

Woodlands Secondary School	Assessment Policy	
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Date	Review Date	Author	Nominated Governors
February 2025	February 2027	Nicole Tulloch	N/A
Website	Statutory Policy	Source	Ratification Date
Yes	No	N/A	February 2025

1. Aims of the policy

At Woodlands, we believe that curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked and are integral parts of the teaching and learning process. Assessment supports us to plan and deliver high quality teaching and learning experiences for all.

Assessment should:

- Be useful and processes not onerous for staff
- Inform planning, target setting and interventions for individuals and groups of students'
- Facilitate recording and reporting of progress and achievements to students', parents/carers and other agencies, as appropriate
- Encourage students' to be active in, and where possible share responsibility for, their own learning
- When analysed, assessment data should form part of the evidence used to inform the school improvement plan.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Governors will:

- Be familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all students'.

2.2 The Senior Leadership Team will;

- Review assessment practices regularly and update the policy in a timely fashion when changes are made, as to ensure that the policy is a true reflection of current assessment practices within the school.
- Consult and share with the wider leadership team and teachers in relation to the contents of the policy and its implementation when making changes.
- The Assistant Head Teacher has overall responsibility for managing Assessment, Recording and Reporting and will take the lead in monitoring and implementing school policy and procedures.

2.3 Department leaders will:

- Support the Senior Leadership Team with delivering the aims of the policy as outlined in section 1.

- Ensure their own knowledge and expertise in using the schools assessment systems is of a suitably high standard, so that they ensure that day to day practices pertaining to assessment, recording and reporting are met.

2.4 Teachers will:

- Ensure that they are familiar with this policy and undertake assessment as required by the policy and the practices within their department and in line with the teacher standards.
- Engage with all training provided in relation to assessment policy and practice.
- Seek guidance and support if there are any aspects of the policy or assessment practices within the school which are unclear, or for which they require further support with.

2.5 Wider support staff will;

- Follow the guidance and/or requests they receive from teachers, department leaders and senior leaders in relation to supporting the assessment of students”, providing such guidance or request falls in line with their role for which they are employed.

3. Approach to assessment

Our assessment systems are designed as a meaningful and reflective approach to support teachers in planning the best route for each individual student. The overarching vision is that assessment should be used to keep students moving forward in their learning, however that may look.

Assessment is not an end in itself; its main purpose is to support teaching and learning by identifying what students’ already know and can do and what their next step should be.

By assessing students’ accurately and consistently and recording key information we:

- build a clear picture of each student’s skills, knowledge, understanding and approaches to learning
- identify each student’s strengths and the priority areas for their future learning
- identify an appropriate curriculum for each student
- identify “next steps” for each student
- evaluate the progress that each student is making over time
- evaluate and improve the teaching strategies used with each student
- support students’, where appropriate, to monitor their own learning
- Identify, celebrate and share achievement.

It is essential that the limitations of using a singular assessment as determination of ‘progress’ is understood. Teachers, leaders, and parent/carers must understand that the tools we choose to use to assess our students should not be used independently as a sole indicator of ‘progress’, and rather, there is a need to triangulate a range of assessment evidence to truly know how a student is moving forward and are ready for the next stage of their education.

Woodlands have set up a range of assessment frameworks, designed to support teachers in assessing students’ with a varying range of complex needs, and therefore mitigate some of the limitations with using a singular assessment tool for learners with complex needs. We have done this by tailoring the frameworks to each ‘cohort’ or department.

The school’s assessment frameworks are used to capture student progress through the curriculum and across the range of subjects and learning opportunities tailored to them. The curriculum, and related assessment framework will therefore naturally vary by department.

An overview of the main assessment frameworks used are detailed below.

Department	Assessment Frameworks
PMLD	Routes for Learning, Engagement Model & EHCP Outcomes
Pathways	ILOs (Individual Learning Objectives) & EHCP Outcomes
KS3, KS4 & FE	Looking at Learning & EHCP Outcomes
The LOFT	Looking at Learning & EHCP Outcomes OR ILOs (Individual Learning Objectives) & EHCP Outcomes
The BASE	EHCP Outcomes

Assessment of EHCP Outcomes – ALL students

- All students are set bespoke outcomes which form part of their EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan), these outcomes are broken down into annual and termly targets.
- An annual review meeting is held where progress against the targets is reported on, discussed and next steps agreed with parents, professionals, the local authority and students' themselves.
- Evidence (i.e. observations, photographs, work) will be uploaded onto Earwig throughout the school year. These will be used to produce the Annual Review report for each student. There is an expectation of **at least three** pieces of evidence for each student for each target over a calendar year.
- A termly review of progress towards EHCP targets is undertaken by the teacher, using evidence uploaded. Each target will be assessed as having been 'not achieved', 'partially achieved', 'fully achieved' or 'exceeded'. A new termly target will then be set. This is recorded on EARWIG each term, and the progress from across the year is shared at the annual review meeting and at parent's evenings throughout the year.

Curriculum Assessment

- Routes for Learning - PMLD
 - Students within the PMLD department are assessed using the 'Routes for Learning' framework. Teachers observe students and use Earwig to record progress. Teachers will moderate themselves termly, to ensure that the Routes for Learning matrices are up to date for each student.
- Engagement Model – PMLD
 - The engagement model is an assessment tool designed to support staff to develop the most appropriate environment for learning. Staff will select one student at a time on a rolling programme to assess, and will adapt teaching strategies, stimuli and surroundings accordingly. This is in then revisited as part of a rolling programme.
- Looking at Learning – SLD (KS3, KS4, FE), Pathways. LOFT
 - Students will be baselined each academic year as part of 'Assessment Week'. Assessment week will occur every October and will involve students undertaking short targeted tasks alongside their class teacher / class lead to ascertain whether their current assessed working levels remain appropriate.
 - In SLD / PD / (some) LOFT cohorts, 'Looking at Learning' is used as a form of formative assessment throughout the year. This means that teachers use it as a tool to guide curriculum/lesson plans and give feedback to students (written and/or verbal) as sessions happen. This feedback will also support selecting the correct level of assessment for students during assessment week.
- Students within the Pathways department and some LOFT cohorts are assessed against 'ILOs' (individual learning objectives) as part of the WISERR curriculum.

- The learning challenge documented against each learning event will be either a termly EHCP target which is a step towards the annual target or another half termly learning objective. The ILO is an alternative to documenting the learning objectives on a number of individual lesson plans.
- The students' responses to the opportunities provided to achieve these targets are recorded by the class staff on a daily basis by a tally or tick sheet.

External Accreditation

We offer relevant external accreditation for our students, where appropriate.

- OCR Entry Level Life and Living Skills suite of qualifications.
- NCFE Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications in English and Maths
- AQA Unit Awards in ICT
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme

Accreditation Programme	Cohort	Timeline
OCR Entry Level Life and Living Skills suite of qualifications.	SLD (including PD) LOFT PMLD Pathways BASE	At the end of Year 11 AND at the end of Year 13 At the end of Year 13 At the end of Year 13 At the end of Year 13 At the end of Year 13
NCFE Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications in English and Maths	SLD / LOFT with assessment scores of EL1+	Students can be entered during Year 10-13. There is one exam sitting per academic year. Most students are entered in Year 11 and/or Year 13.
AQA Unit Awards in ICT	SLD / LOFT with assessment scores of EL1+	At the end of Year 11 AND at the end of Year 13
The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme	Woodlands does not have an explicit criteria for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Each case is considered individually.	Students in Year 9-13.

If a student leaves school as part of a phase transfer during a school year that is not an accreditation year (Year 12 and / or Year 11 in the LOFT, BASE, Pathways or PMLD), the school will use their best endeavours to enter the student for their accreditation at the end of the school year. Where this is not possible, information about their accreditation route/pathway will be shared with the next provider, who *may* use it as part of their accreditation pathway.

Triangulation of wider assessment evidence

Where a student has wider professional input, their reports can be triangulated with other available school evidence to inform our judgement and help understand where to target support, amend targets or introduce interventions.

4. Reporting

Woodlands Secondary School has a statutory obligation to report to parents/carers annually. This is achieved through the annual school report which is passed to parents/carers in July each year.

In addition, the school provides a detailed “Annual Review Report”, 14 days prior to the annual review meeting. This report provides a more detailed description of the progress being made towards EHCP outcomes and annual targets.

Progress against EHCP outcomes is reviewed by the teacher on a termly basis, and individual targets may be amended in line with the termly assessment. Parents can request a copy of the latest termly review of EHCP targets or “target tracker” at any time.

Parents are invited to discuss the Annual School Report and Annual Review Report, and given the option to comment on these school reports during the year.

5. Moderation

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that teachers are making consistent judgments about standards. In order to do this, they have to have a shared understanding about the expectations for each standard so that a particular level of achievement (for example, a Credit) is awarded to student responses with the same characteristics, regardless of who marks/grades them.

- Internal moderation across the school, takes place during the Autumn term.
- External moderation takes place with a group of special schools SSMAAG (Special schools’ moderation and assessment group). The group meets annually to look at assessment and carry out moderation tasks.

The moderation focus is determined by the current School Improvement Priorities.

6. Monitoring and evaluating the policy

The effectiveness and usefulness of the assessment policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team. Changes to assessment practices within the school should be reflected and updated within this policy as soon as reasonably practicable and reviewed on a biannual basis.

Appendix

Assessment methods and definitions

Assessment methods at Woodlands school vary depending on the profile of each student, however there are some common definitions which apply to all:

- **Baseline assessment** determines the student's starting point for their learning journey. It is the process of identifying an individual's current learning and support needs to establish their learning pathway, including any required behaviour or medical support plan.

On entry to the school, baseline assessments are undertaken by the class teacher during the first term and recorded on the relevant school assessment software. There may also be therapists or other professionals who also undertake bespoke assessments, and share these with the teacher to further inform the students’ starting point.

- **Formative assessment or assessment for learning** is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures carried out during the learning process to inform teachers of the need to modify teaching and learning activities to further improve student attainment.

Assessment for learning examples at Woodlands include: Informal observations, observation of practical activities, effective questioning, annotations made on documentation, peer evaluation resources, discussion, plenary, marking of work.

- **Summative assessment** is used to evaluate learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined timeline —typically at the end of a project, unit, course, term, or school year.

Examples at Woodlands include: Baseline assessments and ongoing termly assessment against the relevant assessment framework, Annual Review meetings, External accreditation such as NCFE Functional Skills and OCR Life and Living Skills qualifications.

- **Attainment** is the academic standard that students' reach in, for example, assessments and exams. It's usually recorded as grades, scores, or levels, and it indicates a student's/learner's result at the end of a Key Stage.
- **Progress** is a student's achievements over a period of time, for example from KS3 to KS4, or between Y7 and Y8 in school or termly.
- **Recording** is the selection and retention of significant and relevant information on the students' experiences and achievements, including what the student knows and can do. This informs planning.
- **Reporting** is the communication of significant and relevant information on the individual students' experiences and achievements.