



Grow Independent School

ASSESSMENT POLICY

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This policy lays out the assessment, recording and reporting practices, approaches and systems of Grow Independent School.

After reading this policy:

1. All staff should understand the expectations of them and what they can expect from each other in relation to this area of school practice.
2. Advisors should be able to understand where children are going in their learning and what they achieve or where they develop to.
3. Parents/carers should be able to understand exactly where their children are in terms of their development and their achievement.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The purpose of this document is to show how pupil progression is planned, assessed, responded to and reported at all levels

Planning, assessment, record keeping and reporting are inter-related. They are all integral parts of the teaching process. Record keeping is concrete evidence of some form of assessment of a pupils learning and effectiveness of teaching. More will be assessed than recorded and more recorded than reported.

The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. It serves several purposes:

- ‘Formative’ (Assessment for Learning) provides information for the teachers to plan the next steps in pupils learning. Assessment is not an end in itself; its main purpose is to support teaching and learning by identifying what pupils already know and can do and what their next step should be. Assessment for Learning is an integral part of teaching and learning, which is evident in every lesson.
- ‘Diagnostic’ and ‘functional’ assessment provides more detailed information about pupils’ individual strengths and weaknesses.
- Summative and observational assessment provides a means for the recording of overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way usually at the end of a term, year or key-stage.

Aims of Assessment

- To establish as accurately and honestly as possible the pupil’s level of function in all areas of the curriculum;
- To provide a starting point/baseline for future decisions regarding the pupils individual curriculum needs and learning programmes in order to set achievable goals;
- To relate back to the pupils statement or EHCP where relevant
- To monitor progress and acknowledge achievements;
- To demonstrate continuity, progression and development for individual pupils;

- To report achievements to parents/carers and to provide a basis for discussion with parents/carers and other professionals regarding the pupils progress and future needs;
- To monitor the appropriateness of the individual teaching programmes devised;
- To inform future planning;
- To offer teachers the means to evaluate their teaching methods.

Assessment at Grow Independent School – expected practice

We know that effective teachers hold a great deal of information in their heads and it is not possible to commit all of this to paper. However, we believe that when teachers identify in advance what they intend to assess and then record the outcomes of this assessment in a systematic way, it is more likely that the information will contribute to a developing picture of each pupil's attainments and learning needs and influence teachers' future plans.

A good teacher will:

- identify each pupil's strengths and the priority areas for their future learning
- establish where the pupils are in their learning
- identify an appropriate curriculum for each pupil
- identify "next steps" for each pupil and carefully plan a route to their learning destination expressed as a clear learning objective
- make regular checks on progress over time by identifying progress within individual lessons or a series of lessons
- make adjustments to the "next steps" as pupil progress dictates
- evaluate and improve the teaching strategies for each pupil
- support pupils, where appropriate, to monitor their own learning
- identify, celebrate and share achievement using evidence to adapt what happens in the classroom to meet the learner's needs

Assessment framework in relation to access to learning for pupils with ADHD, ASD, SEMH, SpLD anxiety or additional issues

Pupils with significant additional needs, including those with challenging behaviour make particular demands on the assessment process. E.g.:

- It is very difficult to assess a pupil's abilities when they are dysregulated or highly anxious
- it is difficult to assess/access learning before a pupil is able to manage their own behaviour sufficiently to focus and show consistent responses.

At Grow Independent School these factors are taken into account and assessment therefore takes place at times and in such a manner to ensure that the truest and most accurate picture of what a child can achieve is built up.

Our pupils' progress is not always linear and skills are rarely generalised spontaneously. Teachers need to use their professional judgement in analysing the outcomes of any

assessment, particularly one that depends on a published tool or on an observation made on only one occasion.

- We need to be alert in our observations of pupils' responses, some of which may be fleeting
- We need to be observing lessons and pupils' responses consistently and using consistent language to do so
- Parents/carers are crucial in gaining both formally and informally an understanding of the significance of what we see in order to determine the quality of learning
- Judging the quality of pupils' responses in class and around the school - are they different in different circumstances

Responses and Incidental observations

Responses involve sharing what we know about our pupils and the quality of their responses as we see them from day to day. As class staff, we know each individual pupil very well, which helps us interpret the meaning, significance and quality of their responses.

The nature of the pupils' responses is an indication of their attainment and how well they are learning. We need to be:

- consistent in recognising and recording observed responses
- aware of the developmental sequence in that progress can be lateral as well as linear.

Pupils can deepen their understanding and have a widening of experiences without being necessarily ready to move to the next level. Pupils may have 'spikey profiles' meaning that they excel and progress quickly in one area of the curriculum but make slower progress in others. This is accounted for in the planning and assessment process.

- continually talking to other adults about pupils' responses.

Incidental observations

Alongside planned assessment we also seek to identify key achievements outside the formal assessment process.

Assessment of pupils is going on all the time in class and around school. This usually involves unplanned observations of pupils in the many different contexts that occur in school life. Such observations often provide useful clues to individual needs and are part of the planning and assessment process.

A pupil may demonstrate in one lesson a skill which has been worked on in another curriculum area or show a response related to the focus area but not the same as the learning objective.

We also seek to be alert to the 'wow moments', where a pupil engages in a task for the first time or unexpectedly displays a skill or an attitude which has not previously been observed (for example, initiating a conversation for the first time or accepting close proximity with another pupil).

These significant steps need to be noticed, shared and recorded e.g. it could be written down on a post it note for an individual pupil or written up on a specific class observation sheet. These incidental observations need to be used to plan next steps and used as records.

EHCP targets are shared amongst staff so that they are aware of the potential significance of a conversation, action, gesture etc.

Self-Assessment - involving pupils

Whenever possible, pupils should be involved in their own assessment by reflecting on their experiences and setting their own targets. We involve pupils in recognising and assessing their progress in ways that reflect their level of understanding. We want our pupils to recognise their success and feel pleased with their achievements; this should increase their self-awareness and improve their self-esteem. Some ways of encouraging pupil involvement:

- Personal evaluation and reflection within the class group at the end of a lesson/day or week, celebrating what each pupil has done and reviewing in relation to learning objectives.
- Encouraging pupils to look back through their Books, School Magazines and photo collections and their work samples including videos, photos and pieces of work and self-assess in a way that is appropriate to them e.g. giving comments about pieces of work, choosing what they liked doing best, selecting a piece to be displayed.

Links with the curriculum - Schemes of Work

Each subject has a scheme of work which is set out within our curriculum framework. It is based around the National Curriculum, and ensures that students would be able to move more easily from Grow into a mainstream if the opportunity arose.

Each scheme of work we adopt includes Learning Objectives i.e. what we want the pupils to learn over the term in relation to skills, knowledge and understanding together with the assessment criteria/focus. Activities i.e. a range of activities differentiated for each pupil dependent on their individual objectives.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt the schemes of work in a way that suits them and their pupils, and this may include making decisions to alter some of the expected outcomes of a lesson or omitting/altering a number of lessons within the scheme to suit the students' individual needs. The small group approach at Grow allows for a very bespoke curriculum using the schemes we have in place as the starting point for planning.

The schemes of work include medium term plans that show week to week activities and incorporate objectives/outcomes. Our yearly overviews of the whole curriculum ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is being delivered, and opportunities for over-learning where required.

Although we have a very full and aspirational curriculum outline for our Study-Ready branch of learning, this can be adapted to include the subject coverage required for each individual student, and our Work-Ready / World-Ready curriculum will be even more bespoke to the individual, drawing on the schemes of work suited to that student, the qualifications they are aiming to achieve and their journey to life after school.

The pupils at Grow Independent School are at very different stages of development and therefore we do not take a 'one size fits all' approach to planning. A folder containing the Schemes of Work is kept within a shared online drive for all teachers to access, adapt and amend as they see appropriate to the individual student or small group.

What do we assess in Key Stage 3?

Students in Key Stage 3 will be assessed against the National Curriculum objectives for each curriculum area. This knowledge will be tracked and evidenced using a traffic light system of Red, Amber and Green to establish whether each objective has been met on our Key Stage 3 curriculum assessment tracker, and this information will be shared with students and parents at the end of each term.

What do we assess in Key Stage 4?

Key Stage 4 is similar to Key Stage 3 in that we use a range of formative assessment methods to establish what learning has taken place each lesson.

However, in Key Stage 4 we are also looking carefully at the specifications for the students' chosen areas of study to ensure they are working towards some final qualifications at the end of year 11.

Students will be assessed against the specifications for their chosen qualifications throughout year 10 & 11 to ensure our teachers, students and parents know what stage they are at in achieving their qualifications.

Specific assessment objectives for each subject area/qualification will be used to track students' progress towards their predicted grades using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system, and this will be reported to parents at the end of each term.

We aim to be able to offer qualifications in the following, and we envisage this list will grow and adapt depending on our students chosen career and life plans:

- GCSE Maths
- GCSE English
- GCSE Science Triple Award
- GCSE Art
- GCSE Music
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE History
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE Religious Studies
- GCSE Design & Technology
- GCSE Dance
- GCSE Spanish
- BTEC Hair & Beauty
- BTEC Health & Social Care
- BTEC Caring for Children
- BTEC Customer Service
- BTEC Performing Arts
- AQA Unit Standards in a range of functional, employability and personal/social skills.

Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) Outcomes:

In addition there is consideration to the following four outcomes and what this may mean at different ages and stages of development throughout the curriculum.

- Employment
- Independent living
- Community Inclusion
- Health

Assessment of students working at Pre-Key Stage level

Students who are not yet able to access the Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum will work to achieve the National Curriculum assessment objectives for Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 1. These objectives will be marked as Red, Amber or Green on their tracker.

Students working below a Key Stage 1 level will be assessed using the Engagement Model with targets closely linked to the student's EHCP, whereby assessment of progress

is assessed in a holistic and person-centered way. Progress will be recorded in a variety of ways including photographs, observation notes and work produced. This will be reported to parents at the end of each term.

Initial Assessments Before admission to the school

A meeting with the class teacher from the current setting or school takes place before the pupil starts. If there is a Team Around the Child (TAC), a transfer meeting takes place and information handed over to the school through the key stage leader and/or teacher.

National Curriculum levels are taken and current work books are examined to build up an overall picture of how the child is performing. Upon admission to the school:

- Wherever possible, baseline assessments in reading, spelling and numeracy will be carried out; however, this will not always be possible.
- Where relevant, assessments will be conducted by relevant specialists, including but not limited to the Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist and/or Educational Psychologist.

Tracking

Pupil tracking sheets are updated at the end of each term, we use a system of Red, Amber and Green to establish to what extent the learning outcomes for each subject have been met. Parents are updated each term at Parent Consultations and at the end of year through their written school report.

Recording

In judging the effectiveness of our provision we ask, 'Are all our pupils doing as well as they can?' For pupils with multiple difficulties, judgements of achievement need to be underpinned by a range of evidence. Records are an important piece of the 'jigsaw of evidence'. The quality and reliability of records are vital to present a convincing picture of progress and thereby contribute to judgements about achievement. They give evidence of changes in pupils' attainment, behaviour and personal development over time.

Grow Independent School adopts the use of Compass, a web-based school management system. This program will enable us to record each student's progress during the time they are with us against whatever criteria is relevant to them. It will allow us to report to parents in a simple and effective way, and collect evidence towards a student's individualised learning goals. It will also allow us to keep a record of a student's social and emotional development, their behaviours, their attitudes to learning and can be tailored to include developmentally appropriate goals for each individual's personal development.

Annual Reviews

We involve parents in the Annual Review process by seeking their views on their children's progress and priorities for the following year and sending them draft copies in advance of the review meeting.

Teachers write a full report of the activities in which each pupil has taken part and the progress they have made at the end of each year and this document includes details of National Curriculum assessments.

Pupils are invited to attend part of their Annual Review. Parents/carers are seen as partners in the education of their child. They are invited to the statutory Annual Review of the pupils Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care Plan during which any changes to the statement/plan are put forward, progress discussed and targets for the pupil set. There are also parents open evenings to review progress and termly targets. Teachers have regular contact with parents by phone, face to face or email.

Monitoring and Support

The School Leadership Team aims to:

- Ensure that all teachers know what is expected of them with regards to assessing pupils.
- Help teachers make well-founded judgements about pupils' attainments and progress
- Track the attainments and progress of individual pupils and pupil groups over time and compare the progress made by different groups of pupils to ensure that no group is disadvantaged.
- Provide parents with accurate information about their child's attainments and progress.
- Monitor practice in assessment and the use made of assessment information
- Use assessment information when planning training and the deployment of resources.

The Headteacher aims to induct new members of staff, giving information to teaching staff regarding assessment procedures to be undertaken at agreed times, supporting individual staff in the process of assessment and to co-ordinate and lead INSET relating to assessment.

As part of the ongoing monitoring process the Headteacher will work with external consultants to carry out learning walks to ensure that standards are consistent throughout the school. The SLT will work alongside the teachers to lead the moderation process which involves consideration of work samples from across the school.

The SLT (and as the school develops, curriculum subject leaders) will monitor the schemes of work and support teachers in developing their curriculum areas. All teachers have a responsibility for the assessment of the children they teach. Where necessary, training will be arranged to support all teachers in this role.