

Assessment Policy

“ACHIEVEMENT WITHOUT LIMITS”

Principles and Aims

Assessment is a continuous process which is integral to teaching and learning in order to allow children to reach their full potential. It is fundamental to being able to extend and challenge children’s learning. Assessment should be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies to promote outstanding progress for individuals, groups and cohorts.

Assessment procedures are free from bias, stereotyping and generalisation in respect of gender, class, race and special educational needs. The school analyses the progress of different groups to ensure it meets individual and group needs.

Assessment can take a variety of forms and be both formal and informal. It can include:

- Day-to-day formative assessment
- Summative assessment
- National standardised summative assessment

Assessment procedures allow for the non-neurotypical development of our children.

Our Approach to Different Forms of Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment should be to inform teaching and learning. In terms of the time devoted to assessment, day-to-day formative assessment should be used chiefly, with other forms occupying a much smaller proportion of time. Teachers’ planning should take thorough account of formative assessment and teachers should be able to explain at any point how they have used formative assessment in planning for the needs of individuals, groups and cohorts.

National standardised summative assessment will occur:

- At the end of EYFS
- At the end of KS1
- At the end of KS2
- At the end of KS4, via external accreditations
- At the end of KS5, via external accreditations

In-school summative assessment will be collected at the end of each year.

The school uses the following assessment structures in Lower School:

- Development Matters, for EYFS and extended EYFS
- Engagement Scales for P1-4
- Dorin Park Assessment Ladders, for P4-8
- NC Age Related Expectations, relating to Years 1-3 for pupils exceeding P8

In Upper School, the following assessment structures are used:

- Dorin Park Assessment Ladders, with different Ladders for different Flight Paths
- Engagement Scales for P1-4
- External accreditations

Assessment information should be updated regularly on the Dorin Park Assessment Ladders and the other associated assessment tools listed above. Assessment Ladders represent live information and they are updated to reflect this.

How Assessment Is Implemented

All students will have a baseline assessment on entry to the school or at the start of a key stage. This will take place within four weeks of arrival or the start of the school year. Pupils will then be placed on an appropriate Flight Path related to their long term goals.

Flight Paths for Lower School:

- Development Matters
- Pre-formal learning
- Semi-formal learning
- Formal learning

Flight paths for Upper School:

- Vocational
- Independence
- Discovery

The Flight Paths direct towards a particular range of outcomes. The detailed assessment structures of these Flight Paths are based on short, discrete, qualitative and concrete descriptions of what a pupils is expected to learn, know and be able to do. Assessment Ladders are completed regularly as a live document to promote formative assessment and maximise learning.

The trajectory outcomes of the Flight Paths do not represent targets for individual pupils but rather give guidance on the average historical performances of pupils who were working at similar levels. These should be interpreted using professional judgement as they relate to historic National Curricula and external accreditation syllabi. Please see the section on how assessment outcomes are collected and used for further details.

How Assessment Outcomes Will Be Collected and Used

Assessment profiles will consist of:

- Baseline data
- Special group information e.g. Medical needs, Pupil Premium etc.
- Assigned Flight Path, and historic Flight Paths over time
- Live Assessment Ladders
- Reading ages
- National standardised summative assessment results

- External accreditation results
- Summative yearly assessments
- RAG ratings for progress each term
- Predicted grades for external accreditations
- Progress towards IIP targets
- Communication ladders

Assessment data will be collected via SIMS Assessment Manager and Excel on the Staff Area drive (P). Live Assessment Ladders will be on Excel on the P drive in the first instance. Any updates to information will be made weekly and the live Excel versions may be updated by teaching assistants from paper copies if required.

Assessment Ladders will be reviewed and RAG rated against progress along the Flight Path on a half-termly basis by all teachers. Key Stage leaders will moderate samples of Ladders and RAG ratings each term and provide a written report to the Leadership Group through the Assistant Headteacher.

Flight Paths will be used to determine RAG ratings. These will be standardised and baseline data will be extrapolated to outcomes which take into consideration any current national expectations (where available) and historic progression guidance in the absence of national expectation data. At the end of each academic year, a snapshot of assessment will be taken for summative progress. Progress will be evaluated as good or outstanding following moderation and guidance from the Leadership Group. This will be recorded formally on Assessment Manager.

Pupils will not be set individual targets based on grades/levels etc. Our pupils are non-neurotypical. Examination of the historic achievements of pupils nationally, from a variety of starting points, shows a very wide range of potential grade outcomes. There is a substantial risk of setting targets which are not sufficiently challenging enough or conversely which are unreasonable for any given individual. The approach we have therefore chosen to take is to strongly promote formative assessment as a means to maximise success and to assume that our pupils have a limitless potential to achieve, which we must match with appropriate challenge informed from formative assessment. No pupil's Flight Path is fixed and pupils may move to a different path if that is appropriate. This allows for outstanding progression, and also takes account of the needs of those pupils whose condition leads to cognitive deterioration over time.

Pupils who are entered for accreditations are tracked throughout their course, and a half-termly review of their progress also takes place. If it is agreed that the progress a pupil is making or is likely to make will not be sufficient for the course he/she has been entered for, the pupil, after agreement between Head of Department & Head of Curriculum, and after discussion with the student and family, may be withdrawn from the course and another more suitable course provided in its place.

Individual IIP targets and Communication ladders are used to monitor and evaluate personal progress. This provides a wider assessment profile that encompasses both personal and academic progress.

Arrangements to Ensure Teachers Can Conduct Assessments Effectively

Heads of Key Stage will, through half termly key stage meetings, ensure that assessment is discussed regularly and any concerns addressed. Teachers will have the opportunity to moderate judgements together via departmental, key stage and teacher meetings. Heads of Key Stage will moderate and take samples of Ladders and RAG ratings on a termly basis. The Leadership Group as a whole will

moderate and sample Ladders and RAGs on an annual basis and feed back on progress via a written report to all staff and governors.

External assessments and national standardised assessments are carried out under the direction of the Examinations Officer, following national requirements and JCQ regulations.

Quality of formative assessment will be monitored through the Quality Assurance mechanism of lesson observations, learning walks and book and data scrutiny. Information is recorded centrally in the Quality Assurance files.

Where opportunity for external moderation, either formal or informal, exists, teachers will be released for these opportunities and will feed back to colleagues via teacher meetings.

Arrangements for Governance, Management and Evaluation of Assessment

The responsibility for strategic management of data is held by the Assistant Headteacher who directs operations through the SIMS Manager/Examinations Officer. Termly reports in relation to pupil progress will be compiled by the Heads of Key Stage and these will be evaluated by the Assistant Headteacher, who will then report to Leadership Group. Minutes from the report to Leadership Group will be available to governors.

The Assistant Headteacher will produce an annual report to all staff and governors on assessment, taking into account outcomes and quality of assessment, and using all available data. This will take a narrative form with data summaries attached as appendices. The report will be clearly understood by all stakeholders, including Ofsted.

Assessment will be under the remit of the Learning and Development Committee, who will consider this as a standing item on the agenda.

At any time, data may be examined by the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Group directed by the Headteacher. At any time, data may be examined by a designated member of the Governing Board, although sufficient time will need to be given for the data to be anonymised by the MIS Manager. This is to ensure we have confidence in our data integrity.

APPROVED: FGB

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