

# Pathways School

## **Assessment Policy**

### **Policy Monitoring**

Date of last review: September 2022

Reviewed by: Saima Ali Majid, Chair of Trustees  
Neil Jones, Headteacher

Date of next review: September 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

## **1. Aims**

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessments.
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents.
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

Pathways School embraces the Engagement Model Guidance for maintained schools, academies (including free schools) and local authorities, July 2020.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/903458/Engagement\\_Model\\_Guidance\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903458/Engagement_Model_Guidance_2020.pdf)

The engagement model is the assessment (replacing P scales 1 to 4) for students working below the standard of national curriculum assessments and not engaged in subject-specific study.

The engagement model has 5 areas of engagement:

- exploration
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

These areas allow teachers to assess students' engagement in developing new skills, knowledge, and concepts in the school's curriculum by demonstrating how students are achieving specific outcomes. They represent what is necessary for students to fully engage in their learning and reach their full potential.

## **3. Links with other school policies and practices**

- Curriculum policy

## **4. Principles of assessment**

Assessment is used to support learning and development of our students at Pathways School. We aim to measure each student's progress independently, according to their individual profile of needs.

Staff use assessment data to inform their teaching and support student progress. We aim to moderate assessments regularly inhouse and annually with schools with students with a similar profile to those at Pathways School.

## 5. Assessment approaches

At Pathways School we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

### 5.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how students are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Students** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Formative assessment techniques used at Pathways School include marking and feedback, questioning, self and peer-assessment, observations.

### 5.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of student cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure students are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.
- **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching.
- **Students** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents** to stay informed about the achievement, progress, and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Our in-school summative assessment feeds into reviews for students with special educational needs or disabilities. The main assessment models will be The Engagement Model, Essential for Living (EFL), The Assessment of Functional Life and Living Skills (AFLLS) and The Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Programme (VBMAPP). Other models may be used if more relevant to a student's needs.

### 5.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of student cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure students are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Students and parents** to understand how students are performing in comparison to students nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs, AQA ASDAN and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4 and 5 as well as the Engagement Model for those students achieving levels below National Curriculum summative assessments.

### 6. Collecting and using data

Assessment data will be recorded termly for each of our students. This information will primarily be used to inform the teaching of the student and allow staff to monitor progress and plan teaching accordingly.

Data will be used to put appropriate interventions in place for those that are working both below and above expectations.

### 7. Reporting to parents

Assessment data will be shared with parents and carers termly through written reports. This information will also be shared during students' annual review meetings.

Our reports will include the following information:

- Brief details of achievements in all subjects and activities forming part of the school curriculum, highlighting strengths and areas for development
- Comments on general progress
- The student's attendance record:
  - The total number of possible attendances for that student, and
  - The total number of unauthorised absences for that student, expressed as a percentage of the possible attendances
- The results of any public examinations taken, by subject and grade

### 8. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all students. Typically, Pathway's students are learners who are not engaged in subject-specific study and are likely to be at the earliest stages of development in either one, a combination of, or all the 4 areas of need as set out in the SEND code of practice: communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional, and mental health difficulties,

and sensory and/or physical needs. This means that the assessment of their progress needs to be holistic. Improving students' ability to process information as well as improving their communications and motor skills, can help to improve students' ability to engage in education. This targeted intervention is incorporated into lesson plans and used by teachers to personalise the curriculum for each student.

Often students do not make progress in a linear way. There may be a period in which the student does not gain new concepts or skills but adapts to apply existing ones to a broader range of contexts. For a student with complex needs, this can be a significant development and can demonstrate real evidence of achievement. Progress for these students can also be variable. They may make progress for a period, but then either plateau or lose some of the gains they have made before progress starts again. These patterns of progress are typical for students who are not engaged in subject specific study.

Preventing or slowing a decline in the students' performance may also be an appropriate outcome of intervention. Not all students will make progress. As a result of their medical conditions, some students may regress in their achievements and progress. This can be temporary, but sometimes it can be lengthy or permanent. In these cases, students' recorded progress may decline. For these students, maintaining existing skills may have priority over the promotion and assessment of new skills.

## **9. Training**

Staff will attend annual training on assessment delivered in school.

Teachers will be responsible for remaining abreast of good practice and share best practice with peers as and when required.

The leadership will ensure that all staff have access to appropriate training.

## **10. Roles and responsibilities**

### **10.1 Trustees**

Trustees are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all students
- Holding school leaders to account for improving student and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

### **10.2 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects

- Analysing student progress and attainment, including individual students and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to trustees on all key aspects of student progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years

### **10.3 Teaching staff**

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy.