


Grow Independent School



Positive Feedback and Assessment Policy

Policy Document (2024-2025)

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Approved by:	A Lee (Chair of Gobs)

At Grow, we are committed to providing an accessible and inclusive environment for all our students, staff, parents, and visitors. We strive to ensure that everyone can fully participate in our educational community, regardless of any physical, sensory, cognitive, or neurodiverse conditions.

We can provide information in multiple formats, including printed, electronic, and audio versions. Please let us know your preferred format. We offer translation and interpretation services to support non-English speakers and those who use sign language.

We value feedback from our community to help us improve our accessibility measures. If you have any suggestions or require assistance, please contact us: office@growschool.co.uk

Thank you for helping us make Grow a welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.

Introduction

At Grow Independent Special School, we are committed to providing a nurturing and inclusive learning environment for all students. Both feedback and assessment play a crucial role in understanding our students' unique strengths and challenges, guiding our teaching and support strategies. This policy outlines our approach to educational assessment within the context of our school's values and mission.

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.

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.

Mission and Values

We are committed to supporting and celebrating **ACHIEVEMENT** for all.

We cultivate **BELONGING** and strive to create a space where all feel safe and have courage.

We always act with **COMPASSION**, building trusting relationships through empathy and kindness.

We are committed to:

- Facilitating meaningful learning in a nurturing environment.
- Engaging students who have not previously been able to thrive in other school environments by prioritising connection and building trusting relationships.
- Fully understanding the motivations, needs and aspirations of our students and supporting them in overcoming barriers to achieving their full potential.
- Our mission is to empower students with SEND to reach their full potential by providing personalised, supportive, and inclusive education.

Purpose of Assessment

Educational assessment at Grow Independent School serves several essential purposes:

- **Understanding Student Needs:** Assessment helps us gain insights into the individual strengths and challenges of our students, including their learning styles, abilities, and areas requiring support.
- **Setting Individual Goals:** Assessment enables us to set realistic and achievable academic and developmental goals tailored to each student's abilities and needs.
- **Informing Instruction:** Assessment data guides our teaching practices, allowing us to adjust curriculum and teaching methods to cater to each student's needs effectively.
- **Monitoring Progress:** Ongoing assessment helps us monitor students' progress and make timely adjustments to interventions and support plans.
- **Communication:** Assessment data facilitates transparent and constructive communication with parents, ensuring they are active partners in their child's education.
- **Reflection:** Allowing students to reflect on their work, improving and developing in order to improve and progress.

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;
- To use the information gained from the assessment method.

Assessment Types

At Grow Independent School, we employ a variety of assessment methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of our students. These methods include:

- **Formative Assessment:** Frequent, ongoing assessments used to inform instruction and provide feedback to students and teachers.
- **Summative Assessment:** End-of-term or end-of-year assessments that evaluate students' overall understanding of the curriculum.
- **Diagnostic Assessment:** Initial assessments to identify students' strengths, weaknesses, and specific learning needs.
- **Portfolio Assessment:** The collection of students work overtime to demonstrate progress, skills, and achievements.

- **Progress Checks:** Regular checks for knowledge to ensure learning has taken place and to assess any gaps in knowledge that need to be revisited prior to summative assessment.
- **Observational Assessment:** Teacher observations of student behaviour, interactions, and learning progress.
- **Standardised Testing:** When necessary, standardised tests may be used, but always in conjunction with other forms of assessment to provide a holistic view of the student.

Type	Purpose	Method	Frequency
Diagnostic	Initial benchmarking	GL assessment, IDL assessment	On entry
Formative	Identify gaps in learning and adapt teaching strategies	Teacher observation, paper/online assessment	Ongoing
Summative	Inform IEP targets and planning	White Rose Maths, GCSE, Functional Skills	Half/ Termly/ Yearly Start/End unit
Portfolio	Evidence practical learning	BTec, ASDAN, project-based learning	As necessary

Assessment at Grow Independent School – expected practice

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





- 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

Due to the nature of our provision; i.e. small group teaching, it is expected that most feedback can and should be provided verbally during the lesson on a more holistic level – as and when the work has been completed – however, there is still a need to evidence when, how and why teacher input has impacted the learning. As such, the following symbols and annotations are in place to provide a consistent approach across the school to feedback and marking in a way in which all learners can understand.

Marking and feedback should take place regularly, however, it is expected that staff will plan for a formative assessment or progress check at least once a week, where some form of feedback is provided to the students.

- All teaching staff to use **purple** pens to mark
- Pupils to respond/update with **green** pens

Symbol /Comment	Purpose
*	Written at side of work or in the margin to indicate teacher annotation - e.g comment to indicate where LO met
* RAP	To indicate where an error needs to be revisited in the next lesson (indicates student’s knowledge hasn’t been embedded or isn’t fluent and needs to be revisited in the next lesson.)
* ↑	To indicate where an edit/up level required to meet LO – this could be done within the lesson, where a student has finished the task and you want to challenge them further by asking them to move to the next step
* VF	To indicate where verbal feedback has been given and pupil can independently correct In Maths this should be accompanied by a . under the question/response which needs to be revisited or, In English/other topics , for the focus to be <u>underlined</u> when an error/uplevel needs to be revisited

	You may ask the child to summarise the feedback/ discussion if you feel this is appropriate – it would depend on the specific child.
* 	To highlight a spelling error - to be added to pupils' spelling journal by the teacher in purple pen
* 	To highlight an error with capitalisation
* 	To highlight an error with punctuation
* 	To highlight an error with grammar
^	To indicate a missing word within the sentence
* INTERVENTION	where separate intervention required- email to subject lead to advise
* supported	where pupil has needed support to achieve Learning Objective - with the expectation that pupils are working independently otherwise

To challenge more able students, you may not use the above codes to identify Literacy errors – you could just identify where there is an error and ask students to self-reflect and correct. This will encourage more reflection on errors and students will learn to proof read more effectively.

When marking a piece of work that is being used as formative assessment, staff should give students comments that are then discussed as part of the next lesson:

S = Strength = demonstration that knowledge is embedded and/ or fluent

T = Target = informs teaching, identifies a gap – this leads to the **follow up**

RAP Lessons

Following the marking of work – whether this be a formative assessment or a knowledge quiz – teachers should provide time in the subsequent lesson for students to Reflect and Perfect. This does not need to last a full lesson if it's not needed, however, the focus should be on a misconception or an area of knowledge that needs to be revisited in order to close gaps. The student will be provided with the time to perfect their work, if necessary.

Students should also be given the necessary time to correct any purple pen in their book.

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

Pupils with significant additional needs make particular demands on the assessment process. e.g.:

- it is very difficult to assess a pupil 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 in to 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 response

- 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. These significant steps need to be noticed, shared and recorded e.g. it could be written down on a praise post card for the individual pupil to take home and share with parents and carers, or written up on their 'Golden Droplet' record. These incidental observations may be used to show progress of specific interventions that are put in place in response to a students' EHCP or ILP.

Self-Assessment - involving pupils

Whenever possible, pupils should be involved in their own assessment by reflecting on their experiences. 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. We realise that for many of our pupils, especially those with low self-esteem, this will be difficult but some ways of encouraging pupil involvement could be:

- 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. This also takes place on a whole school basis during Pastoral time when students complete their personal reflections.
- Pupils are also encouraged 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. Some pupils are able to understand their goals and targets and the objectives set for each lesson. Classroom staff will help them to understand the progress they are making and what they need to do next to continue learning 'next steps'. Some pupils are able to recognise and accept when they have done well during a lesson, either from the outcome or because they know that staff are pleased with them.

- Staff should consider how this should look in order for it to be effective use of time and assessment. Due to the nature of students at Grow Independent School, tasks should be structured in a way that enables them to effectively self-assess, whilst providing the same information that would be provided if the teacher had marked that work. Instead, the information would be provided directly to the student, which will enable them to make any corrections in their work.

Although teachers are responsible for ensuring that assessment is planned for and takes place, all members of the classroom team are involved in assessment during lessons and in sharing the information with teachers. This means that they need to be aware of the goals and targets within and of the learning objectives for each lesson.

Links with the curriculum - Schemes of Work

Each subject lead is expected to produce schemes of work for their subject.

Each scheme of work that a teacher writes identifies the priority knowledge that students will need to learn within that scheme. Within the scheme, teachers will identify what assessment will take place and when, considering carefully the information it will give to them.

The scheme of work includes medium term plans that show week to week activities and incorporate objectives/outcomes. Yearly overviews ensure a broad and balanced curriculum and opportunities for over-learning where required. A folder containing the Schemes of Work is kept in the Head Teacher's office

Assessment for Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs)

For all Grow pupils, the development and implementation of Individualised Education Plans (ILPs) are critical. Assessments play a central role in this process:

- **IEP Assessment:** Regular assessments are used to inform and adjust IEPs to match students' evolving needs and goals.
- **IEP Progress Monitoring:** IEP goals and objectives are closely monitored through assessments, with regular reviews to ensure that students are making progress.

Reporting

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 Parents/carers are seen as partners in the education of their child. They are invited to the statutory Annual Review of the pupils

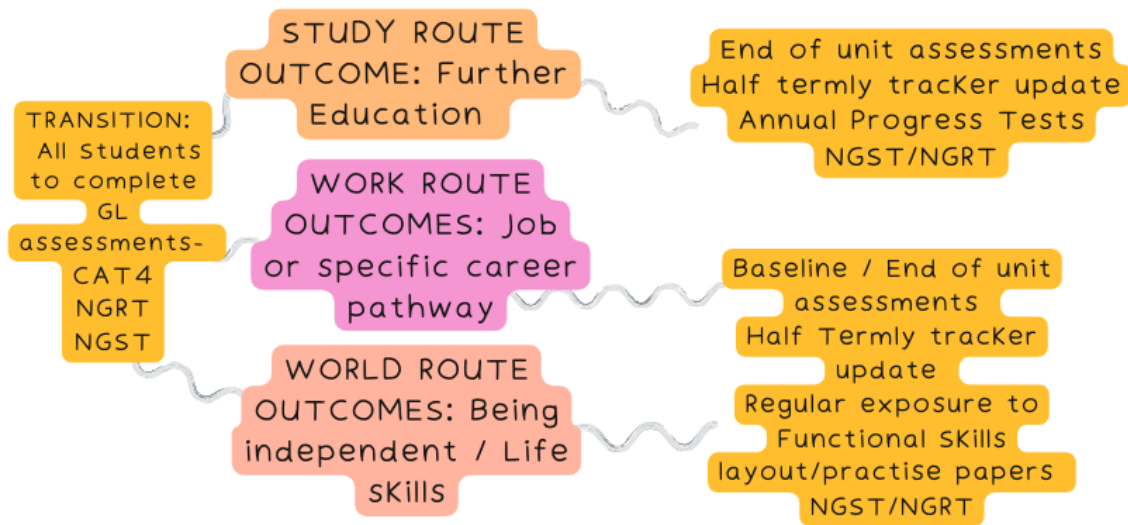
Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care Plan during which any changes to the statement/plan are put forward, progress discussed and targets for the pupil set.

Assessment Support and Accommodations

We acknowledge that our students may require assessment accommodations to demonstrate their true abilities. These accommodations may include extra time, modified assessments, or the provision of assistive technology.

Assessment Journey

Assessment Learning Journey



Baseline and Initial Assessments

On entry - Initial Assessment – wherever possible, baseline assessments in reading, spelling and numeracy will be carried out; however, this will not always be possible. This will provide benchmarking and will inform ILP targets, in addition to the EHCP information.

Half Termly – Teacher to record on student tracker and update objectives with RAG status.

Termly – Dependent on the study branch, assessments will consider the content covered that term. Branch chosen does not dictate working level e.g. GCSE can be accessed if within Study, World or Work route.

e.g

Work – BTec – Functional Skills

World – Functional Skills

Study – age related Key Stage assessment – Maths WRM – these will then inform IEP assessments

Yearly Assessment – End of year assessments – these, along with consistently tracked assessment data from across the full academic year will be used to inform EHCP review and ILP targets.

Tracking

Pupil trackers are updated regularly throughout the term as and when assessments are completed. Parents are updated through the reports issued.

Recording

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. Through the use of Provision Map, teachers are encouraged to record information that is not just academic, to ensure that we are able to build up a full picture of how students have improved – and where they may need more support. This enables both teachers and SLT to measure social and emotional elements that are crucial to the progression of students at Grow Independent School.

Data Privacy and Confidentiality

All assessment data is handled with the utmost care and confidentiality. It is shared with relevant staff, parents, and external agencies only when necessary, and always in compliance with data protection regulations.

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 other members of SLT 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. It will be provided as part of an induction programme for teachers new to the school and as part of an ongoing CPD programme.

Continuous Improvement

We are committed to continually improving our assessment practices. We regularly review and update this policy to ensure that it aligns with the latest research, best practices, and the changing needs of our students.

Conclusion

The assessment policy at Grow Independent School reflects our commitment to providing a nurturing and inclusive educational environment for all students. It ensures that we use a range of assessment methods to understand, support, and empower our students, always with a focus on their individual abilities and needs.