



Assessment Policy

Our Mission:

Assessment should support the individual development of the students through holistic and inclusive knowledge and teaching styles. The aim of assessment is to enable self-confidence and reflective learning in order to be able to help shape the students' personal learning processes.

The purpose of teaching is to guide students toward a deeper understanding of the fundamental concepts in their current Unit of Inquiry. Assessment should focus on one thing for all students: understanding. Teaching with this goal in mind focuses on the process of learning rather than places pressure on the result of the learning.

A key aspect of assessment lies in recognizing that learning is more than just absorbing and recalling information. It involves making sense of ideas, constructing meaning, and viewing things from different angles to develop a true grasp of the material.

When students are encouraged to think about what they have learned, how they learned it, and the questions that remain, they build self-awareness and provide evidence of how much they are recognizing their own learning (metacognition). By asking targeted questions, educators can simultaneously assess and build understanding.

Understanding is demonstrated when students:

- Can teach the concept to someone else
- Can explain it in multiple ways
- Can identify what it is and what it is not
- Can connect it to other ideas
- Understand how they learned it and what more they need to learn

Involving students in the assessment process gives them ownership, which is transformative. When students feel they are actively engaged in learning, rather than having learning "done to them," they become more motivated and invested, which enhances their learning potential.

We believe in multiple approaches to assessment which are student-centered and process-focused. The purpose of assessment for the teachers is to learn how we can support the children. Assessment not only refers to the grading of children, but it is also an important point for the planning and implementation of lessons. Teachers reflect and draw meaningful conclusions with regard not only to the pupils, but also the lessons.

Summative Assessment

School tests (Schularbeit)

School tests in Austrian primary schools are planned, written examinations to determine the performance level of pupils according to the 4th grade curriculum. They last one lesson each and take place in the subjects Language Arts (German/English) and Math. These tests serve to monitor the children's learning progress. There are usually two tests per semester in each subject, the results of which are included in the overall assessment (Berger et al., 2016).

Literature used:

Berger, S., Cermak, U., Fischer, I., Flandorfer, G., Hochenegg, B., Jagersberger, I., Kirchstorfer, O., Novy, H., Seidl, S., Sharifpour, M., Wittig, G., Zunzer, K. (2016). *Schoolwork in primary school - a handout*. Retrieved from <https://s6581a744aadda5ef.jimcontent.com/download/version/1695138285/module/12124294293/name/Schularbeiten%20in%20der%20Volksschule%20-%20eine%20Handreichung%20zu%20gesetzlichen%20Grundlagen%20Deutsch%20Mathematik.pdf>

The Schularbeit is designed by the classroom teacher. In our German-language classes, the students do the tests in German. In the English-language class, the students may choose to do it in German or in English.

According to the Austrian law, students must have one math Schularbeit and one German/English Schularbeit per semester. When a child is absent on the day of a Schularbeit, they are not allowed to make up the exam if they already have one test that they have taken. If a student misses one of the Schularbeit in the semester, they will be assessed on their work in the class.

IKMPlus

The IKMPLUS (informal competence measurement) in primary school records the basic competences of pupils in the subjects German and Mathematics once a year at the end of the summer semester in the 3rd and 4th grades.

The children's individual knowledge is assessed on the basis of the respective curriculum in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in specific areas. This survey provides teachers with valuable data to tailor lessons to the needs of the pupils.

Literature used:

IQS. (undated). IKM PLUS - Primary school: General information. IQS. Retrieved from <https://www.iqs.gv.at/themen/nationale-kompetenzerhebung/ikm-plus-volksschule/allgemeine-informationen>

MIKA-D Test

This is clarified in our Language Policy

Evaluation and Grading:

We follow the Austrian law to provide the necessary grades to our students once every semester. A 5 is considered “not passing”, a 4 is considered "sufficient", a 3 is “satisfactory”, a 2 is considered “good,” and a 1 is considered “very good.”

Along with our grades, we provide each student with a learning goals catalogue. This catalogue targets specific areas of development for the children. It evaluates social competencies, areas of growth, as well as more specific learning goals.

Performance Tasks

This method can be used to assess students' ability to apply their knowledge in practical, meaningful ways, beyond traditional testing. These can be summative or formative in nature. We use learning activities, assemblies, presentations, and other ways for students to showcase their knowledge, understanding, and proficiency.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessments monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback. It helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work.

Formative assessment goes hand-in-hand with reflections. This type of assessments allows teachers to adjust their teaching strategies in real-time to better meet the needs of the students as individuals and the class as a whole.

Reflections

Reflections encourage students to think critically about their learning experiences. This method helps students internalize what they've learned and consider how they can apply it in the future. Using the Approaches to Learning consistently and allowing students to reflect on their experiences during a unit teaches pupils their learning style and they learn how to learn.

Reflections also apply to our staff members. Communication between the teaching staff, afternoon supervision, the parents, and the children is very important. By creating a strong

sense of teamwork, we can reflect together and constructively provide feedback to all members of the community

Self-Assessment

Students are guided to assess their own work to help them become more independent learners and to foster a deeper awareness of their learning process. This form of assessment strengthens the Approaches to Learning specifically in the Thinking Skills category. It goes hand-in-hand with being Reflective.

Peer Assessment

Peer assessment helps students develop their ability to evaluate the work of others, which in turn improves their self-assessment skills and deepens their understanding of the subject matter. Being able to identify areas of strengths and areas of growth for others deepens an individual's understanding of the topic at hand.

This type of assessment also deepens the Learner Profile Attributes by strengthening children who are open-minded, caring, principled, reflective, and communicators. Using peer assessment to highlight the LPAs builds a more secure and safe learning environment, which in turns deepens and promotes healthier learning.

Observation

This method can be used to understand students' engagement and social skills, which might not be evident through traditional assessments. Through our observations as teachers, we can view students through a lens of growth and support leading to more individualized resources for the children. Observations are more useful as a proactive approach to see how to improve student learning.

Students can also be charged to observe things around them including observing others, themselves, even the teacher! Observations can provide excellent feedback and open up positive, mutual conversations.

Ongoing Assessment

Ongoing assessment means regularly checking and observing the children's learning status and progress to find out what their strengths are and where they still need support. Ongoing assessment is used to ensure that all children are making progress, and if a different teaching method needs to be implemented, or if a lesson needs to be adapted to ensure good learning. It means comprehensive and continuous observation of the learning and development process of the pupils. It allows for input to be provided in a more targeted way.

Portfolios

Portfolios are a tool for ongoing assessment as well as a way for students to reflect on their progress and learning. We use them to track students' progress, celebrate their achievements, and encourage them to take ownership of their learning journey.

Checklists

I use them to provide students with a clear outline of tasks they need to complete, which helps them stay organized and focused.

Assessment for inclusion:

As an inclusion school, we must build assessments tailored for the needs of all students. Students with identified special needs are provided with myriad ways to meet their needs. Students are allowed to use assistive technology and special aids. Some students are granted additional time or a different environment to accomplish their goals. Students with special needs are provided with multiple approaches of assessment in all subjects throughout the year as per their individualized needs. These students are provided ongoing support from their integration teacher, their classroom teacher, our school psychologist, our school counsellor, and our school social worker.

In Summary:

Why do we assess?

- To measure learning and progress
- To provide feedback and guidance
- To make informed decisions
- To ensure accountability
- To support continuous improvement
- To evaluate effectiveness

Assessment at Volksschule Smart City means an actual state of each child and serves not only to provide orientation for teachers and children, but also to better support and encourage the child. Assessment must be fair and transparent: teacher to child, child to child, parent to child, teacher to parent, child to parent, and within ourselves. Our teachers are asked to be transparent about their assessment methods. Feedback and self-reflection are very important, not only for children but also for teachers. Consistent documentation is important to our staff and the needs of our school. Assessment should enable self-confidence and reflective learning in order to guide our teachers to shape and design a personalized learning process for all.