



THE
Lodge AP

— At Sandbach House —

Assessment Policy

2026-2027

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 and Statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1

Principles of Assessment

Assessment at The Lodge encompasses both formal and informal judgements made by teachers and students about the quality and standard of work. Where appropriate, these judgements are measured against nationally recognised criteria.

Formative and Diagnostic Assessment: Ongoing formative and diagnostic assessment is used throughout the year to guide teaching, support learning, and identify areas where students may need additional help or challenge.

Summative Assessment: Summative assessment provides a structured evaluation of learning and progress, awarding an attainment mark, grade, or outcome to demonstrate achievement.

We believe that our assessment approach enables consistent and coherent monitoring of student progress and supports higher achievement for all pupils, regardless of ability. Feedback, in all its forms, is central to this process, ensuring that students understand their progress, recognise their strengths, and know the next steps to improve. It also helps staff identify gaps in knowledge and understanding, allowing targeted support where required.

Our assessments focus on how well pupils have mastered the key knowledge defined for each subject. By the end of Year 9, we have identified the essential knowledge, skills, and concepts that students need to understand, apply, and demonstrate confidently to progress successfully into KS4 and study qualifications such as GCSEs, Functional Skills, or BTECs. This Key Knowledge is informed by the National Curriculum but tailored to reflect the local context, the needs of our pupils, and their future aspirations.

Induction Phase Assessments

SPARCS and DASH assessments : As part of the students induction process, all students complete a SPARCS (Spelling, Processing Speed and Reading Comprehension Speed) assessment and a DASH (Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting) assessment. These diagnostic tools are used to identify individual literacy needs at the earliest stage of the students' programme of study.

The **SPARCS assessment** provides an overview of a student's core literacy skills: spelling accuracy, processing speed and reading comprehension speed. The outcome of the SPaRCS assessment are used to identify students who may require targeted literacy support or intervention, support staff in planning appropriate differentiation and adaptations in lessons, as well as contribute to evidence for reasonable adjustments and access arrangements, where appropriate.

The **DASH assessment** evaluated handwriting speed and fluency. It is used to identify students who may experience difficulties with written output due to handwriting speed, which may impact their ability to complete written tasks under timed conditions. Again, assessment outcomes contribute to the planning of targeted literacy interventions and provide supporting evidence for reasonable adjustments and access arrangements, where appropriate.

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**.

Day-to-day in-school Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is an ongoing process that helps teachers monitor pupils' learning, adapt teaching, and provide support or challenge, while also enabling pupils to understand their progress and areas for improvement, and giving parents a clear picture of their child's strengths and needs.

At The Lodge, formative assessment is used regularly to support and monitor pupils' learning. This includes, but is not limited to, the following approaches:

- **Low-stakes testing:** Low-stakes testing is used to check pupils' retention of key knowledge from previous lessons and to identify any misunderstandings or misconceptions, either across the class or in

individual pupils. This often takes place at the start of lessons, with students recording responses in their exercise books, mini whiteboards, or verbally, so staff can provide immediate feedback. Low stakes testing may also be used at other points during a lesson to assess understanding before moving on to new content.

- **Targeted questioning:** Teachers use carefully planned questions throughout lessons to assess understanding, guide teaching, and identify pupils who may need extra support. This is especially effective when combined with low stakes testing to address misconceptions.
- **Self-assessment opportunities:** Pupils regularly reflect on and evaluate their own learning, with teachers using targeted questions to check understanding and support accurate self-assessment.

In-School Summative Assessments

Summative assessment provides a structured opportunity to evaluate pupils' learning at the end of a topic, unit, or term. At The Lodge, summative assessment is used to measure progress, identify achievements and areas for development, and inform future teaching. It also gives pupils clear feedback on their strengths and next steps, and helps parents understand their child's overall progress and attainment.

- Each subject will include a summative assessment at least once per term. The timing of this assessment is flexible to accommodate the needs and learning pace of the students.
- Students eligible for exam concessions should receive these adjustments as their standard practice when completing summative assessments.
- KS4 students will complete summative assessments that align with their qualification pathway, whether that is GCSEs, Functional Skills, or BTEC qualifications.
- Upon completion of the summative assessment, staff will provide written feedback highlighting strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps. Pupils should be given time to respond to the feedback, and appropriate follow-up interventions should be planned where necessary.

In-School Summative Assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

- School leaders monitor the performance of students, 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 are provided with opportunities to respond to feedback and, where necessary, to engage with appropriate interventions or clearly defined next steps in order to secure understanding and make progress.
- Parents/carers stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Nationally standardised summative assessment

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- School leaders monitor the performance of students, 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 (BTEC & Functional Skills) at the end of Key Stage (KS) 4.

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.

- Students may not use AI tools during assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework, nor write homework or class assignments, whereby AI-generated text is presented as their own work.
- However, students may use AI as a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas, and when specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in Digital Skills lessons or during Art lessons 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. Each report will include information on the student's attitude to learning (rated as poor, needs improvement, good or outstanding) and their progress (reported as limited, expected, good or outstanding).

For KS4 students, the report will also include a current working grade (in line with how the qualification is assessed), identification of the student's academic pathway, and a predicted grade for the end of the qualification.

In addition, there will be an opportunity for further EAA comment, highlighting the student's strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps.

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 & briefings
- All of our teachers are encouraged to engage with external training 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.

Teaching and Learning Lead and the Headteacher will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Moderation
- Lesson observations
- Book scrutiny