Serenity School

Academic Assessment Policy

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Introduction

For many years, schools have assessed the work and achievement of students using National Curriculum Levels. The criteria were nationally produced for each level for each National Curriculum subject.

From September 2014 the Government ceased the expectation and requirement to assess students using National Curriculum Levels. All schools are now expected to implement their own assessment system to suit their own circumstances and requirements.

We have considered a number of systems in order to select the one which we think will work best for our students to ensure maximum progress and success.

Our philosophy as an education provider is to aim high and work hard to achieve the very best results. We believe that students can work and achieve well beyond expectation regardless of their pathway or starting point. We also believe that ability is not fixed but can be developed with the right attitudes to learning and approaches to work. As such, we wish to avoid a system of assessment that seeks to 'label' a student and limit expectations.

We want students to believe in the possibility of achieving beyond what might be expected based on their prior attainment. Time and again, as school leaders, we have examples of students with the right attitudes, who have gone on to exceed all expectations. We, therefore, wish to develop these attitudes in all our students through how we report progress.

We believe that students need to know how to improve their work in specific ways and that good assessment should inform them what to do next to improve. We wish to avoid a focus on numbers or letters, but rather ensure that students are focused on their own progress and how to improve their own work and outcomes.

Our assessment systems are therefore designed as a meaningful and reflective approach to support teachers in planning the best route for each individual. The overarching vision is that assessment should be used as a supportive measure that allows all progress, no matter how small, to be demonstrated and for each pupil to keep moving forward in their learning, however that may look.

Rationale:

- One system of assessment throughout the whole school to provide a coherent and continuous assessment model from the time the child joins us in Reception to the time they leave us at Key Stage 5
- Simple and easy to understand – for staff, parents and students
- Identify the learning needs of an individual pupil or a group of pupils.
- Inform planning, target setting and interventions.
- Assist with the development of quality teaching strategies which motivate pupils.
- Be accurate, reliable and consistent across the school using a range of evidence and strategies.
- Gather and capture additional information necessary to provide a tailored education, of high quality to all pupils
- Inform parents and carers of their child's experiences and achievements.
- Support the identification of barriers to learning and the development of strategies to overcome these.
- Based heavily on formative feedback, supporting all students to succeed – and so develops a "growth mindset" (belief that they can improve)
- Incorporates periodic summative assessment to support this ongoing formative feedback
- Has consistent principles, to be used across subjects, but the flexibility to be suitable for all subject

Principles

At Serenity School, we believe the wide-ranging needs of our students facilitate a necessity for a dynamic curriculum that meets the requirements of all students. Hence, we have developed a curriculum which has three challenging and personalised learning pathways to suit our students' needs and deliver outcomes that adequately prepare them for their next steps. We have also committed to implementing a highly differentiated 'Stage not Age' curriculum which recognises that even within each pathway, our students' abilities vary widely.

Learning content is organised with the fundamental aim of enabling pupils to build upon their prior learning and achieve intended learning outcomes. Therefore, information about each pupil's current performance is used formatively for future planning.

All students at Serenity School have EHC Plans which identify their SEND and we act to support effective learning by removing identified barriers to learning. Best practice involves meeting students' SEND through implementing a graduated approach using the assess, plan, do, review cycle.

- **Assess** – All students are assessed on admission using GL Assessments for students on the Formal Pathway, STAR Assessments for students on the Semi-Formal Pathway and Teacher Assessments (Equal's MAPP) for students on the Nurture Pathway. For pupils with significant communication or developmental needs, including those on the Nurture Pathway, this recognises that progress may not be demonstrated through conventional verbal or written responses, and draws instead on observation, engagement, communication, interaction, independence, regulation, functional skills, developmental progress and evidence from the pupil's individual communication system.

- **Plan** – a plan is put in place to include any additional support in lessons that the student needs using results from the assessments and their EHCP. Short- term, medium- term and long-term targets are set for each student, which include both academic and SEN targets.

- **Do** - Subject specific Stage not Age targets are set by the class teacher. These are called 'I Cans' and are highly personalised to help individual students meet their own learning needs. These are learning targets that teachers set with a view to what the individual pupil might reasonably be expected to achieve by the end of their current Key Stage. These 'I Cans' are shared with students alongside IEP targets in their books and tracked every lesson on what we call 'My Potential Card' to support our **'Stepping Stones to Progress'** approach. These small targets encourage students to be part of their own learning journey. The subject teacher works closely with the Progress Partners and the Behaviour & Therapy Teams to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and use the IEP to link to classroom teaching.

- **Review** – The effectiveness of support and interventions and their impact on student progress is reviewed and evaluated three time a year by both academic and SEND team. Action plans are put in place to support identified n students to close any gaps in learning and ensure that all learners are making at least expected progress towards their own targets.

The implementation of assessment at Serenity School

Assessment, Recording and Reporting (ARR)

The assessment, recording and reporting of the attainment and progress of pupils is part of the school's core business. It is integral to teaching and learning and to ensuring that the special educational needs of pupils are thoroughly understood and met as far as is possible by the school.

ARR practice has to be manageable to be useful. The assessment of pupil's progress informs and is informed by teacher planning. Assessment and teacher planning takes place in the short, medium, and long term. Effective teaching and learning is based upon the continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessment.

Assessment

- The principle of assessment is to check and identify what a child understands and what they need to learn next.
- Assessment begins at Serenity School on the arrival of the pupil. Relevant information on the pupil from their previous school is processed (where it is available) so teachers have some idea of the academic level of the pupil. All pupils on entry will undertake baseline assessments in Reading, Spelling and Numeracy. Conventional assessments of this kind may not be appropriate or accessible for all pupils, particularly within Nurture provision and for some pupils entering through Reception/EYFS; for these pupils, developmentally appropriate assessment is used where required. Therapy assessments and Pupils' Attitude to School and Self (PASS) tests are also carried out. Through 'Live Meetings' the SEND team co-ordinates the development and understanding of the pupil's abilities and needs, and begins to prepare the first IEP part of which will relate to their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These are then ratified by all teachers and Progress Partners for use in the classroom.
- Formative assessment is done daily and lesson by lesson using the 'My Potential Card'. The focus is to provide informative feedback that makes students think about how to develop their understanding, knowledge, and skills to progress further.
- Vocational subjects assess learning as required by the awarding body, and guided by the Internal Quality Nominee, to enable learners achieve set criteria for their qualifications.
- Progress is also checked on a termly basis.
- Some pupils will undertake tests and exams during the academic year depending on their curriculum Pathway.
- A regular assessment of progress in literacy and numeracy is undertaken and where students are below their Reading Age or Numeracy level, they will continue to receive targeted
- Assessment is based on *progress* made – so celebrates effort of all students, with different starting points.

Recording

- Recording is documented evidence kept by school staff to illustrate a student's learning. This data informs and is part of the assessment process.
- Much of this recording is stored on Trackable where examples of pupils' work, and explanations of progress are also recorded. Nurture pupils' progress is recorded on the MAPP tracker.
- Vocational subjects also record progress in accordance with the awarding body's requirements.

Reporting

- Reporting is the formal presentation of a pupil's assessment to relevant stakeholders. This takes place termly
- Parents have two Academic Review Days per year where they can attend to check on their child's progress.
- Parents and students receive formative feedback about strengths and areas for improvement to aid progress.
- Parents are informed about progress in relation to school and when appropriate national expectations.
- Learners' report shows their predicted academic progress outcome, which is what his/her teacher predicts he/she will achieve at the end of their final Key Stage (KS2,4 or 5), if they continue to make progress as they are.
- The Progress rating tells you whether he/she is on track to achieve their Minimum Expected Outcome (MEO).

  Red – *Working below the Minimum Expected Outcome*
  Amber – *Working towards the Minimum Expected Outcome*
  Green – *Achieving the Minimum Expected Outcome*
  Blue – *Exceeding the Minimum Expected Outcome*

- The Minimum Expected Outcome (MEO) is based on the average performance of students with a similar level or score in GL or STAR Assessments nationally or Teacher Assessment using Equals' MAPP.
- The MEO is what a student would be expected to achieve, if they make average progress, based on their starting point and our ambition is that all our students aim for this, as a minimum.

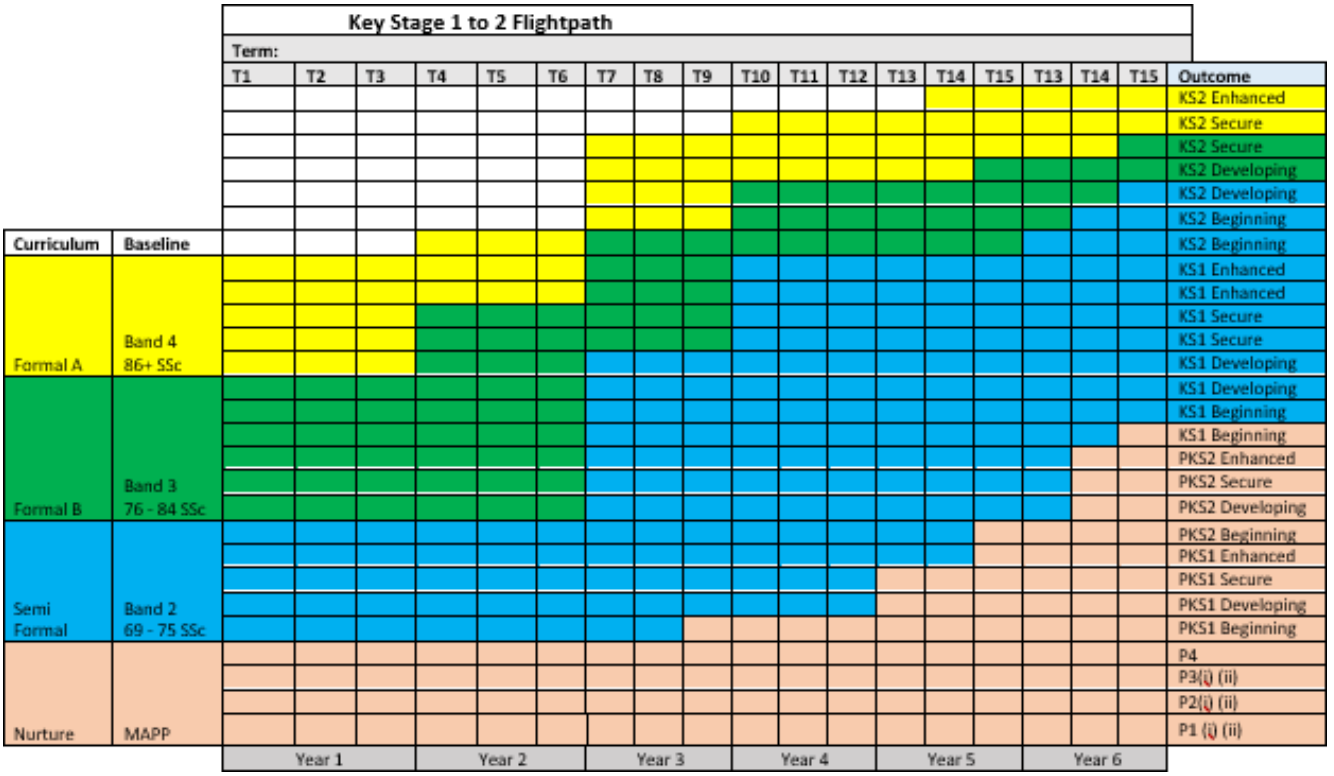
Target Setting

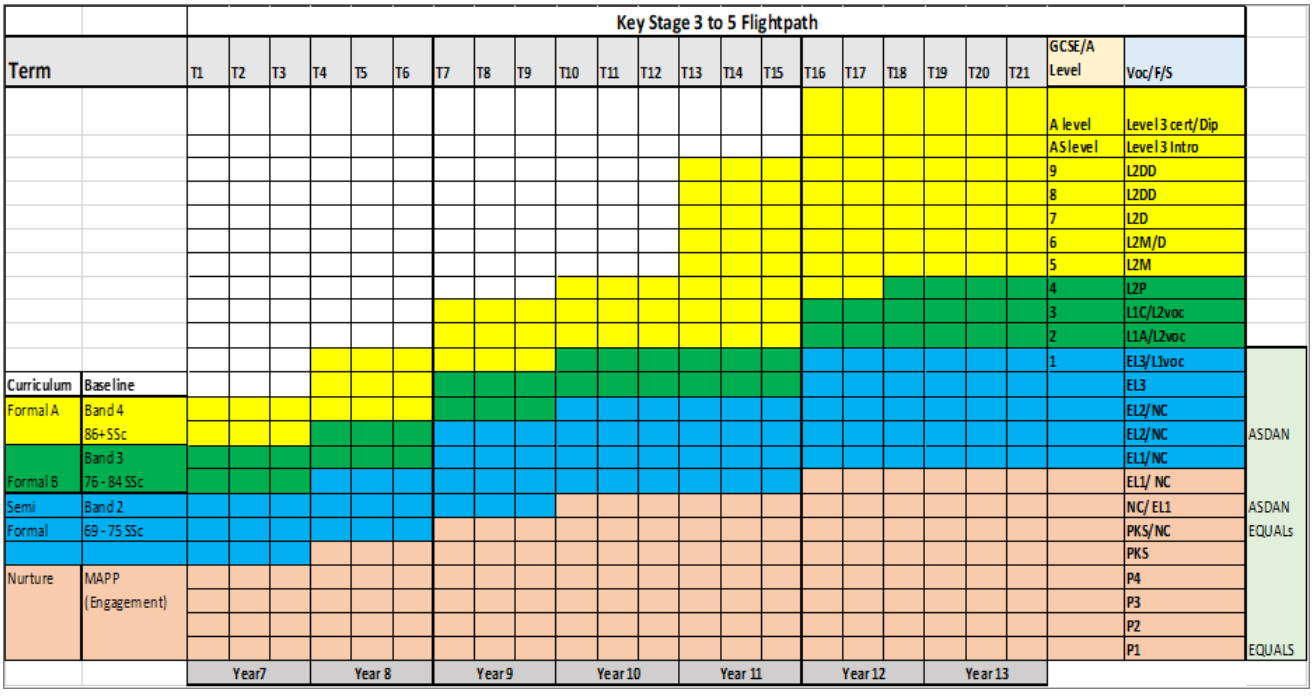
- SLT are responsible for assimilating information to inform target setting for the school.
- All students are set targets based on their Pathways which are determined using their baseline assessments **(See Appendix 1)**
- Students' targets may be reviewed depending on their progress to ensure that they are on the right learning pathway.

Responsibilities and Expectations

- The Senior Leadership team has overall responsibility to monitor and implement the Assessment Policy.
- Teachers' planning and methods of recording are monitored termly by their link SLT/Faculty Leader.
- Teaching staff, including Progress Partners, are involved in meetings on a termly basis to review pupil progress.
- Marking must adhere to school marking policy. All staff have a responsibility to mark and give feedback to pupils effectively.
- The Assessment Policy document is a workable document accessible to all teaching staff. Consequently, aspects of the document may be reviewed when/where necessary to make sure it accurately reflects the school's practices. Targets are set for the end of each year and end of each Key Stage.

Appendix 1


Key Stage 1 to 2 Flightpath
Term:
T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8 T9 T10 T11 T12 T13 T14 T15 T13 T14 T15
Outcome
KS2 Enhanced
KS2 Secure
KS2 Secure
KS2 Developing
KS2 Developing
KS2 Beginning
KS2 Beginning
KS1 Enhanced
KS1 Enhanced
KS1 Secure
KS1 Secure
KS1 Developing
KS1 Developing
KS1 Beginning
KS1 Beginning
PKS2 Enhanced
PKS2 Secure
PKS2 Developing
PKS2 Beginning
PKS1 Enhanced
PKS1 Secure
PKS1 Developing
PKS1 Beginning
P4
P3(i) (ii)
P2(i) (ii)
P1 (i) (ii)
Curriculum
Baseline
Formal A
Band 4
86+ SSc
Formal B
Band 3
76 - 84 SSc
Semi Formal
Band 2
69 - 75 SSc
Nurture
MAPP
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Year 4
Year 5
Year 6


Key Stage 3 to 5 Flightpath
Term
T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8 T9 T10 T11 T12 T13 T14 T15 T16 T17 T18 T19 T20 T21
GCSE/A Level
Voc/F/S
A level
Level 3 cert/Dip
AS level
Level 3 Intro
9
L2DD
8
L2DD
7
L2D
6
L2M/D
5
L2M
4
L2P
3
L1C/L2voc
2
L1A/L2voc
1
EL3/L1voc
EL3
EL2/NC
EL2/NC
ASDAN
EL1/NC
EL1/ NC
NC/ EL1
ASDAN
PKS/NC
EQUALs
PKS
P4
P3
P2
P1
EQUALS
Curriculum
Baseline
Formal A
Band 4
86+SSc
Formal B
Band 3
76 - 84 SSc
Semi
Band 2
Formal
69 - 75 SSc
Nurture
MAPP
(Engagement)
Year7
Year 8
Year 9
Year 10
Year 11
Year 12
Year 13