

Title: <b>Baseline Assessment Policy</b>	Issue Date: <b>01/ 08/ 2019</b>
Department / Section: <b>Guidance &amp; Counseling Department</b>	Revision Date: <b>01/07/2020</b>
Reference No.: <b>AJB-GCD-10</b>	Version No.: <b>5</b>

## BASELINE ASSESSMENT POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Baseline Assessment is to assess each child's level of development at the beginning of their formal schooling in order to record how they've progressed by the time they leave. Baseline Assessment is a resource-based assessment for pupils entering Al Ain Juniors. The assessment is face-to-face with a mixture of tasks and observational checklists. Assessment is the means by which the progress of pupils is monitored. It is a tool to inform parents about curriculum planning and learning programmes.

**2. RATIONALE:** The rationale to conduct the baseline assessment is

- To define each child's ability; what the child knows; understands and can apply.
- To reveal children's strengths and areas of development.
- To ensure early identification of children with S.E.N
- To inform future planning and target setting in order to ensure continuity and progression in our work with the children.
- To find out the learner's level of key thinking skills and competences
- To inform future planning and target setting at pupil, Departmental and whole school levels
- To communicate accurate information about the child that is useful to teachers, pupils, parents, and other educational agencies.

### 3. SCOPE/TARGET AUDIENCE:

This policy is applicable to all new admission and already enrolled students of Al Ain Juniors School.

### 4. INTRODUCTION

While developing the baseline assessment policy following five key criteria was considered:

<b>Validity of the Assessment</b>	The assessment would require providing accurate information about whether a child has particular skills and abilities. The criteria that all the approved tests have met, means that they are judged to provide relevant information on children's language, literacy and Numeric abilities. The AJB baseline assessment is one to one, using cognitive-based activities and school counsellor's observational assessment.
<b>Reliability of the Assessment</b>	The AJB baseline assessment is part of the accountability measures in the school. This is the prime purpose. It is important that the assessment gives the same result regardless of who completes the assessment and the setting in which it is completed. The AJB test

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	administrator guidance provided ensures that personal interpretation or bias has no part to play; that all children have an equal opportunity to show their knowledge and understanding regardless of their circumstances.
<b>Assessment Aligned to SCF and BNC outcomes</b>	The AJB baseline assessment was developed by a team of experts in assessment and SCF MOSLOC (Student Competence framework's Measuring of Student Learning Outcomes Committee), including SLT involved in developing Students' end of key stage Profile. It is fully mapped to the BNC outcomes.
<b>School Needs, setting and manageability of Assessment</b>	In addition to being valid and reliable, it is also important that the baseline assessment is practical for our setting, needs and manageable for teachers who must carry out the assessment and record the results accurately. The AJB Baseline assessment has carefully designed routing and discontinuation rules to enable a focused assessment of the child's abilities.
<b>The Baseline Assessment policy outcomes</b>	It will ensure that the school meets statutory obligations for assessment at the same time promote coherence and consistency in approach to assessment across the school. It shall promote a common understanding of standards within the school and provide a framework within which Departments can design assessment to meet their particular needs, raise expectations of pupil success. It shall provide an explicit framework of practice which will motivate students to engage in the learning process and associated target setting and take greater personal responsibility for their learning outcomes

## 5. POLICY STATEMENT:

A baseline assessment provides information on the student's level the school aims to enhance. It provides a critical reference point for assessing changes and impact, as it establishes a basis for comparing the situation before and after an intervention, and for making inferences as to the effectiveness of the support provided to the student. Baseline assessments will be conducted **before** the actual intervention starts so as to serve as a benchmark for examining what change is triggered by the intervention. A baseline assessment is a crucial element in formative assessment research and planning, and in any monitoring and evaluation of the impact on students' progress and attainment.

Baseline assessment is part of AJS school accountability system that seeks to establish "value added" from age 4 to 15, which will also impact the progress in the senior secondary stages.

The baseline assessment results in a single score for each child. This score will be a 'baseline'. The results of tests that children take in later years will be compared with their baseline score and their attainment will be judged according to the progress the children have made.

The unified New Inspection Framework explicitly outlines that student progress be measured on the new framework attainment measure, currently set at 85% of children meeting the required NIF standards on learning, progress and attainment.

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**Following are the aspects of baseline assessment at AJB**

1. The school has been using informal on-entry assessments to plan teaching and to identify children with particular needs; the new Baseline Assessment policy is intended as an improvement on the already existing methods.
2. The school has developed and selected its own Baseline assessment procedure to identify the strengths and areas of development for individual students at the same time maintaining the similarity to the existing CATS, ACER, TIMSS and PIRLS tests.
3. Baseline Assessment has an impact on teaching and learning, including encouraging the practice of 'customizing teaching to meet individual student's needs' and is seen as helping teachers get to know pupils better.
4. Baseline Assessment has substantial use in terms of identification of additional needs in terms of having a holistic development of the child in mind.
5. The school provides information on Baseline Assessment scores to parents, students and class teachers to agree upon and set targets to achieve over a period of time, which will be evaluated at the end of every term to track the progress students are making. The assessment will help teacher's to know children better and also provide effective support.
6. Baseline assessment results will not impact student admission into AJB, except in cases where severe SEN symptoms are observed during the interview with the Guidance Counsellor. In such cases, parents would be required to provide the school with an assessment from HAAD licensed clinical psychologist for better understanding of child's learning needs.

7. The AJB Baseline Assessment covers three core components:

**Numeracy and Literacy**

**Communication and Language**

**Learning Style and Multiple Intelligences**

**The Numeracy and Literacy Components**

The Mathematics and Literacy tasks are child-friendly using questions that children can relate with. This assessment does not rely on ICT. The questions are based on important aspects of children's foundation understanding in Maths and literacy and is a routed assessment meaning that children do not have to complete questions they cannot attempt, helping to avoid a stressful experience for the child.

**The Communication, Reading and Language Component**

The Communication, Reading and Language are assessed by providing a structured way to view communication and interaction. Our Counsellors use the BURT reading and Schonell Spelling TEST, which are individually administered tests, that provide a measure of an aspect of a child's word reading skills, i.e. word recognition. The Test Card consists of words printed in increasing size of type and graded in approximate order of difficulty. Used in conjunction with other information, the Burt Word Reading

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Test will allow teachers to form a broad estimate of a child's reading achievement to aid decisions about appropriate teaching and reading materials, instructional groupings, etc. In addition, the Burt Word Reading Test should prove useful as an indicator of possible wider reading problems.

### **The Learning Styles and MI component**

The Learning Styles and MI are assessed through an observational checklist, designed to make robust assessments of children's development within a short time. Our Baseline for learning Styles enables teachers to assess the other prime areas of learning (physical, emotional and social development) and the characteristics of children's learning. The evidence suggests that these learning dispositions are critical to children's learning and later success. Therefore, we have developed Learning styles inventory, an additional component based on observation. The MI test will help teacher determine which intelligences are strongest or the learner uses most often. It will also help the learner to understand how to use their preferred learning style /MI to their advantage in every aspect of their learning.

Combination of the three core components of the assessment will provide teachers with a well-rounded picture of each child.

## **6. THE DISCONTINUATION RULE**

It is the criterion for determining when to stop test administration and is designed to minimize testing time. With the exception of Sentence Composition, the discontinuation rule is the same for each subtest. The general discontinue rule is to stop subtest administration after the student receives a score of 0 on **4** consecutive items. Scores of 0 obtained on reversal items count toward the discontinue rule. For Sentence Composition, if the student receives a score of 0 on each of the first 2 items in Sentence Combining, stop administration of Sentence Combining and continue to Sentence Building. If the student receives a score of 0 on each of the first 2 items in Sentence Building, subtest administration will be ceased.

Test administrators will be careful not to discontinue subtest administration prematurely. If it is not clear how to score a response during administration, additional items should be administered until it is clear that the discontinue criterion has been met. If, after review, it becomes apparent that the student was given items beyond the point at which testing should have been discontinued, points will not be awarded for any items beyond the correct discontinue point, even if the student's responses were correct.

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Each faculty member is accountable for ensuring the confidentiality of all student educational records in accordance with the student assessment data confidentiality policy of the School. In accordance with this responsibility, faculty of Al Ain Juniors School will not share, post or display, either electronically or in hard copy, lists of students grades in personally identifiable forms, including the student's name. The assessment reports will be shared with student and parent/guardian only and will be used for informing teacher planning, target setting and measuring progress.