

Ashcroft School

Assessment Policy

Assessment primarily focuses on improving learning rather than measuring it.

In doing so, best practice in avoiding unnecessary workload is met.

Contents:

1. Statement of intent
2. Principles of Assessment
3. Improving essential knowledge and identifying gaps
4. Assessment Overview
5. Principles
6. Purpose, Type, Audience, Frequency
7. Rationale
8. Roles & Responsibilities
9. Training of Staff
10. Types of Assessment
11. Use of Assessment Materials
12. Tests
13. Assessment System
14. Reading Assessments
15. ASDAN Qualifications
16. Tracking & Reviewing Progress
17. Marking & Feedback
18. Records & Record Keeping
19. Moderation and Quality Assurance
20. Reporting
21. Monitoring and Review

1. Statement of intent

Ashcroft School believes that to facilitate effective teaching and learning a comprehensive assessment model is essential.

Regular formal and informal assessments provide teachers with valuable information on the progress and achievements of our students. Monitoring student progress also gives teachers the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and assess the impact of the strategies that we use.

2. Principles of assessment

At Ashcroft School we believe that the key aim of assessment is to **support pupil achievement and to provide accurate information about** individual starting points and the progress that pupils make against initial baselines as they progress through the school and curriculum.

Through our assessment and reporting practice, we aim to:

- Identify accurate baselines and starting points for our pupils to ensure that we target gaps in knowledge and assess academic and SEMH needs accurately and effectively so that interventions can be implemented to support pupil progress and development.
- Enable pupils to be involved in their learning so that they understand the personal and academic targets that need to be achieved to make progress.
- Provide information that can be used to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- Provide pupils with effective feedback so that they know what progress they have made and the steps required for further success.
- Provide opportunities for self and peer assessment during learning activities.
- Track pupil performance and, in particular, identify those pupils at risk of underachievement or who could progress more rapidly and potentially re-enter mainstream education.
- Provide information which can be used to evaluate Ashcroft's performance against national standards and standards across the Trust.
- Provide information and data to support the Annual Review process and further multi-agency meetings.
- Fulfil statutory requirements in reporting on progress against EHCP targets.
- Celebrate students' achievements and improve progress through embedding and building on essential knowledge.
- Guide the planning, teaching, additional support, curriculum development and the creation of resources.
- Communicate with parents and the wider community about students' progress and achievement, celebrating all steps of progress.
- Provide assessment information to ensure continuity when a pupil changes year group or leaves the school.

3. Improving essential knowledge and identifying gaps

At Ashcroft, we see assessment as a process within teaching. To ensure our students are making progress, we must create a curriculum that students can remember, embedding and building on essential knowledge. At Ashcroft, we develop our curriculum as a progression model, viewing assessment as an ongoing process to support teaching and learning and to identify gaps in learners' knowledge.

Information is to be recorded using our assessment program and tracked through pupil progress meetings to illustrate progress throughout our Core curriculum, Enrichment, and Personal Development Curriculum. The Boxall profile is also used termly to sensitively assess our pupils' SEMH needs, which allows for progress against EHCP outcomes to be assessed and tracked effectively. The ASDAN framework is also used to assess subjects within the enrichment curriculum.

Our assessment process is continually being adapted whilst we redesign our curriculum. At Ashcroft, we recognise that curriculum constructs are steps along a much longer learning progression. We are currently working through our curriculum to assess where on that continuum our students are and where they should move to next, developing a more consistent approach to improve progression by tracking through the curriculum.

4. Assessment Overview

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Exams Policy

5. Principles

At Ashcroft, our assessments are valid and reliable. We recognise that each of the three types of assessment has its conditions for validity and reliability, as outlined in the table below.

Assessment type	Validity	Reliability
Assessment for Learning <i>Any activity which is primarily designed to improve learning.</i>	Content validity Assessment must be related to lesson takeaways and relevant prior knowledge. Inference validity Inferences are immediately testable.	It does not need high reliability – the audience is the teacher and student, and the teacher will act on any new information if their inference turns out to be incorrect. However, the teacher should reflect upon the information they have discovered and adapt teaching - in the moment - in response to the assessment.
Formative Assessment <i>Any activity that gives the teacher previously unknown information about students' achievements that is used to inform next steps.</i>	Content validity Assessment must focus on what has been taught and what is expected of students. Inference validity Correct and manageable next steps must be identified.	Needs to be reliable, otherwise, the action taken will be inappropriate. Other professionals need to agree that the next steps are appropriate
Summative Assessment <i>Conclusions about attainment in relation to agreed standards made as the result of an assessment</i>	Content validity Assessments must take place in standard conditions with no help given to students. The assessment should include items of different difficulty so as to reveal differences in students' attainment. Assessments should sample from the subject. Inference validity All audiences should understand the results.	Needs extremely high levels of reliability, so that all parties are confident in judgements. Other assessors would make similar judgements. The student would perform in a similar way if the questions or tasks were different

6. Purpose, Type, Audience, Frequency

Purposes of Assessment

At Ashcroft we use three types of assessment: Assessment for Learning, Formative, and Summative assessments.

Each type of assessment has a distinct nature:

- **Assessment For Learning** - any activity that is designed to improve learning,
- **Formative Assessment** - provides the teacher with previously unknown information about students' achievements which can be used to inform the next steps.
- **Summative Assessment** - allows the teacher to draw conclusions about students' attainment in relation to agreed standards.

Each type of assessment has distinct purposes:

- **Assessment For Learning** is used to help students to remember, apply facts to build knowledge, and develop reasoning.
- **Formative Assessments** is used to check what students remember and understand in the short to medium term, to determine the efficacy of teaching methods, and to decide what to do in response to this information.
- **Summative Assessments** are to check what students remember and understand in the long term and to decide whether this meets agreed standards.

Each type of assessment has distinct audiences:

- **Assessment For Learning** - teachers and their students.
- **Formative Assessments** - teachers, students, subject leaders, and parents.
- **Summative Assessments** - teachers, students, subject leaders, school leaders, governors, parents and (where applicable) other schools and government departments.

The frequency of each type of assessment is:

Assessment For Learning – (Activities likely to promote learning) every lesson, every day.

Formative Assessment - from the mid-point of a topic onwards, with variable time scales.

Summative Assessment - once or twice per year.

7. Rationale

The process of assessment is central to helping pupils to improve their progress and fulfil their potential. It is also necessary to provide a framework to ensure that essential knowledge and procedural fluency can be embedded and built upon informing lesson planning, resources, and support. Assessment is integrated methodically into teaching strategies, so that progress can be monitored and barriers to learning can be identified at a student, group, class, or whole-school level. The school's assessment procedures take account of students' additional / SEMH needs, and the progress of different cohorts is analysed to ensure that the needs of individuals and specific groups are met.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the success of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis, in conjunction with relevant members of staff.

The Headteacher and SLT are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is adhered to consistently across the school.
- Ensuring staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake their duties in relation to conducting assessment processes successfully and accurately.
- Ensuring educators meet internal deadlines.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Identifying gaps in learning.
- Improving progress for all students.
- Embedding essential knowledge that meets the needs of the individual.
- Setting individual targets for students that enable a student to remember, know, apply and reason (Boxall profile assessment also used to support this process).
- Track and record improvements in progress (RWI / Lexplore also to be used to support this process to ensure that reading is also targeted).
- Tracking progress towards EHCP targets.
- Track & record progress using Evidence for learning where appropriate.
- Reporting progress through Evidence for Learning records and via Pupil progress meetings and yearly reports.

9. Training of staff

Teachers and classroom support staff will be provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction and will be informed of any changes to this policy. This policy is a working document.

All teachers and classroom support staff will be trained to identify students potentially at risk of not meeting their expected targets so that appropriate support can be put in place. Such training will be delivered in conjunction with training focusing on autism best practices and with guidance from the wider therapy / leadership team.

Teachers and classroom support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their professional development.

10. Types of assessment

Assessment at Ashcroft will embrace the principles outlined in this policy. Assessments should be ongoing and consistently reviewed.

Types of assessment carried out will include, but are not limited to, the following:

Assessment for learning; Designed to improve learning.

Checking, retrieval practice, writing to learn, metacognition, questioning and feedback. All of these methods help us to enact Rosenshein's Principles of Instruction – evidence-informed principles for effective teaching.

- Checking gives teachers accurate situational awareness of how well students are dealing with the tasks set, from which they adapt their lessons.
- Retrieval practice is the act of remembering previously taught content. The struggle to remember retrieval helps to cement it in long-term memory.
- Metacognition is helping pupils to understand how the brain works and how they learn.
- Questioning allows teachers to assess students' recall and understanding as well as to extend thinking.
- Feedback against specific criteria helps students to meet expectations.

Purpose of prior learning assessments and baseline assessments

At Ashcroft it is essential that we check whether essential prior knowledge - required for the topic about to be taught - has been retained. It is of equal important that we also re-activate prior knowledge so that the topic about to be taught relates to it.

- Baseline assessment used at the start of a unit of work to identify strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to teaching.
- Summative assessment performed at the end or after learning to evaluate pupil progress within a unit of work and to establish the impact of teaching.

- Moderation of subject workbooks across the school to ensure that progress judgements are accurate and secure.
- Practice papers, mock exams and end-of-unit tests
- Oral feedback
- Learning conversations
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Group assessment
- Targeted questioning
- Written feedback that links to assessment criteria

Assessments will be used to:

- Provide information on what students remember and know.
- Identify 'Where the student is now, and the steps required to improve progress.
- Improve essential knowledge and procedural fluency.
- Identify gaps in knowledge.

11. Use of assessment materials

Teachers will provide regular opportunities for students to assess their work and the work of their peers if this is viewed as appropriate. This enables students to be actively involved in their learning and to identify their targets for improvement. Self-assessments and peer assessments may include the following:

- Self-assessment against set criteria / essential knowledge as specified on task sheets mounted in workbooks.
- Peer marking
- Highlighting or annotating their work

12. Tests

At Ashcroft we use both formative and summative Tests.

Formative tests include assessing whether content has been remembered / understood and determining the next steps for the teacher and student.

Summative tests are used to report attainment against an expected standard.

The two models are used in tests: the difficulty model - where students are asked progressively difficult questions, and the quality model - where teachers make judgements about performance. Both have specific criteria so that validity and reliability are ensured.

Prior learning assessments help teachers to know what has been retained from previous topics. Through the redevelopment of our curriculum topics are well-sequenced to build upon previous topics, and teachers must know what has been retained. If necessary, content can be re-visited. The assessments also serve to activate prior knowledge, which helps students to build a schema for that subject.

Learning talks help to provide additional assessment information. These are used for two main purposes: to find out more than work scrutiny can reveal; to help assess in areas where there is little or no written work. The talks are well-planned and mapped against curriculum expectations.

Comparative judgement is used to compare students' work against an exemplar, and to show progress over time.

Students (present, new, or mid-year transfers) complete baseline assessments at the beginning of each topic to identify a starting point for learning and to determine the best approach to support the student to make progress within each of the learning pathways,

13. Assessment System

Students' progress will be tracked and assessed throughout the academic year using our assessment system which supports staff in illustrating progress through our Curriculum whilst we rebuild our curriculum to reflect progression through the curriculum.

Tracking and reviewing progress using Evidence for Learning

How often should I complete assessments?

- Assessment should be part of the teaching and learning process to enable teachers to understand what students remember and know and the essential knowledge they require next. Teachers should assess each half-term as learners work through the curriculum, e.g., if a student has worked through a topic with exceptional or good understanding teachers should ensure that progress is tracked, and that supporting evidence is captured using Evidence for Learning assessment and Evidence for Learning records.

Assessment and the curriculum

It is vital that our students can access, develop, and master the content in our curriculum. We are in the process of creating a more detailed and concrete understanding of the narrative of each subject content (what students would know, understand and be able to do along the learning journey, and upon reaching their destination).

What about Enrichment and Personal Development?

- Please use the ASDAN framework and Boxall profile and assessment against EHCP outcomes to support the assessment of improving progress beyond academics.

Making Evidence for learning records

What do you mean by record?

- A record is when you take a photo of a student or evidence of a pupils work and tag this to a specific statement in relating to progression.
- Records of progression can be tracked to show how students have improved over time. These records build up to create a timeline which can be filtered by subject or student.
- Practical subjects e.g., Enrichment, D of E, Learning for Life, Science etc lend themselves to taking photos as evidence of work. If your students do not have workbooks, we would suggest one record per session.

How do you know when a student has achieved Essential knowledge?

We would expect to see a retrieval of knowledge over time (evidence of the students generalising the knowledge - remembering and retrieving). We would expect that the evidence is varied, showing generalisation, and completed independently (unless specified with support in the statement).

14. Reading Assessments

Assessment and record keeping

Learners will be assessed at the point of entry using the Lexplore reading age assessment, a short approximately seven minute assessment using Artificial Intelligence to track eye movement and determine an individual's reading and comprehension ability (tracked against national, age related

expectations) - this will then be followed by the Read Write Inc. Fresh Start Phonics screening and Comprehension assessment. Lexplore assessments to be carried out by the Reading LSA in the main Ashcroft site and SHINE.

Using the Lexplore reading age assessment we are able to pinpoint from the off a students' reading ability in relation to age related expectations, pitched against national expectations at the various age levels. Learners who score below or within the poor range will have a follow up Phonics screening assessment along with a comprehension assessment. A reading pathway will then be identified for these learners and an individual reading and phonics package developed.

Improvements in reading ages over time to be measured via re-testing at key points throughout year. Learners reading ages are assessed three times a year, Autumn, Spring and Summer. Read Write Inc Fresh Start assessments will take place for those individuals following this route every half term. SHINE teachers will have the responsibility of these, the responsibility for those accessing the Fresh Start program in the main school site falls to the reading LSA. Reading ages are shared with all teaching staff which will enable staff to differentiate tasks accordingly – reading ages are included on Individual Learning Plans, via the pupil progress process and are shared with the pupils, parents and carers through termly reports.

Assessments will focus on reading age and comprehension which involves understanding, analysing, and synthesising words, sentences and ideas and will also focus on the development and understanding of key vocabulary since improving word knowledge and vocabulary, improves comprehension.

At point of entry learners will be required to carry out a Read Write Inc Phonics assessment, assessing a further 2 times throughout the year as a standard practice. Those identified as requiring the Fresh Start intervention will be assessed more frequently, every half term. Depending on the outcomes of the assessment will depend on the pathway which pupils are placed in terms of supporting intervention, targeted intervention, the intensity and regularity of these. Individual, learner reading pathways are determined by the outcomes of both Lexplore and Fresh Start outcomes as detailed by the quadrant;

+	<p>Poor Reading + Good Comprehension Targeted phonics support during daily reading sessions via Read Write Inc Fresh Start</p>	<p>Good Reading + Good Comprehension Extend reading for pleasure, interests as well as expand vocabulary through subject specific text and use of Frayer Model</p>
Word Reading	<p>Poor Reading + Poor Comprehension Targeted intervention with Reading SLSA Targeted Read Write Inc phonics package during daily reading sessions Additional support through use of Frayer Model, key vocabulary lists and high frequency words across all subjects</p>	<p>Good Reading + Poor Comprehension Targeted comprehension support during daily reading sessions via Read Write Inc Fresh Start anthology work Combined with reading for pleasure</p>
-	Language Comprehension	+

Fresh Start is a further tool for assessing our older struggling readers Fresh Start teaches our older struggling readers to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. It is rooted in phonics and uses age-appropriate decodable texts with half-termly assessments. It's a catch-up literacy intervention

for learners at risk of falling behind their peers in early secondary schooling. Teaching begins with recognition, practice and blending of sounds and graphemes, based on a set of module booklets.

15. ASDAN Qualifications

For those learners where formal exams are not suitable or where assessment of enrichment and personal development is required, we offer ASDAN qualifications. ASDAN offers a wide choice of activity-based programmes for learners working at a range of levels. More flexible than qualifications, the courses offer imaginative ways of developing, assessing, and certificating young people's knowledge and skills development.

We follow the quality assurance process set out by ASDAN:

Before Delivery Starts

- Qualification coordinator ensures that internal moderators have been allocated to tutors/ assessors and introduced.
- Internal moderators review and approve proposed schemes of work and assessment plans.
- Internal quality assurance of delivery carried out by the internal moderator before delivery begins. Records of sampling the delivery materials and decisions are kept. Feedback is provided to assessors and stored in the centre file for moderation and audit processes.

During Delivery

- First Teaching of the new unit or new assessor: formative internal quality assurance of assessment carried out by the internal moderator after the first unit has been delivered and assessed. Records and feedback stored as before.
- Summative internal quality assurance of the first completed unit: records and feedback stored as before.
- Summative internal quality assurance of continuous assessments of the remaining units: records and feedback to assessor stored as before.
- Any actions identified from the first round of internal moderation addressed and signed off.
- Internal standardisation meeting held to discuss any issues arising. Minutes are kept and actions are recorded.

After delivery has finished

- Internal quality assurance of completed assessment carried out by the internal moderator at the end of the qualification. Records and feedback are stored as before.
- Any Actions identified from previous rounds of internal moderation addressed and signed off.
- Internal Standardisation meeting held to discuss and issues arising and plan for external moderation. Minutes are kept and actions are recorded.
- Qualification coordinator confirms candidates and units to be submitted for external moderation.
- Summative internal moderation carried out by the internal moderator to include final checking of portfolios. Records are stored as before.
- Arrangements made for external moderation.

Post Result

- Internal standardisation meeting held to discuss feedback from external moderation and any issues arising. Minutes are kept and actions are recorded. Records and feedback are stored as before.

For further information please refer to ASDAN quals internal quality assurance guidance.

16. Tracking and reviewing progress

Pupils are allowed to review their progress through planned learning reflection and retrieval during lesson time.

To assist in guiding each pupil's learning journey, progress will be reviewed formally and discussed via pupil progress meetings three times a year.

Pupil progress meetings for each learning pathway and the class group will be scheduled at 3 intervals across the academic year and will focus on:

- Reviewing the progress of all pupils.
- Identifying, monitoring and documenting cohorts / individual pupils that require greater support and interventions by pinpointing barriers to learning that occur across classes, e.g. attendance, punctuality, behaviour, and mental health difficulties and selecting intervention strategies to implement as a team to tackle barriers to learning.
- Continuously reviewing collective and individual learning targets.
- Keeping an up-to-date record of all strategies and reviews that have been implemented including therapeutic interventions within the school.

17. Marking and feedback

Pupils' work will be marked in line with the Marking and Feedback Policy.

Marking and feedback (where appropriate) will directly relate to subject-specific assessment criteria and individual learning targets.

Teachers will use findings from a range of assessments (see above) marking being one to address knowledge gaps.

Throughout the lesson, pupils are provided with opportunities to review and respond to feedback, and pupils are supported and directed to understand misconceptions.

Feedback will take a variety of forms depending on the age of the pupil, the activity is undertaken and the teacher's judgement.

Marking and feedback strategies at the school take a multi-modal approach:

- Verbal feedback
- Teacher marking
- Peer assessment
- Self-assessment

Achievement will be rewarded in the following ways:

- E-praise/rewards
- Certificates
- Praise
- Stickers/stamps
- Motivational objects

18. Records and record keeping

Teachers will use aspects of Evidence for learning to track and monitor improvements in progress and records from pupil progress meetings will be used to review learner progress, set appropriate targets for the future and feed into reports to parents.

Records will also be kept in the following formats:

- Lesson plans
- Boxall profile assessments

- Pupil's work and workbooks
- Evidence for learning and assessment tracking reports
- Pupil progress meeting records
- Annual review yearly reports
- Annual review summary documents
- Progress towards EHCP outcomes

Summative assessment records, such as GCSE examination results, will be kept electronically and held for six years after the year of the examination.

Formative assessment records, such as pupils' work, will be held for one year.

19. Moderation and Quality Assurance

The process of moderation is an essential part of the assessment system and subject moderation should be carried out by subject leaders each half-term. Teachers will be involved in the moderation process to ensure agreement on criteria for progress in the following ways:

- Collaboration with colleagues to moderate work against appropriate specification/grading criteria to ensure that judgments are accurate
 - Partnership with colleagues from other schools within the local area
 - Attendance at exam board standardisation meetings
- Portfolios of moderated work will be kept securely by subject leaders

Quality assurance will be supported by and conducted through learning walks to provide a clear picture as to what is happening across the school in terms of quality of provision.

Learning walks will be used to:

- Focus on a particular aspect of the provision and check that policies and procedures are being implemented consistently and effectively.
- Ensure that Tier 1 strategies, PBS/Therapy best practice is in place and implemented effectively to support teaching, learning, and access to the curriculum.
- Identify training needs and areas for professional development.
- Ascertain if CPD and curriculum development is impacting positively on teaching and learning across the school.
- Ensure that pupils/students are making progress in line with their stage of development and that intervention programs are in place to support learning and developmental need.
- Ensure that books/work is presented appropriately, and that task sheets are being used to support learning and that feedback and marking is purposeful, relevant, and supporting pupil/student's next steps.

20. Reporting

A written report for each pupil will be sent to parents on a yearly basis. Reports outline the holistic achievements, what pupils have remembered, know, can apply, and problem-solve in all subjects. They will also include social, emotional, and behavioural progression and therapeutic achievements.

Reports will promote:

- Positive home-school relationships.
- Information for parents.
- Opportunities for discussion with parents/carers.
- In some cases, information for partnership agencies.
- Targets for pupils.

Parents will be invited to attend parents' evenings with their child's teacher during the Autumn and Spring term.

There will continue to be ongoing conversations to support the holistic needs of the pupil and family, changes to home and school contexts and transparency on barriers to learning. The headteacher will report progress to the governing board on a termly basis, in the form of a headteacher's report.

21. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board, headteacher, SLT and examinations officer on an annual basis. The scheduled review for this policy is in December 2025.