(27) - ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

Rationale
The Montessori educational philosophy and curriculum is based on understanding what Dr Montessori describes as “The four planes of Development”, 0-6 years, 6-12 years, 12-18 years and 18-24 years. These planes of development are also supported by Piaget and Bruner, and underpin the guiding principles of the SCSA K-10 Curriculum.

The methods The Beehive Montessori School uses to report student achievement align with the SCSA K-10 reporting policy. The following information will articulate how this alignment occurs.

In the first three planes of development Montessori schools provide prepared environments, or classrooms, that include multi-age grouping of 3-6 year olds, 6-9 year olds, 9-12 year olds and 12-15yr olds. These educational environments are especially designed for children to develop executive functions such as independence, learning at their own rate, making meaningful choices, prioritising, developing self-discipline or self-regulation, time management skills, empathy and intrinsic motivation.

We encourage students to recognise their strengths and acknowledge and develop areas that need improvement. An individual’s development to their full potential is not governed or assisted by comparison with their peers, and this is one of the reasons a Montessori classroom has an age range of 3 years.

Dr Montessori advocates that directly comparing children or grading them against their peers could be seriously detrimental to their development. Every Montessori classroom is multi-aged and there are usually about 8 or less children of a single aged group. Sometimes, the child’s peer could be two years older or younger. All the children are very aware of each other’s abilities and are comfortable with their strengths and areas which need growth. Comparison and grading could damage a child’s self-esteem and cause parents unnecessary concern.

If we were to grade them, the child with a learning difference who has worked extremely hard to achieve a “D” will give up when he sees that a friend who made little or no effort achieved an “A”. In a Montessori classroom it is the effort and the work that we applaud, it is the process that we value and not the grade or result. Placing an emphasis on their grade with comparison with their peers will inhibit growth of their self-esteem and could diminish meaningful engagement with their work, causing some children to simply give up.
and encourage other children to become lazy. Grading children in this way is directly in opposition to the Montessori methodology and philosophy.

**Objectives**

- To ensure that student's progressive achievement in all learning areas of the Montessori National Curriculum is monitored consistently within and across the years they attend Beehive.
- To ensure that student achievement is recorded and communicated within the school for the purpose of reviewing curriculum delivery and teaching strategies.
- To report student achievement to parents in a way that is meaningful and consistent with the ideals of the Montessori method.

**Links to the School and Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan promotes the preservation and continuous improvement of the educational system for children based on the education of the whole child in keeping with the purest ideals of the Montessori Method and the guidelines provided by the AMI (Association Montessori Internationale).

**Overview**

**Student Assessment**

The Montessori curriculum (as approved by ACARA in 2011- see 3.1 Curriculum Plan) is very prescriptive and involves the use of a sequential set of materials, designed to teach specific concepts, and students are continuously self-correcting when using the materials.

For the younger child, most of their activities involve ‘hands-on’ manipulation of a set of sequential Montessori Materials for all subject areas. They easily see if their work is not accurate and can self-correct accordingly. For the primary aged students, there are also many opportunities for self-correction. All cultural subjects (history, geography, botany, zoology, ecology, music and art) are supported by specific nomenclature with moveable materials. These consist of pictures, labels and definitions that have a control booklet. The students can manipulate the material and then self-correct, which aids in the development of independence.

Based on the Montessori curriculum, the Beehive Montessori School has developed a comprehensive set of individual student checklists for all of the four age groups; 3-6, 6-9, 9-12 and 12-15 to reflect this (See 3.1 Curriculum Plan). These checklists span all learning areas, and detail each lesson a child is given during his or her time at The Beehive Montessori School. These lessons are in turn aligned to achievement standards from The Western Australian Curriculum & Assessment Outline. Each lesson is marked with the five point scale. Teachers continually update these records and parents can access them on request.
Rather than A, B C D E, we use an equivalent five point scale: presented, emerging, developing, consolidating and mastered (See table1 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Beehive Scale</th>
<th>Achievement descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Excellent</td>
<td>5. Mastered</td>
<td>The student demonstrates excellent achievement of what is expected for this year level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B High</td>
<td>4. Consolidating</td>
<td>The student demonstrates high achievement of what is expected for this year level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Satisfactory</td>
<td>3. Developing</td>
<td>The student demonstrates satisfactory achievement of what is expected for this year level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Limited</td>
<td>2. Emerging</td>
<td>The student demonstrates limited achievement of what is expected for this year level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Very Low</td>
<td>1. Presented</td>
<td>The student demonstrates very low achievement of what is expected for this year level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers also keep portfolios of the children’s work which is evaluated against the Australian Curriculum achievement standards in Maths, English, Science, History, Geography, The Arts, Health & Physical Education and Technology (see 3.1 Curriculum Plan).

Children are formally tested (see Beehive Standardised Assessment Schedule) every year from the age of 5-15 years to assess phonological awareness, spelling, reading, comprehension and maths. The tests administered are standardised across Australian norms which reflect scores relevant to their age. Parents have access to these test results whenever they want.
If a child tests significantly below his or her chronological age, an **intervention procedure** will begin (see A27 Procedure for Intervention). The teacher will confer with the Principal and if there are significant concerns the school will suggest that the child undergo a series of physiological tests (vision, hearing etc.). If required, an **Individual Education Programme** (M8) is designed for the child that may include input from the teacher, parent, Principal and any specialist that may have made recommendations, and outlines how we will cater to the individual needs of the student, and monitor their progress. This process is not only to assist those with learning challenges, but also to identify and plan for those students who are gifted and talented.

The Beehive Montessori School also participates in the NAPLAN testing for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 which shows the school’s mean compared to the state and national mean. Parents are given their children’s reports and the school publishes how the school performed in comparison to other schools in the state and the nation in the newsletter and at the School Annual General Meeting in our Annual Report. We are happy to show parents a copy of the complete school’s report and this shows them how their child performed in relation to their age peer group.

**Reporting**

The Beehive Montessori School communicates with parents and carers throughout the year to ensure that they are well-informed about their child's achievement and progress. The School's reporting process is clear and transparent: **formal report meetings occur twice yearly** in plain language and in a format that is relevant to the school's philosophy.

The first semester reporting meeting is a Portfolio Reporting session at the end of Term 2 with the teacher available to answer any questions. A second formal report meeting occurs at the end of the school year when parents and their child meet with their teacher and are provided with a written report which outlines how a child is progressing in all learning areas, as well as **student attributes** such as students’ attitude, behaviour and effort, concluding in an overall teacher and student comment (see A31 Student Report). The portfolios of student work samples are also available at these meetings. In addition to these two scheduled formal reporting opportunities, parents are free to book a meeting with teachers before or after the school day. Parents are also welcome to view portfolios at the end of each school day.

Parents are also encouraged to book an ‘observation’ once a term. This allows the parent to observe their child working, by sitting in on the classroom and is followed by a meeting with the teacher. During this meeting the parents may look at all written records pertaining to their child. These include their child’s test results (A31c), Student Checklist (A18), portfolio work samples linked to the Australian Curriculum achievement standards (A33) and anecdotal observations. These meetings are always recorded by the teacher and kept in the child’s file. Unscheduled viewing of work, parent driven teacher meetings and
observations all provide opportunities for more informal reporting, tailored to the needs of the family and the school community.

Levels of Responsibility
The Principal is responsible for:
- Ensuring the Montessori philosophy directs our assessment and reporting policy and procedures

The Assistant Principal is responsible for:
- Those duties as delegated by the Principal

The teachers are responsible for:
- Encouraging parents to observe in their child’s classroom
- Meeting with parents on a regular basis to update them on their child’s progress
- Observing students on a daily basis- in all areas of their development including behaviour and motivation
- Providing a variety of methods and opportunities for students to show what they have learnt
- Discussing with the Principal if they have concerns regarding a student’s learning
- Meeting with parents to discuss concerns and to make referrals as appropriate
- Following the Procedure for Intervention if this is considered necessary, including the development of an IEP
- Modifying the curriculum if necessary
- Working closely with outside professionals and the Education Support Teacher
- Maintaining accurate records including portfolios, individual student checklists, observation notes and parent/teacher meeting notes
- Write Student Reports at the end of each school year
- Annual standardised testing from the age of five years (see testing schedule)

Documentation
- A18a-d Student Individual Checklists
- A27 Procedure for Intervention
- A31 Student Report templates
- A31c Individual Assessment record sheet
- A31c Whole Class Test Record sheet
- A33a-c Portfolio tags linked to the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards
- Beehive Standardised Assessment Schedule
- Testing Schedule
- Letter to Parents on Reporting