



Whole School Assessment Policy

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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive document to share with staff, governors, other professionals, families and other interested stakeholders. The policy incorporates the vision, values and aims for assessment when using an adapted curriculum and the specialised approaches required for teaching the pupils at The Bridge.

Due to the adapted curriculum at The Bridge, which is a broad and balanced approach that identifies and meets the variety of needs of our pupils, the curriculum, alongside specialist teaching approaches, provides consistency throughout the school, whilst recognising developmental and age-related aspects to learning. Therefore, we have adapted and created assessment systems which accurately and meaningfully allow us to support the progress of all our pupils.

Rationale for our assessment systems

‘The commission encouraged schools to make the most of the freedom to develop their own approaches to assessment and explore new methods of recording assessment information’ (Final report of the commission on assessment without levels).

From September 2021, the use of the Engagement Model became statutory for pupils who are working below the level of the national curriculum and who are not engaged in subject-specific study. Schools are expected to report to DfE which pupils are assessed using the engagement model, pre key stage standards or SATs at the end of KS2. The Engagement model is to be used in conjunction with a school’s existing planning, assessment and recording systems to provide a flexible, holistic assessment for these pupils.

Context

The Bridge School is a special school for pupils aged from 2 to 11. We have pupils across the age range. At The Bridge, we support pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Autism (ASC) and children with Complex Needs. All pupils at The Bridge School have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

We appreciate that all our learners are unique and are at very different starting points within their academic journey. They all need different learning targets to develop their skills at different points. That is why no one single assessment tool fits our pupils. The assessment frameworks must be flexible to meet the need in recording a pupil’s individual strengths and the next steps needed to progress.

The assessment pathways at The Bridge School vary depending on which Curriculum Journey the pupil is on. The frameworks and systems a pupil is assessed upon are decided on an individual basis and should support the learner in noting meaningful achievement within school and the wider school community. We recognise that effective assessment is essential to support the quality of learning, teaching, achievement and progress of our pupils.

Aims

The main aim of assessment is to help children progress and develop in their learning:-

- a) By providing feedback on engagement and performance that will inform future learning;
- b) By recognising, valuing and recording achievement;
- c) By identifying areas of need and developing appropriate strategies to meet them.

Assessment systems/forms of assessment

Attainment and progress is monitored continuously as children progress through our developmental Assessments Pathways. These subject assessment pathways that have been collated using a range of National and Local assessment materials including: Statutory Framework for EYFS, Development matters small steps, Pre-Key Standards, Switch progression Guidance, Routes 4 Learning, AET frameworks, A2E continuums and the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Staff have access to developmental assessments in 18 areas. Which areas staff use to assess pupils will depend upon pupils' individual needs in liaison with senior leaders.

This is underpinned by our use of the Engagement Model for pupils who are not engaged in subject specific learning or are developing early skills. Recordings of pupil's engagement in the areas of Initiation, Persistence, Anticipation, Exploration and Realisation are made regularly and used to build up a picture of how developed each of these are for each pupil. Alongside this, we also consider pupils' motivators to create overall teaching environments and approaches that create the maximum potential for learning for individual pupils. This underpins our assessments of progress as we believe that:

“Without engagement, there is no deep learning, effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress” (Hargreaves, 2006, Carpenter, 2010).

Together with our developmental assessment pathway, some pupils are also assessed using standardised assessments appropriate to their needs this may include, but is not limited to, Read Write Inc (phonics knowledge), PIRA (reading comprehension) and SLUTHES (Word level of understanding).

Evidence for Learning (EfL)

Evidence for Learning is the electronic platform used to capture and create a rich, comprehensive picture and narrative showing and detailing learning and progress. The platform is used to collect evidence, alongside pupils' books where appropriate, assess and track progress against personalised learning goals (EHCP outcomes and IEPS) and developmental progression pathways/frameworks). Evidence is linked to capture progress towards targets and indicate next steps for learning. This supports an assessment for learning cycle to ensure personalisation of planning and delivery of activities.



Assessment is critical to teaching because it provides teachers with information about pupils understanding and needs that informs their next steps in teaching. Responsive teaching builds on assessment for learning.

Baselining

When children are admitted to the school, a baseline of their knowledge, skills and understanding is established against which all progress can be measured. A baseline against our Developmental Assessment Pathways is carried out alongside any information shared from their previous setting or EHCP. Some pupils may also be able to access standardised assessments as outlined above. Some reception aged pupils will also be able to access the National Reception Baseline Assessment.

Progress

Data on progress is collected termly using EFL, with achievement towards end of year targets, derived from pupil's individual starting points, used as a marker to update planning and interventions. Across the curriculum, achievement and progress, is measured aiming to develop excellent knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to make substantial and sustained progress considering their different starting points. Progress over time is a key component of learning to ensure that pupils have retained skills and knowledge and are able to generalise these across a variety of contexts ensuing mastery.

Lateral progress is evidenced for pupils with the most complexity of need and contributes towards the acknowledgment of small-steps progress. For some pupils with life-limiting medical conditions or who may have a degenerative condition progress is measured and aims to maintain skills and extend these wherever possible is paramount; this also supports staff to explore alternative means of access to the curriculum and the measurement of achievement.

Monitoring

Pupil progress meetings are scheduled to take place termly. Pupil progress meetings are professional conversations between a class teacher and a leader to discuss teacher judgements, analyse the progress of pupils and impact of any interventions, celebrate success and collaborate to create an action plan for each class. Meetings allow staff to analyse and discuss factors that have supported pupils' progress and identify barriers preventing progress. Evidence is collected from day-to-day assessments, and then questioning is based on the data collected.

Wider moderation of teachers' judgements will also take place throughout the year. Moderation is intended to ensure that assessment outcomes are fair, valid and reliable, that assessment criteria have been applied consistently. This will be done through a triangulated approach including learning walks, discussions, annotation and work evidence. This may include a multitude of professionals in both internal and external capacities.

Reporting / Statutory attainment

EHCPs

Pupils who attend The Bridge School have an EHCP which details long term outcomes for each individual pupil. These outcomes are broken down by teachers into termly targets known as Individual Education Plan (IEPs). These targets are central to providing personalised and effective support for individual pupils, ensuring that they receive the necessary adaptations, interventions, and services to succeed in their academic and developmental goals. An outcome can be defined as the benefit or difference made to an individual because of an intervention.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are reviewed annually. The Review process will be completed in line with the dates of completion of the EHCP with discussions around progress towards outcomes featuring centrally to the review. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is drawn up for each child and reviewed on a termly basis, which coincides with outcomes identified for each child on their EHC plan. A copy of each IEP is circulated to parents who are asked to work with their child on elements at home and to contribute to a discussion about it on a regular basis. These are worked upon daily within classrooms and discussed with class staff as appropriate at regular consultation meetings.

National attainment

Pupils' attainment in the core subjects of the National Curriculum [English, Reading and Writing, Mathematics] is assessed nationally and procedures for modifying the various assessment arrangements or disapplying children from the National Curriculum are available. Assessments are conducted according to directions issued annually to schools by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE), this includes, Reception Baseline (RBA), EYFSP, Y1/2 Phonic Check, Y4 Multiplication Term, End of KS2 assessment and SATs. Leaders in collaboration with teachers and parents will make decisions on which National Assessment systems pupils will access. This will be made on an individual basis.

Annual Reporting to Parents

Schools must keep an annual record of pupils' progress in all areas of the National Curriculum and formally report to parents each summer. Parents are also encouraged to discuss the progress of pupils through a range of formal and informal opportunities created each year by the school.

Data analysis

The analysis of progress and attainment data is essential for monitoring individual pupil development, ensuring tailored support, tracking the effectiveness of interventions, and promoting equality and inclusion. By analysing data, staff can demonstrate their effectiveness in meeting pupils' needs and improving educational outcomes. It can help inform teaching pedagogy and practices supporting the adjustment teaching strategies to improve learning outcomes.

Data analysis also enables leaders to make evidence-based decisions to improve educational experiences and outcomes for all pupils. By considering analysis of key groups (e.g., pupils with autism, those with sensory impairments, or those from disadvantaged backgrounds), we can ensure that all pupils receive the support they need, regardless of their specific challenges. This also enables leaders to assess whether interventions are beneficial for specific groups and to make data-driven decisions to improve outcomes.

Senior leaders will use data analysis to aid in evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching methods, resources, and curriculum, helping them make informed decisions about areas for improvement, staffing, resources, and the allocation of support. This ensures that pupils receive the appropriate interventions and provisions, leading to better outcomes.