitive to the more objective and scientific. It is essential that they be seen as a package since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of the child.

Observation All children are observed **frequently and regularly**, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle, focusing on the whole class, to close-up where he/she focuses on one child or activity, and from non-participant, observing from without, to participant, observing from within.

Performance

Assessments These are assessments of goal-directed tasks with established criteria, that are authentic challenges and problems. There are numerous approaches to the challenge/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

Process-Focused

assessments The students' transdisciplinary skills are observed often and regularly and the observations are recorded by:

- ✕ noting both typical as well as non-typical behaviours
- ✕ collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability
- ✕ synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity

A system of note taking and record keeping has been created within the school that standardises record keeping and minimises paperwork for the teachers. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions are methods used by the teachers collecting these observations.

Selected

Responses These are single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most common examples of these used in the school.

Open-Ended Tasks

These are situations in which children are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution depending on the nature of the inquiry.

Portfolios These are collections of the children's work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of an active mind at work.

Reflective Fridays play an important role in carefully designed time within the PYP for the implementation of a

variety of assessment strategies. This supplements all other curriculum time used for assessment purposes.

Reporting

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of children's learning, identifies areas of growth, and contributes to the consolidation of the entire school community. Assessment without feedback merely serves as judgement; feedback is the component of assessment that lets us make sense of judgement and improve our work. Our school culture encourages both assessment and feedback.

Our reporting involves the student, the parents and the teacher working as partners. It also reflects the values of our school community. We aim for it to be fair, honest, credible and comprehensive. It must also be understandable to all involved. The student development talks scheduled each term allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice.

Student-led development talks

These talks are formal ones where children are involved in discussing their work and their progress with their parents. The child, with the guidance of the teacher, will select work (based on a variety of assessment strategies) to be discussed. Each family is invited to sign-up for a time for these talks. The date of such talks is pre-determined each term by the school and fits in with the general process of development of each of the two terms within the academic year.

Teachers complete standardised paperwork prior to these talks and parents, if they wish, may collect a signed copy of this the day after the talk has taken place. All such forms are kept on record in the school and follow the child when he /she transfers to a new school.

As part of the assessment process every child has a written report card sent to its new school which clearly indicates the child's grade level and records of achievement. This meets the requirements of the PYP. However, such records can only be posted from the school to the child's new school. It is the responsibility of the Principal to correlate and post these records. In Sweden strict laws control what schools may and may not release regarding written records kept on children below the level of grade eight. The school's assessment agreement therefore allows its teachers to keep accurate written records on every PYP student thus following PYP requirements, enables the teachers to meet the academic

needs of each individual child by reviewing records, allows the successful transfer of children to new schools and works within the framework of the Swedish law.

Appendix

This section of this agreement provides parents with some examples of the types of assessment tools that may be selected for use by its PYP teachers. Like all school documents they are only examples as school is a dynamic and ever changing work place and as such so is its documentation.

Formalised as an agreement:

Appendix

The English School in Älmhult Reflective Assessment

The name of the topic that I have just completed is:

What is the message that you have learned from your inquiry?

What was the most important lesson for you?

What are you going to do to make this a better world based on what you have learned?

What have you learned that you can share with others and how will you do this?

Date: _____

Name: _____

What do I know?	What do I want to know?
Where will I look?	How did I show what I learned?

I felt good when _____

Next time _____

My friends said _____

My teacher said _____

Group Assessment

Unit of Inquiry Title: _____

Recorder: _____

Reporters: _____

How did you begin to work together, what did you do first?

What did your group enjoy the most when working together?

What was the biggest problem your group had when working together?

How do you deal with the problem?

Did everyone in the group make an equal contribution?

Did you learn from each other? Did you help each other? Give some examples of these.

As a team award yourself points from 1 – 4. One point means you did not work together very well, two points you worked quite well together, 3 points you worked well together and 4 points you worked very well together?

Explain what you might do differently next time you work together.
