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Assessment Policy

Policy Issued: September 2024

Policy History		
Policy Date	Summary of Change	Review Date
01.09.2024	None – Initial Version	01.09.2025
11.09.2025	Amendments made by Alison Adams Factual accuracy check Introduction updated Rationale updated Initial Assessment Updated Feedback and Marking updated	11.09.2026

Policy Author: Sioned Davies (Headteacher) ,

Amendments: Alison Adams (Deputy Headteacher)

Reviewed: Kevin Gallagher (Proprietor)

Introduction

Assessment is a process which involves gathering information about what pupils know, understand and can do and using that information to promote learning. Assessment is a continuous process. Most day-to-day assessments are based on informal tasks and questions which prompt pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. Other assessments are semi-formal such as class tests, or formal such as nationally recognised qualifications. This policy, which sets out the rationale for assessment arrangements, has been based on consideration of statutory responsibilities placed on schools, current practice and evidence from research that is commonly accepted.

This policy applies for all Golfa stage, ensuring the assessment process is understood and all pupils are celebrated for their individual achievements. The policy is designed to support the feedback, assessment and monitoring cycle and ensure consistency across our school to provide a system that tracks pupils attainment and progress seamlessly across a pupil's whole school journey. Communication and sharing good practice between staff is vital to developing assessment for learning across the school and ensuring consistency of approach.

Rationale

Assessment serves three fundamental purposes: -

- To help pupils learn.
- To help teachers teach more effectively and to adopt a more personalised approach to the needs of their pupils, and
- To provide relevant and accurate information about attainment for pupils, parents/ carers, teachers and others (e.g. to decide on pupil's groupings and provide relevant qualification levels and future transitions).

Amberleigh Therapeutic School is committed to developing effective use of the various types of assessment as defined below:

Initial Assessment - The process of identifying a pupil's learning and support needs at the start of their educational journey with us. This enables Amberleigh Therapeutic School to have accurate information to support their starting point and learning pathway to inform future planning. Initial assessment is carried out via the completion of subject specific booklets, a cognitive abilities test (CAT 4), a reading assessment and the use of GL assessments in maths and science.

Formative Assessment - This is an intrinsic part of everyday classroom activities, providing evidence of what learning is taking place. It is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by pupils and their teachers to decide where pupils are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there, taking into

account previous rates of progress and for pupils to be aware of their progress and learning development.

Key Processes of Formative Assessment

- Establishing where the pupils are in their learning
- Establishing where they are going
- Working out how they get there

This is Assessment for Learning (often referred to as AFL)

Summative Assessment - which will enable teachers to evaluate the skills and knowledge learnt at the end of a teaching period, unit or module. Summative assessment is carried out periodically to determine pupil knowledge and skill levels at a particular point in time. It can involve grading against criteria, recording attainment on entry, monitoring progress across a stage, comparing attainment and achievement against initial identified expected grades / levels e.g. those determined through a range of data including Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs). **This is Assessment of Learning.**

AFL gets straight to the heart of good teaching by:

- helping teachers to guide pupils towards their next steps in their learning
- Informing pupils to help each other to take the next steps in their learning
- Encouraging pupils to help themselves to take the next steps in their learning

AFL is founded upon the following 10 principles. It:

- is part of effective planning
- focuses on how students learn
- is central to classroom practice
- is a key professional skill
- is sensitive and constructive
- fosters motivation
- promotes understanding of goals and criteria
- helps students to know how to improve
- develops the capacity for self [and peer] assessment
- recognizes all educational achievement

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to assessment within Amberleigh Therapeutic School.

We intend to:

- Create a dialogue between pupil and teacher/other adults.
- Ensure continuity and progression for the pupil as they move through the school.

- Acknowledge areas of key skill knowledge success to the pupil, thereby motivating them to make progress.
- Identify key skill areas requiring further development to pupils and adults, which will be used to inform future planning.
- Raise the achievement and self-esteem of pupils by providing them with regular, high quality, diagnostic feedback about their work.

This policy provides the framework for the whole school assessment practice, whilst recognising that different assessment strategies will be appropriate at different times, in various areas of the curriculum. Subject areas will develop assessment policies and practices, which are consistent with school policy. Schemes of Work for each subject will specify appropriate assessment opportunities and methods.

Dedicated improvement and reflection time (DIRT) is an essential part of the plan, teach and assess model. This planned opportunity provides regular focussed support for pupils to understand what key skills they have accomplished and what they still need to develop.

- Feedback is provided from teachers (green pen) or peer marking most likely in the DIRT format
- Comments are specific and directly linked to key skills and success criteria shared with students beforehand
- Pupils are provided with further feedback on what they could do 'Next lesson/steps'
- Pupils respond to their feedback in purple pen

Planning

- It is a requirement that schemes of learning be planned for all subjects and are recorded to take into account the most recent subject specifications, grade criteria and assessment objectives (AO's)
- Schemes of learning should be treated as live documents and time should be given to review what went well and to update on a regular basis.
- All Schemes of learning should contain a variety of assessment opportunities that are linked to a specific learning outcome or an assessment objective.
- Medium-term planning and day-to-day-planning should be guided by the key questions:
 - What do I want students to learn by the end of the unit/lesson?
 - How do I (and the students) know if they've learned it?
- Lesson planning should be led by learning outcomes rather than activities.
- Learning outcomes should be derived from the specification's assessment objectives to ensure all higher order skills are delivered.
- Bloom's Taxonomy are useful tools to explain assessment objectives.

Teaching

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and teaching is supported by clear objectives, success criteria, and by methods that involve pupils actively and give them some responsibility for how they learn.

- Learning objectives are clearly stated during each lesson (Where appropriate, they should be written and displayed to pupils, they may be written down by pupils to provide a learning log or may be used as the title for written work).
- Learning outcomes are written in terms of what pupils will be able to do by the end of the lesson as a result of the learning that has taken place. Learning outcomes are linked to explicit success criteria and should form the basis of marking, pupil feedback and review sessions (inc. plenaries).
- Learning outcomes are located in 'The Big Picture' – i.e. how the lesson links to wider skills' development, where the lesson fits into a whole unit of work, how the lesson contributes to overall progress.
- A wide range of formative assessment techniques is used during the lesson to ensure evaluation of learning and adaptation of teaching to meet the pupils needs.
- Levels of attainment, assessment objectives, grade criteria and exam specifications are explained to pupils.
- Effective use is made of exam specifications and assessment objectives to demonstrate to pupils what they need to do to progress in their learning and attain higher standards of achievement.
- Exemplar material is used with pupils to highlight the exam grade standards for which they are aiming.

Assessing

Assessors are linked to our vocational courses, such as catering, retail and design and technology. The lead IQA Alison Adams is responsible for overseeing the quality assurance of the assessment process. A sampling plan is used to enable this process to continually take place. Assessors are RAG rated, linked to their experience in assessing, knowledge of subject and qualification and CPD. The process used is Red, sample guidance 60%, Amber, sample guidance 40%, Green sample guidance 25%. However, this is only a guide and the IQA can decide at any time to reduce or increase sampling levels.

Feedback and Marking

To ensure consistency, teachers will give feedback in green pen and students will peer/self-assess in purple pen.

Constructive feedforward feedback can be oral or written, according to the task. It needs planned time for students to respond or make an improvement but is most powerful when included in the fabric of the lesson.

Feedback throughout a lesson is demonstrated through questioning and oral feedback when working alongside the pupil during or when monitoring a task. Encouraging extended questions and reflection of their learning.

Time should be given for pupils to read the feedback, and then make focused improvement based on the teacher's comments. The teacher needs to make time available for this to happen. To ensure clear identification of each person's work, it has been agreed that the following format will be used.

Pupil – to use black pen for evidence and purple for amendments.

Assessor – green pen for marking and feedback. Black pen for official awarding body forms such as observation/witness testimony forms.

IQA – Blue pen to counter sign.

Verbal Feedback

Verbal feedback and dialogue should be embedded within every session. It should be specific to the learning intention and success criteria. Verbal feedback should identify both positives and the next steps, so that the child has a clear understanding of how to move their learning forward. Every pupil should receive verbal feedback on a regular basis. When this is given, a 'vf comment'/stamp will be recorded next to the piece of learning. Where it is required, teachers should comment on the presentation of work to ensure that pupils understand the importance of presenting their work to a high standard

In addition, the teacher must ensure that he/she circulates around the pupil during the main activity: offering verbal feedback where appropriate writing constructive comments/questions that allow the pupil to move their learning forward – (the use of feedforward feedback)

Written Feedback

Pupils work is marked regularly either with the pupil or following completion of the lesson, to ensure feedback is relevant and fresh from the lesson This is an essential element in assessment for learning. Close the gap marking and feedback will identify areas that the pupil needs to focus on to ensure progress is made.

A whole school approach using 'Next lesson/steps' as outlined above

- Pupils will receive regular developmental feedforward feedback regarding their progress towards their targets. This is to be linked specifically to the success criteria, learning outcome and what is required in exams whether being assessed by the pupil, peer-partner or teacher. This feedback will enable pupils to recognise their next steps in learning and how to take them.
- **Close the Gap** – pupils sign, comment, amend work or complete starter tasks which show their response to the marking

Written comments must be readable by the pupils

Marking must convey that a pupil's work is valued

Feedback shall always include comments and sometimes marks or grades

Feedback will be personal/individualised to the pupil.

All teachers implement the literacy code within their feedback, to ensure a whole school approach towards literacy, please see codes below:

Literacy codes

Mark	Means
Sp + underline	Try this spelling again
P	Punctuation error
G	Grammatical error
C	Find the missing or misplaced capital letters
//	New paragraph/Mark in where the paragraphs should be
√√	Exceptional point/use of language
?	Not clear. Rewrite this short section again to improve the expression
Λ	Word missing
FS	Write in full sentences.
Ex	Develop your explanation further using key vocabulary.
D	Add more detail. Add in the point you forgot to include
WW	Wrong word e.g. their/there, farther/further. Try and find and correct it.

Self-assessment and peer assessment

Pupils can mark their own work, or their peers, against success criteria and on occasions can be involved in shared marking (through plenaries and in group sessions). This is not meant to replace teacher marking and feedback but is important for encouraging pupils to become more independent and responsible for their own learning. All self and peer assessment should be moderated by the class teacher and completed in purple pen by the peer.

Self-Assessment 'Asesiad fy hun' – we are unsure of the meaning behind this?

In Golfa Stage 1 students should be taught to self-assess in a meaningful way, against the success criteria. Golfa Stage 2 and 3 students will self-assess regularly and up-level their work.

Peer Assessment 'Asesiad fy ffrind'

Golfa Stage 1 pupils will be introduced to peer assessment, if the teacher feels that pupils are ready for this. Golfa Stage 2 and 3 students will be expected to peer-assess regularly. Again, all peer assessment should be moderated by the class teacher, the pupil should initial their peer assessment to identify who has assessed the work.

In depth Marking

Not all pieces of work can be marked in depth. An acknowledgement of a green tick on the lesson objective/ success criteria to show that it has been achieved or a short comment will suffice on some learning. Spelling, punctuation, grammar etc will not be asked for in every piece of narrative writing because pupils cannot effectively focus on too many things in one space of time. When work is finished, ask pupils to proofread focusing on success criteria (personal targets for writing activities and Intervention targets). Only give feedback about those things you have asked them to pay attention to. This will mean that some aspects of writing are unmarked, but over time will be marked.

Assessment Opportunities

The school will create formal summative assessment opportunities, such as internal examinations for English and Maths where appropriate for all pupils, at appropriate times of the year. Other summative assessments will be identified in subject area schemes of work, usually at the end of Autumn / Spring / Summer terms.

Attainment data will be used as the basis for reporting to LA and other professional bodies and monitoring pupil progress via the school's progress tracking system.

Methods

Different kinds of assessment will be used by subject teachers, which will fit the purpose of the assessment and provide data, which is valid, precise and reliable e.g. past paper questions used at Entry Level / Functional Skills L1 & L2 / GCSE should be marked using the relevant mark schemes and moderation of some of these tasks at subject level will ensure rigour.

Outcomes, Levels and Grades

Baseline cognitive abilities tests (cat 4), reading age tests and initial subject assessments will be carried out on arrival, outcomes will be allocated, attainment will be assessed in National Curriculum levels. The Vocational Pathway, attainment will refer to Non Accredited Skill Building, Agored Cymru and NCFE grades in most cases. Assessments will relate directly to the requirements and methodologies of the relevant awarding bodies. It is important that pupils have the opportunity to develop their understanding of the different levels and how to progress to the next one.

Records

The school will keep a record of progress of each pupil, including a record of prior attainment from previous schools. A tracking system will be implemented on Ambertrack for each subject area, which the class teacher is responsible for inputting data. All staff are required to take an active role in tracking pupil attainment against targets and in taking necessary and appropriate intervention.

Individual teachers will keep their own records of pupil achievement in their classes. This could include examples of assessed work.

Standardised Work

Teachers are expected to keep portfolios of pupils work as exemplars of agreed assessment standards. This is also useful evidence of the school's standardisation procedures for the Quality Assurance internal and external moderation process, and will aid the completion of the SER.

Academic tutor meetings

A strong partnership with carers, based on frequent, regular, personalised and pertinent communication, helps the pupils to achieve their best. Termly reviews take place between carers and teachers. The record of learning is reviewed and discussed with tutor, pupil and link worker; grades and narratives on their general learning attitude and ability is also discussed. Reporting on progress is tracked by teachers termly.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupils

- Are expected to read and take note of feedback given by teachers
- To address the suggestions for improvement
- To ask for clarification where necessary
- To participate in self-evaluation; this includes noting down any instructions / guidance given

Carers

- Are expected to discuss targets with their key child
- Encourage their key child to engage positively in their education
- Ask for support for their key child as necessary
- Keep the school informed if there are any particular reasons why their key child is finding tasks difficult

Teachers

- It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning experience at all levels – from planning through to delivery and evaluation.
- Each subject teacher is responsible for accessing, using, monitoring and updating assessment data for their teaching groups.
- Each subject teacher is responsible for ensuring that all lessons deliver the agreed schemes of learning and that the most relevant assessments identified in that scheme of learning are completed.
- Records of individual pupil progress should be simple, relevant and useful, providing information for future planning. They should be available to support

judgments made – particularly when reporting to carers and other professionals during PEP and LAC meetings.

- All reports and comments about pupil attainment should be supported by evidence and should not be a surprise to pupils.
- Assessment practices should be communicated and shared with pupils – displays, reference materials, checklists etc. should be used to support pupils in becoming competent at assessing their own and others' performance and level of attainment.

The Additional learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) will ensure that all staff are aware of the necessary access arrangements, and reasonable adjustments for learners who are entitled to these, The ALNCo will also coordinate the provision of additional support as they would do in normal circumstances.

Senior Leadership Team SLT has a responsibility to:-

- SLT will conduct a cross-curricular scrutiny of work across all Golfa Stages at least once a year. Findings and points for action should be discussed with ALNCO and outcomes shared with all staff.
- SLT are responsible for monitoring assessment practices and the use of data across the school.
- Conduct regular pupil voice with a focus on work scrutiny
- Evaluate and review the assessment policy in line with the schedule for policy review
- Support the development of assessment for learning strategies through the Continuing Professional Development programme
- Ensure that the assessment policy is consistent with good practice and with other policies