Pennine

School Assessment Policy

Approved by	Name	Date
Reviewed on		Date July 2025
Review due		Date September 2025

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive document to share with staff, Directors, other professionals, families and other interested stakeholders. The policy incorporates the vision, values and aims for assessment when using an adapted curriculum and the specialised approaches required for teaching the pupils at Pennine.

At Pennine we recognise that effective assessment is essential to support the quality of learning, teaching, achievement and progress of our pupils. We appreciate that all of our learners at Pennine are unique and are at very different starting points within their academic journey. They all need different learning targets to develop their skills at different points. That is why no one single assessment tool fits our pupils. The assessment frameworks must be flexible to meet the need in recording a pupil's individual strengths and the next steps needed to progress. It is very difficult for us to compare outcomes for the whole school cohort. Learning and target setting is personalised to each pupil - every child is unique in their learning experiences.

We use assessment as a key part of our approach to inform the next steps for pupils and to monitor the wider impact of our curriculum. Staff use a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies to track pupil progress and plan appropriate interventions where possible. To minimise anxiety and distress for our pupils, assessments are planned within all year groups to ensure pupils are given a routine and develop strategies to cope with formal assessments. Pupils are given updated targets at regular intervals to ensure they understand what their next steps are and how to progress to them.

Senior leaders conduct regular work samples to monitor pupil progress and learning walks to monitor pupil progress and support staff development.

At Pennine the purpose of assessment is: initial, diagnostic, formative and evaluative. Assessment then informs judgements about progress and recording of which thus contribute to future planning. In order to ensure accuracy of planning, teaching and assessment, we use evidence from a range of different sources such as teacher observation, class work, tests, investigation, learner reviews, questioning, project work, and examinations (where appropriate). There are three phases to this process:

Formative short-term assessments will be an ongoing part of every lesson to check pupils' understanding and gain information that assists in adjusting day-to-day lessons plans.

Medium term assessments will focus on ideas linked to the key objectives, which have been covered during each term.

Long-term assessments will take place annually. A variety of assessment tests may be used according to pupils' ability levels. Pupils' individual success will be recognised and celebrated through the school systems for rewarding and celebrating achievement.

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.
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated.
- Informs pupils about what they have done well and highlights areas of improvement.
- Supports pupils' confidence in learning, contributing to accelerated learning.
- Supports teachers' assessment knowledge for each pupil, to plan and establish effective next steps in their academic progression.
- Develops reliable processes in the school, which equally balance the need to provide marking and feedback and where it is appropriate to provide it.

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.

3. Principles of Assessment

Assessment at Pennine aims to:

- Provide a baseline against which to measure attainment and progress in all areas, including the life skills and creative curriculum.
- Identify the learning needs of an individual pupil or a group of pupils.
- Inform planning, target setting and interventions.
- Assist with the development of quality teaching strategies which motivate pupils.
- Be accurate, reliable and consistent across the school using a range of evidence and strategies.
- Complies with statutory requirements.
- Gather and capture additional information necessary to provide a tailored education, of high quality to all pupils.
- Inform parents and carers of their child's experiences and achievements.
- Support the identification of barriers to learning and the development of strategies to overcome these.

4. Assessment approaches

At Pennine 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.

Assessment for learning key principles:

- Class data should be used to plan lessons with appropriate pace and challenge.
- Pupils should know what is expected for their ability and at key stage 4 knowledge of their minimum expected grade.
- Teachers should plan and pitch lessons against learning outcomes which meet pupil needs.
- Teaching should effectively model what successful achievement looks like for pupils.
- Teaching should allow time for the review of learning, including pupil response to feedback which demonstrate the improvements that have been made.
- There should be variety in assessment activities both formative and summative including peer and self-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 to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve.

Assessment for learning is the process of finding out where learners are within a learning continuum, where they need to go and how best to get there.

Assessment for Learning (AfL):

• is part of effective planning.

• focuses on how pupils learn.

• is central to classroom practice.

• is a key professional skill.

• is sensitive and constructive.

• fosters motivation

• promotes understanding of goals and criteria.

• helps learners know how to improve.

• develops the capacity for self and peer assessment.

Marking & Feedback

Marking and responding to pupils 'work is an essential element in the assessment of the performance, progress, levels of attainment, and the raising of standards throughout our school. It informs and enables staff, children and parents/carers in this process.

Feedback can take different forms: peer, self, teacher marking or verbal. All the evidence tells us that effective feedback works, and we should aim to use a combination of these forms as appropriate to the learning. The best feedback, whether it is written or verbal, will give our pupils a clear sense of how they can improve, with pupils responding and making progress as a result. Feedback should be used to identify gaps, address misconceptions, assess knowledge, skills and understanding.

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 to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Summative assessment is used to provide useful information for improving future learning and to demonstrate improvement and progress over a long period of time.

In KS2 and 3 Summative assessment takes place in varying formats including in class formal assessments at the end-of-topic or unit text and end of year assessment. All assessments will be sensitively considered with the pupils' mental health and wellbeing to be considered first and foremost.

At KS4 and 5 pupils also have the addition of timely Mock Exam week that provides evidence as to the pupil's current attainment and will allow for teachers to add interventions where necessary.

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 to understand how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally.

For Primary: National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6) – in house delivery and assessed (due to the needs of the pupils).

For secondary: Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4, and post-16 qualifications in Key Stage 5.

4.4 Target Setting

Targets are set based on a number of factors including externally recognised assessments and teacher assessments. The setting of targets, specific and measurable goals for our pupils can foster a sense of common purpose and contribute to our desire to help pupils achieve their greatest potential. Appropriate targets will be set annually at review and half termly by classroom teachers. The targets will be challenging but achievable and meaningful in their circumstances.

5. Collecting and using data

Data is collected 3 times a year, this is inputted by education staff at the end of each term. The Data is collated and the information is used to plan appropriate interventions based on pupil progress. Data is available for both Education and Care teams to access to ensure the progress of their pupils/key children is used holistically. Data is analysed and presented to the Senior Leadership Team Termly, this in turn is disseminated to the Board of Directors.

6. Reporting to parents

Full EHCP reviews will take place annually, during this time the following will be reviewed:

- Progress in all subject areas.
- Attendance
- What is going well and what the pupil needs further support with.
- Review of each EHCP outcome in all areas.

▪ Achievements including internal and external qualifications or awards.

In addition to EHCP annual reviews, a progress report will be sent home three times a year. Parents and carers receive weekly phone calls on how their child is presenting from either the form team or key worker. Finally, each year group will have an annual parents evening in which the successes of their child can be celebrated, and further support needed can be discussed.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils. 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.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 Governance

The Board of Directors 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

8.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that 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

8.3 Teachers

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

9. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board. All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Senior leadership are responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed and will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

▪ Work scrutiny

▪ Lesson visits

▪ Learning Walks

▪ Pupils progress

▪ Pupil Annual Review Process

▪ Data and Progress Monitoring

See Pennine Quality Assurance – half termly plan.

10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1. The Headteacher is responsible for:

▪ Ensuring that this policy is implemented, monitored and remains effective.

▪ Assessing whether marking and feedback practices effectively balance the need to mark and provide feedback and the strain on teachers' workload.

▪ Reviewing this policy as and when necessary to establish whether practices are effective and consistent across all departments within the school.

10.2. Curriculum Leads are responsible for:

▪ Ensuring all members of staff within their departments are aware of the school's procedures in terms of marking and providing feedback.

▪ Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy within their departments and reporting their findings back to the senior leadership team.

▪ Answering any queries that teaching staff have in regard to this policy and the school's practices.

10.3. Teaching staff are responsible for:

▪ Ensuring that they adopt this policy when marking and providing feedback.

▪ Using their professional judgement to determine when it is appropriate to offer more intervention support systems than just feedback.

▪ Monitoring the learning of all pupils within their class to ensure they are making at least good progress.

▪ Ensuring that pupils understand the feedback they have been given.

▪ Allowing pupils to ask questions and respond in regard to any feedback they have received.

11. Expectations

11.1 Teaching staff are expected to:

- Provide marking that offers clear information about why pupils have done well.
- Offer detailed suggestions and targets for improvement, which should create a progressive plan for continued learning in green pen.
- Provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on feedback, which also allows them to respond to the feedback, ask questions and improve their learning in purple pen.
- Remind pupils of their targets and how these targets can be achieved in particular lessons.
- Ensure that marking identifies misconceptions and feedback addresses these swiftly.
- Use marking and assessment to identify the next steps for pupils, which should be used to plan the delivery of the curriculum.
- Offer questions and challenge pupils whose work was correct, which should encourage further development.
- Provide feedback that is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupil.
- Provide positive and pupil-friendly marking and feedback.
- Return work promptly and allow pupils time to review any feedback that has been given to them.

11.2 Pupils are expected to:

- Try their best with any work they complete.
- Ask questions when they do not understand something in lessons.
- Read any comments on their work and ask questions if they do not understand them.
- Review their own progress by re-reading previous work and establishing where they have made mistakes or identifying ways it could be improved with support and guidance from the teacher and/or class support staff.
- Make a conscious effort to meet their targets and to action any suggested improvements.
- Take responsibility for their learning.

12. Workload

The school understands that marking and providing feedback is a large contributor to the workload of teachers; therefore, teachers will ensure that their marking and feedback is only done to positively impact upon the progress of a pupil.

Teachers will ask themselves 'why am I providing this feedback?', 'how will this feedback be useful to the pupil?'

13. Marking

▪ Teacher marking will be in green pen. Peer/Self-Assessment by pupils using purple pen.

▪ Where appropriate teachers will provide PIN (Positive, Improvement, Next Steps) marking:

P – make a positive comment about what has been achieved by the pupil, where possible this should relate directly to the learning objective of the lesson or the personal target for the pupil.

I – improve, give a clear indication of what the pupil needs to do to improve the work, again linked clearly to the learning objective of the lesson.

N – next steps, issue a task or directive which the pupil should carry out in purple pen so that it is clearly evidenced that they have read your comments and acted upon them. In English, for example, they may be asked to revisit the first paragraph of their work and correct the punctuation, spelling or improve the vocabulary.

Teachers will indicate where a specific challenge target/task/work has been set. Teachers will indicate when verbal feedback has been given during 1:1 time with the teacher.

14. Feedback

Feedback should be given to:

- Motivate pupils.
- Establish an opportunity to make learning progress, by:
  - Rectifying a misunderstanding.
  - Reinforcing a skill or piece of information.
  - Improving on a pupil's understanding or ability to do something.
- Pupils will be given time to reflect on their feedback and respond.
- Teachers will allow pupils to reflect on feedback at the start of lessons, so that the feedback is at the forefront of pupils' minds when they begin the lesson.
- Positive reinforcement will be used to emphasise that pupils are improving, which will encourage them to improve their performance over time.
- The school believes in developing independent thinkers and as such, feedback will guide the pupil to the correct answers, as opposed to giving the answers away.

15. Monitoring of Marking & Feedback

Curriculum Leads will carry out a focused book look at least once per half term. This will include class books and assessed work to ensure quality control in terms of regularity of marking, appropriate awarding of marks and the presence of concise diagnostic feedback to enable pupils to identify and address areas for improvement.

There should be clear evidence of:

▪ Securing and building on previous knowledge showing that pupils are practicing their work to secure learning and therefore making at least good progress.

▪ Deep learning, Mastery and Thinking hard.

Action is put in place for teachers who have not met standards for work scrutiny evaluated by Curriculum Leads or Senior Leadership Team.