



Stella Maris School

Monitoring and Quality Assurance for Teaching and Learning

(Working Document)

2025-2026

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Stella Maris School is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of all members of the school. All school staff and volunteers who work in the school are expected to share this commitment and vision.

This Policy was written in consultation with the Trustees, Headteacher and the staff of Stella Maris School with due regard to our mission statement.

“At Stella Maris we endeavour to put the children at the centre of everything we do. Our mission is to educate, nurture and instil traditional values and cherish our children. We inspire them to achieve their best in every aspect of their lives.”

Overview

At Stella Maris School we use a range of sources to get a reliable overall picture of the quality of teaching and learning in all age groups across the school.

We use tracking and summary sheets to record and communicate the outcomes of our monitoring activities and understand how to act on evidence seen to improve our offer. Although we know from paragraphs 26 and 129 of the Inspection Handbook that Ofsted no longer requires schools to provide evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning, as it instead collects evidence from its first-hand observations and conversations to evaluate the overall quality of education, we still keep records for our own evidence of Learning Walks and classroom visits, which help the Headteacher and management to evidence quality assurance of the level of teaching and learning taking place in school.

Sources we use to monitor the quality of teaching and learning:

Lesson Observations

While lesson observations are among the most reliable sources of evidence for the quality of teaching and learning, they only give you a snapshot of a particular session at a particular time so we carefully triangulate them with other sources of evidence and information to build up a picture of the quality of teaching over time.

Learning Walks

Learning walks are an effective way of getting a more user-friendly overview of what is going on in the classrooms daily and an approach that we use consistently at Stella Maris School. Small class sizes and the limited availability of the Headteacher due to her teaching commitment means that focused learning walks can provide a great opportunity to gather information about the overall picture of teaching and learning more efficiently on a weekly basis.

Scrutiny of Work

Examples of children's work are selected for scrutiny across various subjects on a regular basis. This scrutiny can be operated either by the Headteacher and Senior Teacher, or the Curriculum Trustee and Subject Leaders who are assessing their subject areas.

Sometimes the scrutiny may take place across a key stage and at other times a mix of pupil groups can be targeted, if the scrutiny involves a specific subject. Scrutiny also helps to inform on progress and can over time build up a more reliable picture of either progress of groups of children within a particular subject or individual progress from one age range to the next.

Pupil Voice

Talking to our pupils about their learning in class or in focus groups is a key strategy we use to find out about learning within each year group. These conversations regularly take place during class lessons and in the plenary of the lessons. Sometimes they take place as an assessment activity at the end of a topic or unit of work and at other times the Headteacher or Curriculum leaders within subject areas talk to various age groups about the work they are doing within specific subjects or topic areas. We use our school questioning process of asking the questions:

What are you doing?

Why are you doing it?

What are you learning from it?

Ascertaining the level of retention of knowledge and skills is a key part of this process also.

Tracking Data

Assessment data helps to identify gaps in learning and might also help to inform whether teachers need targeted support in certain subjects or with specific year groups. When looking at internal data we make sure that assessments are covering the whole Curriculum and we use consistent processes across year groups.

There are three main assessment points during the year for the whole Curriculum and the data collected by the teachers informs the Autumn and Spring Progress Reports which are sent to parents and the more weighty end of year Academic Report at the finish of the Summer Term.

Our Assessment Policy gives more detail about this process and how it can vary across Pre-Prep, KS 1 and KS 2. Copies of the reports are held in the pupil files to build up a picture of the progress the children are making from one term to the next and across the different year groups. This progress is monitored through regular update meetings between the Headteacher and class teachers where individual children are discussed.

The Pre-Prep Department follow the statutory assessment procedures for EYFS and the EYFS Lead attends the moderation meetings with the local authority to quality assure compliance.

KS 1 and KS 2 use data from internal testing and use NFER and GL to gather evidence. Various commercial reading and spelling tests are used to gather data for reading and spelling ages for the children and the older children use CEM and GL for assessing readiness for the 11+ process. At the end of Year 6 children also participate in NC SATS to assess levels within the core subjects for entry into senior schools.

As well as the above sources teachers use internal testing for end of unit topics in other subject areas to analyse how well children understand what they have been learning and if any further revision or intervention work needs to be carried out, before moving on to another topic.

Creating our own formula for assessing the quality of teaching and learning

During the next academic year we are engaging in developing a consistent school formula for assessing the quality of teaching and learning which all management and staff can use when they are involved in the process of evaluating progress and quality across the school.

We aim through consultation to devise a method by selecting a range of factors which could be drawn from a large list including:

- The progress made by all groups of pupils
- How teachers engage with, and ensure the progress of different groups
- The quality of classroom displays
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons
- The amount of low-level disruption in lessons
- How teachers work with other members of staff
- Lesson planning
- How teachers differentiate or personalise learning in lessons

Evaluating teachers' performance can be carried out in several ways, including:

Appraisals

Peer Review and the views of parents and pupils

Tracking student progress and outcomes

Lesson Observations

The Sutton Trust has produced a research report looking at ways to evaluate teacher effectiveness. In its findings it identifies the following methods for use within a teacher evaluation system:

- Gains in test scores – this data is objective and can measure teaching performance
- Lesson observations – this is the least effective evaluation method
- Pupil surveys – although pupils may misreport, they “provide a middle ground against which gains in test scores and classroom observations can be calibrated”

How Teaching and Learning is inspected

Ofsted's 'quality of education' measure puts the Curriculum in the spotlight. Understanding how inspectors will judge our intent, implementation and impact, and the evidence they'll consider is an important part of this policy.

3 central concepts: 'Intent, Implementation and Impact'

When inspecting a school's teaching and learning Ofsted's working definition of 'Curriculum' focuses on these 3 concepts:

Intent: the extent to which the Curriculum (through its design, structure and sequence) sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage, including that it:

- Is ambitious and designed to give pupils (particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)), the knowledge they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life
- Is planned and sequenced so that:
 - The end points it is working towards are clear
 - Pupils develop the knowledge and skills, building on what has been taught before, so they can reach these end points
- Has rigour, where relevant, so that pupils learn the knowledge that they need to answer subject-specific questions and to gain disciplinary knowledge of how the subject works (but, this shouldn't prevent a topic-based or thematic approach)
- Accounts for delays and gaps in learning because of the pandemic
- Is as broad as possible for as long as possible, including when delivered remotely. We do not offer disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND a reduced Curriculum

Implementation: the way the Curriculum is taught and assessed, to support pupils to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge as skills.

Teachers should:

- Have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach and be supported to address gaps in their knowledge so that pupils are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching
- Present information clearly, promote appropriate discussion, check pupils' understanding systematically, and identify misunderstandings and adapt teaching as necessary
- Deliver the subject Curriculum in a way that allows pupils to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory
- Use assessment to check pupils' understanding to inform teaching, and to help pupils embed key concepts, use knowledge fluently and develop their understanding, and not simply memorise disconnected facts
- Consider the most important knowledge or concepts that pupils need to know and focus on these, and prioritise feedback, retrieval practice and assessment
- Make sure that remote education (if needed) allows all pupils to access lessons and learn, and monitor pupils' engagement and communicate with parents and colleagues effectively if there are concerns

Impact: the outcomes pupils achieve because of the education they've received – they should know more and be able to do more than when they started. All pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, should:

- Acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Make progress, in that they know more, remember more and are able to do more
- Ensure they are learning what is intended in the Curriculum
- Produce consistently high quality work
- Achieve well in national tests and examinations
- Be prepared for the next stage of their education

Inspectors **won't** judge intent, implementation and impact as 3 separate measures – they'll consider them all as part of our 'quality of education' judgement.

What an 'outstanding' Quality of Education standard looks like

The quality of education is 'outstanding' when:

- The quality of education we provide is exceptional
- Everyone knows the Curriculum intent (*what* we're teaching pupils and *why* we're teaching them that) and how it's being implemented, including what it means for them
- Across all parts of the school, series of lessons contribute well to delivering the Curriculum intent
- The work given enables pupils (over time and across the school) to consistently achieve the aims of the Curriculum and meet end of year expectations and exceed them when able to
- The Curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced so that pupils know more, can do more, and remember more
- Pupils' work across the Curriculum is consistently of a high quality
- Pupils consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged
- Pupils with SEND or other learning needs or difficulties achieve exceptionally well

