

# **ASSESSMENT POLICY**



**SUMMERHILL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

## **Summerhill Assessment Policy**

At Summerhill we believe that assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. The main objective of assessment is to provide feedback on the learning process to inform planning, reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and guide learners .

Summerhill teachers use a balanced variety of strategies and tools to assess, record and report on learning. We believe that teachers, learners and parents should have a clear understanding of all assessment practices and expectations. Learners are expected to be actively engaged in and take ownership of their learning with the support of timely and meaningful feedback from teacher-led and peer assessments and self reflection.

Assessment in our school's curriculum is subdivided into three closely related areas.

- Monitoring -how we discover what the students know and have learned.
- Documenting -how we choose to collect and analyse data.
- Reporting -how we choose to communicate information.

### **Principles of Assessment**

The key principles of assessment are outlined below and form the principles of assessment at Summerhill.

- Assessment is integral to planning, teaching and learning.
- The assessment system, practices and expectations are clearly communicated to and understood by teachers, students and parents
- There is a balance between formative and summative assessment
- Opportunities for peer assessment and self-reflection are planned for
- Students' current understandings and experiences are assessed before embarking on new learning.
- Students are provided with effective and timely feedback to guide future learning
- Reporting to parents is regular and meaningful.
- Assessment data is gathered and analysed by teachers to provide information about the teaching and learning, and the needs of individual students.
- Assessment is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Assessments take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including cultural contexts

## **Assessment Practices at Summerhill**

### **> Monitoring Learning (Formative Assessment)**

Formative assessment represents the process of gathering, analyzing, interpreting and using evidence to improve student learning. It is integrated into the curriculum and woven into the daily learning process and is an integral part of instruction. It provides teachers and students with information about current understandings and how learning is progressing. It helps the teacher to plan the next stage of learning and promotes learning by providing students with regular and frequent feedback. This helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success.

We do this by using a range of strategies and tools including:

- Observations
- Anecdotal notes
- Photo documentation
- Student work
- Group and individual discussions
- Self-assessment and reflection
- Peer-assessment
- Open-ended projects
- Checklists
- Rubrics

### **> Documenting Learning**

Teachers use a variety of strategies and tools to collect data and document learning as a means to assess student understanding, show process and evidence of progress in learning.

Documentation of learning includes:

- Photographs
- Student work samples
- Written observations
- Checklists
- Student portfolio
- Records of student conversations, comments explanations and hypotheses
- Annotated pieces of student work

- Videos

## > Reporting on Learning

Reporting is a summary of the formative assessments conducted over a period of learning. At Summerhill, this includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. It describes the progress of students' learning, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to the efficacy of the programme. Reporting involves parents, students and teachers and occurs through conferences, portfolios and reports.

Assessment without feedback is merely judgment; feedback is the component of assessment that lets us interpret the judgment and improve our work. Reporting is perhaps the most public aspect of a school's assessment policy, and as such needs careful consideration in order to provide clear information that is useful to students and parents. Reporting may take many forms including conferences and written reports.

Effective reporting should:

- Involve parents
- Reflect what the school community values
- Be comprehensive, honest, fair and credible
- Be clear and understandable to all parties
- Allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice.

Reporting at Summerhill includes the following:

### Progress Report

This is a general report written by the teacher within the first six weeks of school. It communicates the social and emotional experiences of the child and describes how the child has transitioned into their new class.

### Term Reports

These are formal reports written at the end of each term to inform parents about the learning that has occurred for their child during the reporting period with a focus on all developmental areas.

### Portfolios

Schools have a responsibility to show evidence of student learning. As an example, portfolios are one method of collecting and storing information that can be used to document and assess student progress and achievement.

A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection.

A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work. It provides a picture of each student's progress and development over a period of time both as individual and group learners. It enables students to reflect with teachers, parents and peers in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement, and then to set individual goals and establish teaching and learning plans. Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international schools 2009. P50

Portfolios at Summerhill are digital and are in the form of Seesaw for students aged 1-6

### Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences occur twice in the school year, after the progress report and again after the first term formal report. For K4 and K5, the first conference is a three-way conference where the student joins his/her parents and teacher. The purpose of these meetings are for the teacher, parent and student to share and reflect on the learning, understand the school curriculum and to collaborate in setting goals to achieve these goals.

### Unit / Project Work celebrations

Throughout the year, Summerhill parents are invited to celebrate the learning that is happening. This is a time when children share their work and experiences with their families.

**References:** Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education

**Acknowledgements:** Aoba-Japan International School

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