



THE Lodge AP

— At Sandbach School —

Assessment Policy

2025-2026

Policy Written/Reviewed by	Dave Evans
Date of Review	January 2025
Date of Next Review	January 2026

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.

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

Principles of Assessment

Assessment reflects the formal and informal judgements made by teachers and students about standards of work, and is measured, where appropriate, against nationally agreed criteria. Formative, diagnostic assessment is used throughout the year to inform teaching and learning and identify any areas for improvement. Summative assessment is used to evaluate learning and progress by awarding an attainment mark, grade or outcome to a student.

We believe that this policy will enable us to assess student progress at The Lodge in a coherent and consistent way and facilitate higher achievement for students across all levels of ability. Feedback in all of its forms underpins our assessment policy in order that all of our pupils know and understand the progress they are making and what their next steps are to continue to improve. It will also inform subject staff as to where there are gaps in students' knowledge and understanding.

Our assessments focus on how well our pupils know the key knowledge that has been defined in each subject. We have defined a set of criteria at The Lodge for each subject at the end of Year 9; that is, key knowledge that each child needs to know, be able to apply and demonstrate confidently in that subject in order to progress on to KS4 and the study towards GCSEs or BTECs/Tech Awards. We follow the National Curriculum when defining Key Knowledge, taking into account our unique area and reflecting the needs and aspirations of all of our pupils.

Key Knowledge is defined in Y9 to ensure that all of our children are taught what is important for them to be able to acquire the defined Key Knowledge at the end of Key Stage 3. At KS4 the Key Knowledge required is defined using the specifications for the GCSE or Vocational qualifications.

Assessment Approaches

At The Lodge 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.

In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

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

At The Lodge, formative assessment takes a range of forms:

Low Stakes Testing

Low stakes testing is effective in enabling us to gauge whether or not key knowledge from previous lessons has been retained, and where there are any misunderstandings or misconceptions either in the class as a group or in individual pupils. They take place at the start of lessons, with pupils using their whiteboards to record answers for their teacher to feed back on. Low stakes testing can also occur at any point in the lesson to enable the teacher to gauge the retention of key knowledge before moving on.

Targeted Questioning

Questioning is a very important part of how we assess the effectiveness of learning in the classroom. Throughout every lesson, teachers will direct carefully constructed questions to individual pupils across the class with responses informing teaching that lesson or next or highlighting where additional individual support maybe needed. This is especially important when used to complement low-stakes testing, perhaps to check whether misconceptions apparent earlier in a lesson have been addressed.

Peer Marking

This is routine expectation within a sequence of lessons and will enable pupils to review a partner's learning in order to reflect on their own. The process of articulating a concept or skill to a partner supports the transfer of knowledge from the short term to the long-term memory. Again, this is a strategy designed to encourage independent learning and foster a sense of scholastic excellence.

CAT4, NGRT and PASS

As part of our induction process at The Lodge each child by the end of their second week will have completed a CAT4 assessment. This will measure their cognitive abilities and show us their true potential, plus any gaps in learning to address. The NGRT reading assessment will also be completed by every learner by the end of their third week to give us a standardized reading age and this score will be compared against national averages. These assessments will be re-taken at the end of their placement to measure progress during their time at The Lodge.

The PASS survey will be completed after the third week for those children on a dual placement who will be returning to school to identify their attitudes towards themselves and school. Any areas identified in red we will address whilst they are with us at The Lodge, in the hope that at the end of their placement those areas will have turned green, ready to go back to school.

In-Class Assessments

Assessments are planned to occur twice per full term for the subjects of English, Maths, and Science, in addition to all subjects at the Key Stage 4/Post 16 level. For Key Stage 3 non-core subjects, assessments will take place once per term.

Written feedback will be provided to each student.

To accommodate students entitled to extra time, tests should last approximately 40 minutes, ensuring that they have the opportunity to receive this during the class period.

For Key Stage 3:

Each assessment will commence with a section of multiple-choice questions, evaluating the comprehensive understanding of the entire course, emphasising the importance of recalling prior knowledge for long-term retention. Furthermore, each assessment will encompass a combination of both short and extended response questions.

For Key Stage 4/5:

In the case of GCSE and BTEC subjects, the assessments will align with the expectations outlined in the relevant specifications from the corresponding awarding bodies.

For non-GCSE or BTEC qualifications, every assessment will commence with a section of multiple-choice questions to gauge the grasp of course material as a whole, underlining the significance of recalling prior knowledge for long-term retention. Additionally, each assessment will include a mix of short and extended response questions.

Throughout all assessments, there will be an evaluation of spelling, punctuation, and grammar, along with an examination of reading skills.

Research supports our assertion that the effectiveness of any marked work lies with the quality of feedback. Pupils will receive details of how and where they have done well and what they are expected to do as 'next steps' in order to address any areas for development.

In-School Summative Assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- School leaders 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 evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period, and the impact of their own teaching.
- Pupils need 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.

Annual Summative Test

KS3

All pupils will be tested on the key knowledge and skills they have accessed from year 9 up to that point. Support will be given to pupils with revision and preparation for their exams, which will be held in June every year.

The outcomes of these tests will inform the following year's curriculum and will also inform any review of setting for the following year.

As with the tests that take place within the classroom during the year, feedback will be detailed, and all pupils will receive information as to how to efficiently and effectively tackle their 'next steps'.

KS4

All pupils will be tested on the key knowledge and skills they have covered from the GCSE or BTEC/Tech award syllabus up to that point.

In Year 10, pupils will sit a formal mock examination when the teacher feels that this is necessary, and the student is ready to partake in this.

In Year 11, pupils will sit a formal mock examination at the end of term 1. Support will be given to pupils with revision and preparation for these exams.

All tests in KS3 and KS4 are Quality Assured to ensure both consistency in levels of challenge and content across all subjects, and to ensure that all key knowledge taught is tested equitably. Furthermore, a rigorous standardisation and moderation process is undertaken within each subject area to ensure that all tests are marked to the same standard. In addition to this, at KS3, we triangulate our own judgements against national benchmarks every year through using GL Assessments with a cohort of pupils in each year.

Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- School leaders 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 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 (KS) 4.

Assessing students' journey to exceeded at The Lodge

In order to monitor students' in-class progress, we use trackers that are aligned with "I can" statements customised for different subject areas.

We assess our students' progress toward achieving their full potential by measuring their grasp of the knowledge and skills outlined in our Curriculums and Schemes of Work.

While the breadth and depth of knowledge may vary among students, our objective is to ensure that every student attains knowledge allowing them to practice independently. This holds true even if, for a few students, it might be relatively limited.

The journey to exceeded

It's crucial to understand that the journey to independent understanding describes the learning phase and does not define the learner.

Every learner begins working towards this stage of this journey when they are acquiring new knowledge, and with consistent learning routines like focusing and deliberate practice, any learner can reach the substantial stage.

1	Working towards	Students learning is still new and it may feel difficult.
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2	Expected	Students are getting better but it may still feel difficult to remember everything.
3	Exceeded	Students know enough to practice independently.

	Working towards (Cognitive Phase of Learning)	Expected (Association Phase of Learning)	Exceeded (Autonomous Phase of Learning)
What is going right?	<p>Students are learning new knowledge</p> <p>This is the most difficult stage of learning. It's the right thing to ask lots of questions at this stage so that you can check for understanding</p>	<p>The new knowledge is starting to take roots.</p> <p>It's still the right thing to ask lots of questions so that you can learn from your mistakes at this stage.</p>	<p>Students now know this knowledge quite securely. They are now at the stage where they can start to practice independently.</p>
What might feel difficult?	<p>This new learning will feel difficult.</p> <p>Students won't feel very successful at this stage of learning.</p>	<p>Learning will still take a lot of effort.</p> <p>Students won't feel as successful as you want to be.</p>	<p>Although students know this knowledge quite securely, it might be hard to apply it to other contexts or to use it to solve problems.</p>
How accurate will students be at this stage?	<p>Not very</p> <p>They will make a lot of mistakes at this very early stage.</p>	<p>Still not very</p> <p>They will still be making mistakes at this stage.</p>	<p>They are quite accurate now – although they are still making a few mistakes.</p>

How much will students remember at this stage?	Not much Students will need a lot of prompting from the teacher.	Still not much It will still take effort and prompting to remember at this stage.	Students should be getting better now at recalling this knowledge with less prompting although it still takes effort.
What type of practice should students be doing at this stage?	Students are at the 'I DO' stage where they need the teacher showing you what to do and how to do it.	Students are at the 'WE DO' stage where they should be doing guided practice with the teacher.	Students are at the 'YOU DO' stage where they can now practice independently.
What style of teaching is required for this stage	<p>Lots of 'I DO'</p> <p>Any practice should be highly scaffolded</p> <p>Lots of 'live' checking for misconceptions</p> <p>Build in high success rates to build confidence</p>	<p>Lots of 'WE DO'</p> <p>Practice should still be very scaffolded</p> <p>Lots of 'live' checking for misconceptions</p> <p>Keep success rates high to maintain confidence</p>	<p>Moving, through fading practice, into 'YOU DO' with practice becoming less scaffolded and more independent.</p> <p>Checking for misconceptions can become more episodic at this point</p> <p>Encourage the student to build confidence in independent practice at this stage</p>

The 'Exceeded' stage

Our goal at The Lodge is for curriculum teams to thoughtfully design their curriculums and scheme of works, ensuring that students can develop knowledge. Through attentive learning, guided practice, and teachers utilising 'I do / we do' tasks, we aim for every student to gain 'exceeded' knowledge of the subjects they've been taught. Subsequently, through 'you do' tasks and independent practice outside of class, students enhance their understanding until they've fully understood the material.

'I do, we do, you do'

This refers to the transition students make from supervised to self-directed practice:

I do	<p>During this phase, the student depends on explicit guidance from the teacher.</p> <p>The student relies on the teacher to demonstrate the tasks and provide clear instructions.</p> <p>This instructional guidance is essential and should occur in the classroom under the teacher's supervision.</p>
We do	<p>At this point, the student can engage in practice alongside the teacher but still requires substantial guidance.</p> <p>We refer to this as guided practice, where the teacher and student work together, gradually transitioning to independent practice when the teacher is confident the student is prepared.</p> <p>Checking for comprehension is crucial during this phase.</p> <p>This collaborative practice should occur within the classroom under the teacher's guidance.</p>
You do	<p>In this phase, the student is capable of self-guided practice.</p> <p>We term this independent practice, which does not necessarily occur within the classroom with the teacher. It is often more effective when conducted independently to foster self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Full independence in practice may not occur right away. Hence, we use the term "fading practice" to signify that the student is progressively relying less on teacher guidance.</p>

Collecting and using data

We will record data from in-class assessments on a central management information system. This data is used for analysing in order to gauge progress and areas for development and is shared once per term with parents. Workload, and avoiding unnecessary workload, has been a key consideration in the formation of this policy. Data is collected once onto a markbook which is then managed by the leadership team to create reports and analysis.

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 Lodge 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.

Reporting to parents/carers

Parents will receive a report three times a year, at the end of each term. This report will give information about attainment against key knowledge and where their child can go / what they need to do to address gaps in their knowledge or understanding – their strengths and areas for development. In addition to this, parents will receive Attitude to Learning (ATL) grades for each subject, based on a 1-4 score, and information about attendance in school.

Attendance will highlight

- The total number of possible attendances for that pupil, and
- The total number of unauthorised absences for that pupil, expressed as a percentage of the possible attendances.

ATL is graded as follows: There is an annual Parents' Evening where parents can discuss their child's progress with subject teachers. These are on the school calendar which is published to parents. At KS3, we do not issue grades.

Reports are issued at the end of each term that state whether a pupil is:

Working towards an understanding of the key knowledge that has been defined in every subject, or

Expected to achieve an understanding of the key knowledge that has been defined in every subject

Exceeding an understanding of the key knowledge that has been defined in every subject.

At KS4, a report is sent at the end of every term that tells parents the GCSE or BTEC grade that their child is currently working at, following tests in class or more formal exams. These reports also contain details of the aspirational target that their child should be working towards. Like the KS3 report, parents will receive information about what they can do at home to support their child on their GCSE or Vocational Qualification journey.

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.

Training

Teachers will be kept up to date with developments in assessment practice, and will be able to develop and improve their practice on a regular basis through a coordinated programme of CPD.

This takes place throughout the year and includes:

- Initial INSETs in August and September of each year
- Weekly staff Meetings
- Termly staff Twilight
- All of our teachers are encouraged to examine externally in order to develop both their awareness of assessment and approaches to teaching and learning.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the annual CPD programme reflects developments in assessment theory or practice.

Roles and responsibilities

Trustee Board

Board of 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 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.

Headteacher

The headteacher 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 governors 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.

Teaching Staff

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.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Curriculum Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the board of directors.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. All staff are responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

Curriculum Leads will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Moderation
- Lesson observations
- Book scrutiny