

Assessment Policy

The Woodlands

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

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

2. Legislation and guidance

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the [final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#)
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in [the Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#)

3. Principles of assessment

Rationale

Inspectors will take account of current standards and progress, including the school's own performance information, and make a relevant judgement on academic and other learning outcomes for pupils by evaluating the extent to which all pupils:

- progress well from their different starting points and achieve or exceed standards expected for their age nationally (at the end of a key stage), or within the school's own curriculum
- attain relevant qualifications so that they can and do progress to the next stage of their education into courses that lead to higher level qualifications or into jobs that meet local and national needs.

To judge outcomes, inspectors will evaluate pupils' academic and vocational achievement across the curriculum.

In judging achievement, inspectors will give most weight to pupils' progress. They will take account of pupils' starting points in terms of their prior attainment and age when evaluating progress. Within this, they will give most weight to the progress of pupils currently in the school, taking account of how this compares with the progress of recent cohorts, where there are any. Inspectors will consider the progress of pupils in all year groups, not just those who have taken or are about to take examinations or national tests. As part of pupils' progress, inspectors will consider the growth in pupils' security, breadth and depth of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Due to the changing nature of The Woodlands' cohort, measuring progress across the key stages can be challenging. The small number of pupils in all key stages also makes the statistical analysis of trends difficult. Some of the issues faced include:

- Pupils coming on roll throughout the whole of the academic year.
- A wide range of complex individual needs e.g. disengagement, behavioural, SEND, mental health and addiction issues.
- A wide range of home circumstances e.g. some pupils experience settled home backgrounds whilst others experience extremely traumatic home lives characterised by alcohol, drug abuse, domestic violence, criminality and mental health issues. A significant minority of pupils are in Local Authority Care.

Types of Assessment

Summative assessment

Provides a snapshot of attainment at the end of a unit, term, year group, key stage or when a pupil is leaving the school. It makes judgments about a pupil's performance in relation to national standards.

Formative assessment

Assessment for Learning is the day to day ongoing assessment to enable teachers to identify the next steps in a pupil's learning and to enable pupils to have greater involvement and responsibility for their own learning. Key strategies used to ensure good formative assessment take place include observation, discussion, questioning, paired response work and quality marking.

Diagnostic

Diagnostic assessment helps to identify pupils' strengths and areas for development. We use outcomes from assessments to plan future work and to identify groups of children who need support. This process also helps us with our target-setting and to reflect on the teaching and learning strategies which we use. Pupils are base line tested in Numeracy, Literacy and Spelling. Certain subjects may also conduct Gap Analysis.

4. Assessment approaches

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

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

4.1 In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

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

Entry Assessment and baseline

Pupils enter The Woodlands throughout the year and often arrive mid-Key Stage. Prior assessment data is collected from the previous school. On entry to the school, after the initial meeting with a member of the pastoral team, the pupil will complete assessments in the following, if applicable:

- Reading and spelling
- Maths and English
- Thrive

The induction process and the assessment data collected provide the information that enables us to place each pupil in the tutor group with the most appropriate programme of study. Social needs can also be catered for based on any prior knowledge of the pupil and their attitude to learning on entry. Staff use the entry assessment data to draft **SEND Support Plans** for pupils identified as having SEND. Outcomes are set with the support of the SENDCo before being amended and finalised with the pupil and her/ his family.

Marking and Recording

Pupils work will be monitored by both subject leaders, SENDCo and SLT. Book Scrutiny and Work Scrutiny will take place termly by SLT, and will be evaluated using specific criteria and previously set targets. It is an expectation that all work, written and non-written, will be recorded and assessed in accordance with the Marking Policy and, where applicable, will have evidence of AfL. The SLT monitor AfL termly using medium- term plans. Further evidence of AfL outcomes is reviewed as part of the school-wide work scrutiny.

Strategy used	How and when	Purpose
Learning Objectives	Learning objectives can be tracked to objectives in medium-term plans and are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and clearly separated from the explanation of the activity.	Clarify the Learning Objective. Give learning a clear focus
Success Criteria	Learning Outcomes are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils.	Clarify the learning outcome. Set expected standards
Feedback and Marking	Oral and written feedback, linked to a learning objective is focused on the shared learning objectives of the lesson.	Providing verbal and written comments on how pupils can improve their work and make progress towards their personal targets.
Observation	Ongoing observations watching, listening and talking.	To inform APP, AFL, creating a bespoke curriculum to take account of the interests of children.
Questioning	Teachers encourage, trigger and sustain verbal dialogue.	To enable pupils to become independent learners.
Self / Peer Assessment	During lessons pupils are expected to reflect on what they have learned and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are encouraged to assess each other's work and to provide fair and helpful feedback.	To be reflective and able to self-assess.
Talking Partners	The climate for learning gives pupils the confidence to verbalise partially formed thinking and constructively challenge each other's ideas.	Development of AFL skills.
Target Setting	Teachers use an appropriate range of data to baseline pupil performance, set targets and judge processes.	To ensure progression towards curricular targets.

4.2 In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils 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
- **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
- **Parents/carers** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

The Woodlands uses various summative assessments e.g. end of year exams, end of topic tests and reviews for pupils with Special Educational Needs

Expected Levels of Progress at Key Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4.

At the Woodlands there is an expectation that pupils will progress at the same rate as their peers in mainstream schools. Pupils are expected to progress in English, Mathematics and Science within each Key Stage. However, all pupils are treated as individuals and we recognise and understand that low ability pupils may not make the same expected levels of progress as high ability pupils. We are also aware that there is a significant link between pupil mental health and well-being and the impact this has on progress. This is through our own data analysis but has also been confirmed by a report published in 2014 by the Public Health England: The Link between Health, Well-being and Pupil Attainment.

Target-Setting

Curricular targets will be set by the teacher and informed by the Arbor data tracking system and teacher assessments every half-term. These will then be shared with staff, pupils and parents at regular review meetings.

Where targets are not met, an appropriate intervention plan will be written and followed to support individuals or groups of children. The curriculum will be adapted to accommodate any highlighted whole class weaknesses.

SEND Assessments and Interventions

The Woodlands provides a graduated response to supporting pupils with SEND.

Level 1

- Assessments for all pupils on entry including those that are subject specific, Thrive and the Boxall Profile

Level 2

- Assessments and interventions for pupils with specific concerns including referrals to the School Counsellor, Cognition and Learning Team, ASC and EWEL Team.

Level 3

- Assessments and interventions for pupils with identified needs and concerns including Educational Psychology referral

For further details, please refer to the SEND Policy.

4.3 Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

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

Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4

5. Collecting and using data

Ongoing assessment and tracking:

Pupils current attainment levels and indicative grades are recorded half-termly in order to track progress. Staff record current attainment grades and progress is measured against target set from baseline data.

Tracking involves systematically building a picture of the progress that each pupil or group of pupils make their expected learning path. An effective system should track pupil progress individually and is reviewed regularly with teachers in order to identify and discuss any under attainment and/or underachievement as well as celebrate examples of good progress. At the Woodlands, we use entry assessment data, APP, and Arbor to track pupils' progress. This information is used by all members of staff to inform teaching and learning. The information is provided to parents to inform them about pupil's progress on a termly basis during Home/School Reporting days.

Assessment and Reporting Timetable

There are opportunities for whole- school collection of assessment data and reporting. This normally happens each half-term.

6. Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. The Woodlands recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

7. Reporting to parents/carers

Reporting to parents and carers

- Regular reviews with carers and teachers
- Regular 'phone contact with parents/ guardians
- E PEP (where relevant)
- Daily home/school diaries
- Re-integration meeting with parents and home school before returning

Pupil reports include

- Brief details of achievements in all subjects and activities forming the school curriculum, highlighting strengths and weaknesses
- Comments on general progress
- Attendance record

Other reporting mechanisms:

Due to the vulnerability of the pupils who attend The Woodlands, data collection and reports may be asked for by multi-disciplinary team meetings. e.g. a Looked After Child review or a CAF panel, a Child Protection Meeting or as evidence for an EHCP. All staff are expected to contribute to the writing of such a report where appropriate.

8. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in, as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

9. Training

All staff regularly participate in training sessions designed to help them understand effective assessment and its role within good and outstanding teaching. As part of HLTA and Teaching Standards, staff are expected to have an effective understanding of the different forms of assessment.

10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 Management Committee

The Management Committee 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 pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data
- Monitoring that school staff are receiving the appropriate support and training on pupil assessment, to ensure consistent application and good practice across the school

10.2 Executive Headteacher / SLT

The Executive Headteacher / SLT is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to members of the management committee on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
- Making sure arrangements are in place so teachers can conduct assessment competently and confidently, including training and moderation opportunities

10.3 SENDCO

The SENDCO is responsible for

- Maintaining the SEND and Additional Needs register
- Coordinating individual support
- Advising staff of appropriate support strategies
- Initiating and managing the EHCP process for identified pupils on The Woodlands' roll
- Collaborating with referring schools to support their EHCP process for identified pupils on dual roll
- Working with local authority SEND partners
- Reviewing pupil records received from schools and identifying gaps in information
- Sharing relevant information with staff
- Making referrals to partner agencies
- Ensuring SEND Support Plans are quality controlled and offering advice and support to tutors.
- Organising CPD for staff

10.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy
- Being familiar with the standards for the subjects they teach
- Keeping up to date with developments in assessment practice

10.4 Tutors

Tutors are responsible for

- Implementing the agreed assessment procedure
- Setting individual outcomes against baseline information
- Ensuring well focused in-class support for individual pupils
- Maintaining accurate records of pupil attainment
- Reporting pupil progress to parents/carers
- Coordinating SEND Support Plans and writing them in partnership with Pastoral Mentors, Learning Support Assistants and the SENDCo
- Referring SEND concerns to the SENDCo through the CPOMS system

11. Monitoring

Policy and guidelines are subject to regular reviews and evaluation by the Senior Leadership Team. The Senior Leadership Team will regularly review assessment and progress via the school calendar, by observing lessons; completing learning walks; completing planning and work scrutinies; analysing visitor feedback; speaking to pupils and analysing pupil and parent feedback. After any of these take place, an analysis will be made and feedback will be given to staff.

A review of lesson observations, planning scrutiny, work scrutiny and learning walks should inform the following:

- Improvement in pupils' achievement and attainment
- Improvement in the Teaching and Learning across the provision

The desired outcomes for this policy are improvements in pupils' learning and greater clarity amongst pupils, teachers and parents concerning pupils' learning, achievement and progress. The performance indicators will be:

- An improvement in pupils' attitudes and attainment
- An improvement in behaviour across the school
- Improvement in the Teaching and Learning and assessment across the provision

12. Links with other policies

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND Policy

Appendix A – Key Stage 3 and Key stage 4

Rationale

- Assessment is fundamental to everything we do as it enables us to prioritise, support, extend and challenge in order to create a more bespoke curriculum, improve pupil learning outcomes and future life chances.
- Assessment is only effective if there is a regular review, which is communicated and acted upon at all levels.
- Working together helps us to increase the positive impact of assessment for the young people in our care.

Baseline Procedure and Quality Assurance

- All pupils are baseline assessed through a mixture of observation, set 1:1 or group tasks and summative assessments, within the first two weeks of arrival. This baseline is by necessity based on a “working at” not “full coverage”
- These baselines can be amended by the staff up to four weeks into the placement if further evidence comes to light.
- Photographs and examples of work standards will be collected on a regular basis to demonstrate the skills and abilities of each individual child
- Evidence collected in The Woodlands and evidence from each child’s home school is used to provide an understanding of the child’s prior knowledge, skills and gaps in learning.

Half-Termly Judgements

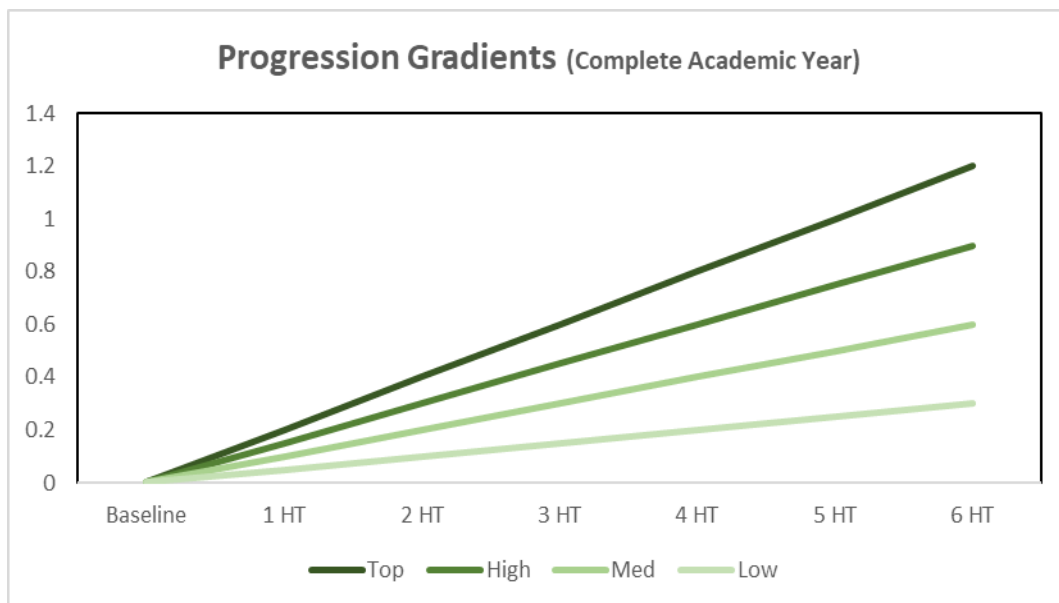
Each half-term, teacher assessments are made on all pupils in all subjects.

- No formal teacher assessments will be centralised during half-terms.
- Teachers are expected to have on-going assessments based upon a baseline, possible re-adjustment of baseline, progression lines and end of year teacher targets.
- Reporting is based on a 5-point scale based on GCSE Level expectations using the progression grids that have been developed in all levels (except Level 1): This equates to divisions of a level.
- **Foundation (0-0.19); Emerging (0.2-0.39); Expected (0.4-0.59); Secure (0.6-0.79); Distinction (0.8- 0.99)**
- The majority of the KS3 pupils arrive around the base of Level 1, therefore to allow for small steps of progress to be developed then reporting of Level 1 is split into a 10 point scale (with a 0.1 division of levels):
- **Foundation (1F); Foundation Plus (1F+); Emerging (1Em); Emerging Plus (1Em+) etc**

Termly Assessments

Once a term full assessments

- Best fit teacher professional judgements are made using class books, formative, summative assessments and progression grids to support this judgement in Maths, English and Science.
- Judgements will be made on current students and all those who left the school that term.
- Judgements are made as “working at levels” based on areas assessed at the time.
- Judgements are made on a point scale based on GCSE Level expectations using the progression grids that have been developed in all levels. The rate of progression will take into account the baseline starting point and depending on the baseline level follow the subsequent flight paths of progress.
 - Low: 0.3 Level of GCSE Progress per year (0.05 per half-term)
 - Med: 0.6 Level of GCSE Progress per year (0.10 per half-term)
 - High: 0.9 Level of GCSE Progress per year (0.15 per half-term)
 - Top: 1.2 Levels of GCSE Progress per year (0.20 per half-term)



- A random 10% sample of the judgements are group moderated each term and further CPD provided as appropriate.
- Judgements that are significantly different from previous records are moderated via discussion with the Head of Base.
- SLT will quality assure the judgements via line management meetings.

Centralisation of Data

All progress data is collated using Arbor.

- A central folder is prepared for use by SLT.
- Appropriate printouts / access to findings are provided for students, staff and Base Manager to aid them in their roles.
- Individual data sheets and other outputs are used with students and for meetings eg Reintegration into mainstream.

Statistical Analysis Of Data

All progress data is converted to a “progress rate” that takes into account the amount of time at The Woodlands. Full school data can be distorted by short stay students so for this reason

- Data for all students who have had less than 20 days at the school are not included in full school analysis.
- Very rapid falls or rises of (2 years) will be capped as this rate is clearly not sustainable.

When interpreting the data, notice should be given to the full statistical notes accompanying them.

Evaluation and Actions

The prime objective of all data collated in this way is to support learning and progress.

Staff must be free to make accurate and informative judgements and then act on them in the best interests of the pupils. Robust challenge is part of this process – however, the vision of The Woodlands is that this is undertaken as part of the natural evaluative cycle that prioritises support and next steps.

Non Academic Assessment

Staff will also track attitudes to learning using Thrive

This will be monitored by all key stage staff and personal mentors as well as by SLT.

Appendix B – Key Stage 1 and 2

Rationale											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessment is fundamental to everything we do as it enables us to prioritise, support, extend and challenge in order to create a more bespoke curriculum, improve student learning outcomes and future life chances. ➤ Assessment is only effective if there is a regular review, which is communicated and acted upon at all levels. ➤ Working together helps us to increase the positive impact of assessment for the young people in our care. 											
5 Point Scale											
<p>Judgements will be made as best fit with a greater emphasis and weight will be placed upon core skills rather than content. For example, the SC1 skills in Science and the first Core Number Skills sheet in Mathematics.</p> <p>Judgements are made on a 5-point scale linked to year group expectations using the progression lines that have been developed:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Foundation</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">20% Some</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Emerging</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">40% Nearly Half</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Expected</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">60% More Than Half</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Secure</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">80% Most</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Distinction</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">100% All</td> </tr> </table> <p>For example: 4F 4Em 4Ex 4S 4D 5F 5Em 5Ex</p>	Foundation	20% Some	Emerging	40% Nearly Half	Expected	60% More Than Half	Secure	80% Most	Distinction	100% All	<p>Progress measured in:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reading / Writing / Maths / PSHE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reading Age / Spelling Age</p> <p>Outstanding Progress:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rate of 6+ Increments per Year 2+ increment per term 20% above Expected 14 Months + Per Year</p> <p>Good Progress:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rate of 5+ Increments per Year above Expected 12 Months + Per Year</p>
Foundation	20% Some										
Emerging	40% Nearly Half										
Expected	60% More Than Half										
Secure	80% Most										
Distinction	100% All										

Timing of Assessment

Assessment will be collected as working at judgements based on the work undertaken at the time together with some standardised activities (especially important for the baseline).

Baseline: Schools to provide pupil's exercise books for staff to judge on entry. Age related numeracy, phse and spag assessment to be completed on entry for core progression. An extended piece of writing will be planned into the two weeks. Teachers will judge this on age- related progression sheets. A Reading test and initial guided reading sessions will be used to make a judgement on the age -related progression sheets.

Ongoing Assessment: Assessment to be completed on progression sheets at the end of each learning cycle.

End of Placement: Pupils to complete a written piece of work for staff to judge. Age-related numeracy assessment to be completed for core progression. Final judgements to be taken from the on- going progression sheets.

Evidence

Highlighted progression sheets will be collected with different colours used for each half-term.

Evidence in books and photographs will be collected on a regular basis to demonstrate the skills and abilities. While it is important to have evidence for most skills, teachers must be able to use their professional judgement and, as such, some lower ability skills can be implied and others will have minimal evidence. e.g. the ability to count in 5s / 10s.

Standardisation and Moderation

The prime objective of all data collated is to support learning and progress.

Staff must be free to make accurate and informative judgements and then act on them in the best interests of the pupils.

Robust challenge is part of this process – however, the vision of The Woodlands is that this is primarily undertaken as part of the natural evaluative cycle which prioritises support and regular opportunities for professional discussion.

Non-academic Assessment

Staff will also track attitudes to learning using The Willow/ Beeches pennies reward scheme and Thrive

This will be monitored by all key stage staff and personal mentors as well as by SLT.