



Term 2 2018

## Embrace Equip Engage Empower

The focus of this term's Learning Quarterly is Assessment and Reporting.

The Learning Quarterly (LQ) is published during Fallow Week each term. The purpose is to highlight and explore current practices in education within the St Kieran's context. It is one of the many ways we keep you engaged in your child's learning.

Twice a year reports are sent home indicating the progress of your child measured against expected norms set by the News South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA). Reporting is done on all six Key Learning Areas as well as Religion, as required by the Diocese of Broken Bay.



In NSW primary schools there are four stages of learning:

- Early Stage 1: Kindergarten
- Stage 1: Year 1 and 2
- Stage 2: Year 3 and 4
- Stage 3: Year 5 and 6

In each classroom, students are usually learning, and being assessed on, the content set for their stage. It is expected that as students move through their stage they will have achieved the expected level before they move to the next stage. However, for a variety of reasons, children don't always achieve this.

In this edition of the Learning Quarterly you will find an explanation of the NSW Common Scale Grade and achievement levels. There is also an article explaining the importance for children to learn from mistakes and build resilience through this.

When you receive your child's report this term, I urge you to take it as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements your child has made and to set some realistic goals for the remainder of the year.

### Achievement Grades – What do they tell us?

The NSW Education Standards Authority stipulates that the Common Grade Scale is used in schools to identify student achievement. The scale (below) describes performance at each of the five grade levels.

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## A

The student demonstrates **extensive** knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and applies **highly developed** skills and processes in a **wide variety** of contexts. In addition the student demonstrates creative and critical thinking skills using perceptive analysis and evaluation. The student **effectively** communicates complex ideas and information.

## B

The student demonstrates **thorough** knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and applies **well-developed skills** and processes in a **variety** of contexts. In addition the student demonstrates creative and critical thinking skills using analysis and evaluation. The student **clearly** communicates complex ideas and information.

## C

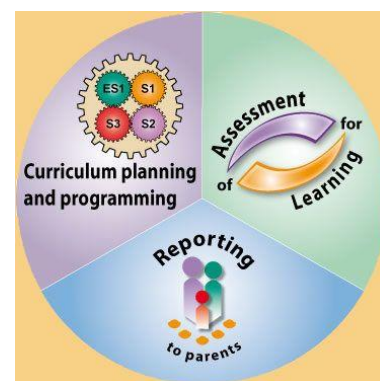
The student demonstrates **sound** knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and applies **skills** and processes in a **range** of familiar contexts. In addition the student demonstrates skills in selecting and integrating information and communicates relevant ideas in an **appropriate** manner.

## D

The student demonstrates a **basic** knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and applies **skills** and processes in **some** familiar contexts. In addition the student demonstrates skills in selecting and using information and communicates ideas in a **descriptive** manner.

## E

The student demonstrates an **elementary** knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and applies **some skills** and processes with guidance. In addition the student demonstrates **elementary** skills in recounting information and communicating ideas.



Key words have been coloured highlighting the range of learning abilities that must be evident before a grade is allocated. The similarities between the Common Grade Scale and the achievement scale used in the St Kieran's report (below) are evident when comparing the two.

Key to Achievement code (NSW Common Grade Scale)	
Outstanding	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.
High	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.
Sound	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.
Basic	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.
Limited	The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

## The Purpose of Assessment

Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies and tools in order to allocate a grade that is a summation of the student's progress thus far. This can actually be interpreted as "evidence gathering" and is how the learner showcases exactly what skills have been developed during this particular reporting period.

### *The Purpose of Assessment*

Tasks that assess students' learning assist teachers in identifying exactly where the student is as a learner. Assessments, based on a particular program of learning can be designed by the teacher in order to ascertain whether a particular outcome of learning has been achieved. Assessments that are diagnostic or standardised are often produced by external educational organisations and they identify strengths, weaknesses and knowledge or skills. Diagnostic assessments identify skills that have been developed and skills that require further development. Standardised assessments are formal assessments that have been designed to measure a child's abilities compared to other children his or her age.

We use a range of assessments at St Kieran's, in order to gain a clearer, more accurate picture of a child's individual progress. PAT assessments in Reading Comprehension and Mathematics (ACER) are standardised and so measure progress and acquisition of skills against other similar students. This assists in forming an understanding of where the individual student "sits" in comparison to other students.

The MAI (Mathematical Assessment Instrument) and Best Start assessments are both diagnostic. They provide information for the teacher regarding future needs or directions for learning.

Both diagnostic and standardised assessments are formative assessments too, in that they assist in "plotting" the student on the learning continuum.

There are three aspects to school based (i.e. work samples) assessments that teachers use. Teachers can use assessment either **for**, **as** or **of** learning. This is outlined below:

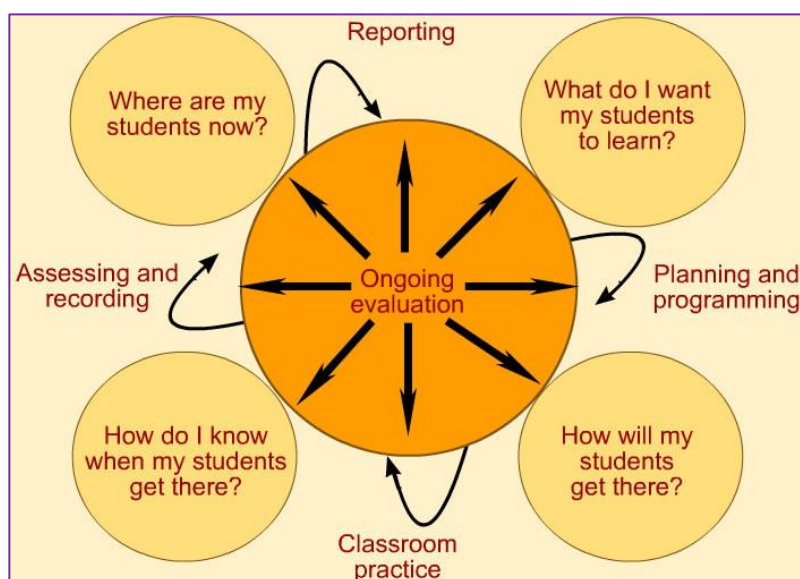
**ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING** occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching. (Formative)

**ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING** occurs when students reflect on, and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals (Formative)

**ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING** occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards. (Summative)

Diagnostic assessments are intrinsically *formative* and standardised assessments can provide data that is both *formative* and *summative*.

Your child's mid-year report is a *summative* assessment of his/her learning. The same can be said for the Parent/Teacher Interviews held at the end of Term 1. There is an aspect of both the mid-year report and the



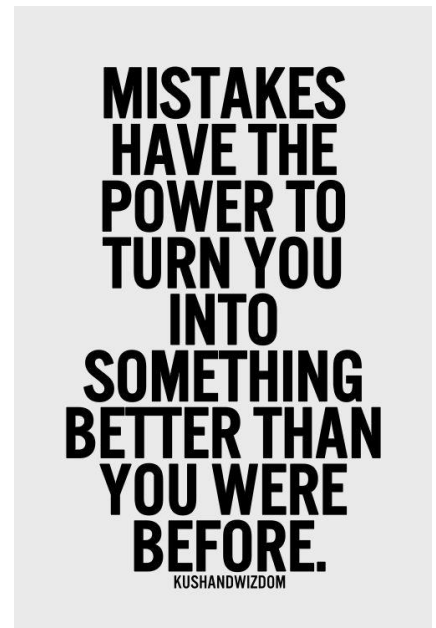
Parent/Teacher Interviews that is *formative*. That is that the mid-year report usually includes a teacher identified goal for the student and the student is always asked to think about a goal for learning at the Parent/Teacher Interview.

The cycle of teaching/learning and assessing is a continuous one that is designed to best tailor programs of learning to meet the individual needs of students. In order to program teaching and learning that addresses specific needs the analysis of data provided by assessments is pivotal to best practice.

## Learning From Our 'Miss Takes'

Primary schools are places of elementary learning. Not just the learning that comes in the pursuit of knowledge and knowhow, but 'sandbox' learning. Learning that forms basis of social behaviour and personal integrity is often called 'lessons from the sandbox'. It is learning about taking turns, telling the truth, sticking with your friends, getting along, owning up for mistakes, saying sorry, forgiveness and moving on.

We all learn from our mistakes, or so we hope. A 'miss take' is as simple that, a 'miss' on 'take' one. Hopefully on the second take we can do a better job than on the 'miss take.' Children learn from their mistakes from a very early age. A mistake in the area of Mathematics, when addressed, often leads to a greater understanding of the concept. A mistake in a child's behaviour is the same. If the mistake is addressed correctly and in a timely fashion that 'miss take' can be a building block of great personal and social learning, development and change.



**It is important to point out to the child that whilst you love them, and always will, sometimes you don't like their behaviour.** Some behaviour is a mistake and children can discuss, learn from and try not to do again. The following article give some helpful tips to parents and educators about acknowledging the child's mistake, making amends and moving on. Perhaps one of the worse things we can do is ignore the mistake or make excuses for the child, but please ....read on.....

### ***"Helping Children Learn From Their Mistakes" by Vandana Sehgal***

Parenting children is a great responsibility. Children's attitude and habits are the reflection of parent's behaviour. To learn from mistakes often requires involvement from other people, either for advice, training or simply to keep you honest.



1. When they do something wrong, show your disapproval but don't get angry and immediately start reprimanding.
2. Sometimes a firm tone works well.
3. Have a conversation with your child and let the story unfold.
4. Sometimes the child's mind is filled with a hundred different consequences. Let the child know that while mistakes cannot be undone, they can be fixed.
5. Let the child experience the natural consequences for their carelessness. If the child misses the school bus due to laziness, let them walk into class late and face the teacher.

Parent's duty is not just about realizing the mistakes to a child. It's also about helping them to overcome from the aftereffects. A few intelligent steps will shape up your children's bright future:

- Trust your child that they are doing their best and know that they will learn faster from their mistakes if they are in an environment that accepts their mistakes.
- Never insult your child in front of others using “shaming” messages like ‘how could you do that’. These messages will hamper their confidence resulting in making more mistakes.
- Don’t over protect your children, it will hinder their growth. In fact will make them irresponsible.
- Deal with your child politely and hug them even if they commit a mistake. Always show love in your eyes even if your voice is firm. This generates confidence in them.
- Make the child understand to stop blaming others for justifying their mistakes. Let them own their responsibility to strengthen their future.
- Help the child to identify the reason for repeated mistakes. It may be due to anger, tiredness or low self-esteem. Reasoning will push the child towards the right direction.
- Be a role model. When you make a mistake, admit it, even to your children. Children learn a lot from you. So take responsibility for your actions and make a sincere effort to correct them.
- Remember that your relationship with your child is the most important thing in their life. Excessive yelling, nagging, or lecturing will spoil everything.
- We all make mistakes and childhood is about learning, so be patient with your child.
- Encourage your child to dust themselves off, pick themselves up and have another go.
- Don’t be a dictator, be a support system. Remember that if you can learn from mistakes, so can your children.

Taken from <https://www.wisdomtimes.com/blog/help-children-learn-from-their-mistake/>

At the heart of every Catholic community is the rock-like belief of forgiveness and healing. The Gospels are full of stories of forgiveness and change. St Kieran’s is a great place for our children to learn from their mistakes, seek forgiveness, make things better and move on. Forgiveness, reconciliation and healing are themes that recur in the Gospels and in our Religious Education modules of learning. Learning from mistakes through the lens of our Catholic perspectives of love, forgiveness and reconciliation add a richer experience of learning from our ‘miss takes.’