ASSESSMENT
POLICY

Contents

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This policy takes into account the Equality Act (2010) which highlights actions and behaviours which are unlawful such as: direct/indirect discrimination, failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students or staff, harassment related to a protected characteristic, victimisation.

➔ **1.** Assessment Rationale

IncludEd Learning Learning in partnership with Manchester Secondary PRU is committed to providing an outstanding education for the students attending our learning centre. All adults delivering education are committed to high standards in teaching, learning and assessment.

"Assessment is the judgement teachers make about a child's attainment, based on knowledge gained through techniques such as observation, questioning, marking and testing." - **OFSTED**

The assessment policy has been written to drive improvements in standards for students and teachers, not just to measure them. The core purpose of assessment in our school is to move students on in their learning and is fundamental to the learning and teaching process. All assessment information should be used formatively.

The curriculum as the progression model
The curriculum is the progression model. We have developed an ambitious curriculum which has been designed to allow us to teach to the top, whilst scaffolding appropriately to ensure our curriculum adaptations can meet the learning needs of all of our students. Our curriculum has been designed to ensure students are taught increasingly complex and challenging content and concepts. Judgements on progress are based on how much of the curriculum a student has learned. Over time, students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of increasingly complex ideas through a range of formative and summative assessments in every subject.

Students should be able to demonstrate expertise, show knowledge and understanding of the content in unfamiliar contexts and be able to describe the key elements of what they have learnt in their own words.

The more carefully we have specified what we intend to teach, the more easily we can assess whether students have learned it. Unlike an age-related expectation (which is just something a child of a particular age is assumed to be able to do, regardless of what they've been taught) having curriculum related expectations allows us to specify, teach and assess the knowledge we expect children to acquire.

If students have failed to meet some of our expectations, we can assume that they might need extra support/intervention and undertake the process of establishing what knowledge they are missing.

Social and emotional assessment – Personal Development and the Skills For Life.

At IncludEd Learning students may have a range of complex social and emotional needs which can act as barriers to making academic progress. We believe that a young person's social and emotional development is as important as their academic progress and that the principles described in this policy apply equally to both.

As part of the review of our curriculum, we have been explicit in recognising that a strong focus on Personal Development is vital in ensuring that students develop the resilience and emotional intelligence needed to regulate their behaviours and access the academic offer effectively. Our curriculum has formal taught elements of personal development: PSHE/Lifeskills, Work Related Learning and Emotional Wellbeing, which make up our Personal Development offer, alongside a strong focus on broader opportunities in the extended curriculum: form time, lunch and break time, intervention sessions and outdoor education.

At IncludEd Learning we use the Skills for Life framework to describe students who:

- can **communicate** effectively
- are able and resilient **problem solvers**
- demonstrate **self-belief** even in the face of adversity
- are proficient **self-managers**
- can work collaboratively with others as **part of a team**

We know that we are at our most effective in supporting students to acquire these skills where desirable behaviour and character traits are continuously modelled by staff, and students feel safe and secure in a school culture that does not tolerate unsafe or harmful behaviours. Therefore, our aim is to ensure that the Skills for Life are aligned across both of our positive behaviour and safeguarding systems, as well as ensure that full and coordinated advantage is taken of complementary opportunities across all our national curriculum subjects.

We recognise that the impact of our work on a student's Personal Development may not be seen for many years after they have left school and as such the measurement of progress in Personal Development is difficult. At Manchester Secondary PRU we use the removal of barriers to learning and students' academic success as one measure of the impact of our efforts to support Personal Development. We also use the outcomes of the PASS (Pupils' Attitude to School and Self) survey to provide a proxy measure of the impact of our Personal Development framework.

➜ 2. Assessment With a Purpose

At IncludEd Learning we work in partnership with MSPRU and assessment data is used intelligently to support learning.

If our definition of **learning** is, "*Knowing more and remembering more. Learning is an alteration in the long-term memory*", then our definition of **progress** becomes "*The extent to which students have learnt the intended curriculum. Progress does not happen in individual lessons, but over time. If students are successfully learning the intended curriculum then they are making progress*".

All assessment tools used by teachers are designed to identify if the specified knowledge has been learnt, if there are misconceptions or gaps in knowledge which need to be addressed, and what the next phase of learning will be. We assess new and prior knowledge regularly through interleaving tests and content. Teachers assess knowledge in different contexts to ensure students can use their knowledge flexibly and that they have a deep understanding of the concepts and principles which underpin the subject. Assessment data tells us if the knowledge is secure, in long term memory, and can be used confidently by the students. In this way we know students have learnt the curriculum.

The school calendar identifies key assessment points at which attainment and progress is judged and when we report these to parents. Regular formative assessments are built into our curriculum maps and schemes of work to provide checks on students' attainment and progress. Our pedagogy is driven by teachers regularly using techniques to test knowledge through questioning and retrieval practice. The school Curriculum Leaders are the subject experts, and they design the style of assessments which best suit the subject domain. They know and understand how knowledge is acquired in their subject and the substantive and disciplinary knowledge which must be taught, learnt, tested, and retested to ensure students learn the knowledge and skills they require for future life.

Our approach to assessment aims to empower all staff to use their professional skills and judgement to conclude how well the students have learnt the content and hence how well they are making progress.

➔ **3**. Types of Assessment

Assessment may be used in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes. At IncludEd Learning all assessments should be used formatively to support the student's understanding of their next steps in learning. True assessment, however, is neither wholly formative, nor wholly summative; it is embedded within classroom practice. At IncludEd Learning we will refer to the following forms of assessment:

Day-to-day formative assessment: led by subject leader
- Question and answer during class
- Marking of, and feedback on, students work
- Retrieval practice - Low stakes testing, closed question quizzes to test knowledge
- Interleaving – some questions on content from 2 weeks/a month ago
- Observational assessment

This form of assessment gives an ongoing view of what key concepts, vocabulary and knowledge has been learnt, what misconceptions exist and what needs to be done to close the gaps and make progress.

In-school summative assessment: led and planned by subject teacher
- End of year tests/exams
- Short end of topic or unit tests
- Reviews for students with SEND

This form of assessment is used predominantly to provide evidence to judge whether knowledge has been embedded in long-term memory and therefore whether the student has made progress over time. It should also, however, provide evidence which can be used formatively to guide next steps in learning.

Formal, external summative assessment:
- GL assessments in English, Maths and Science
- GL New Group Reading Tests
- YARC Reading Tests
- ASDAN
- End of Key Stage 4 assessments e.g. Functional Skills and Entry Level.

See also Appendix 3 for a glossary of terms.

➜ **4.** Recording and Reporting 'Practice

To ensure assessment in each of the curriculum areas is effective, the style of assessment and the descriptors used in the assessments are designed by the subject leaders.

Baselining

Since students can arrive at IncludEd Learning at any time in their school career it is vital that there is a robust baselining process which provides an accurate picture of what a student knows and can do, and where there are gaps in their learning. This information should then be used to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual's needs and to inform intervention practices.

At Key Stage 4, baseline assessments are used alongside pupil prior attainment to establish an appropriate end of key stage target.

The curriculum is the progression model. As a consequence, aspirational target setting conversations with students are based on them learning the skills and knowledge needed to succeed and make progress. We do not share targets with students at Key Stage 3 as this can lead to labelling and can suppress students' achievement.

Curricular targets should be derived directly from formative assessment which is undertaken as an ongoing part of the teaching and learning process.

Recording

At IncludEd Learning we use three descriptors for how well a student has learnt the elements of the curriculum they have been taught, and hence how well they are progressing. They are:

Assessment of Knowledge	
Secure	Making progress **above** that which is expected of them. These students will have learnt the planned curriculum but will also demonstrate a curiosity for the subject and demonstrate the autonomy to pursue further learning (either by learning additional, harder content or demonstrating their mastery of more challenging concepts).
Developing	Making progress in line with (or **at**) the level of progress expected of them These students will be able to demonstrate that they have learnt and understood the key knowledge, skills and concepts which they were expected to learn.
Emerging	Making progress **below** that which is expected of them Assessment of these students will provide evidence that they have not acquired the key pieces of learning that were planned and will provide information about the gaps in their learning. Members of the SEND team and Curriculum Leaders will work with teachers to identify what strategies will be used to support these students.

Students engagement in lesson is also reported and monitored to ensure we have a clear picture of how best to support our students needs as detailed below:

Attitude to Learning	
1	Not able to engage, not ready to learn
2	Able to engage, but not ready to learn
3	Able to engage in learning with 1-to-1 support
4	Able to engage in learning with some support and prompting
5	Able to engage in learning, independently, for a sustained period of time

Half-termly assessments: As students can come on roll at any point throughout the year, and to allow our assessment systems to accurately identify learning needs in a timely manner, these assessment judgements will be recorded at the end of each half-term.

Standardisation and moderation

To ensure consistency of judgement in our assessment processes it is important that we have clarity in relation to our standardisation and moderation processes. These important aspects of our assessment cycle are driven by our Subject Leaders, supported by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

1. Before you begin to standardise or moderate, you must be confident that:

- You are testing on what has been taught
- The assessment is accessible and suitable for all learners
- The mark scheme is right

2. Standardisation refers to the process of making something conform to a standard:

- All markers (teachers) must conform to the standard
- It takes ongoing and constant revisiting to embed a shared understanding of the expected standard of work at KS3 and KS4
- You should develop Benchmark Portfolios which should have examples of the expected standard of work for each year group

3. Moderation is the action or purpose of moderating exam papers, results, or candidates:

- Review of consistency
- Explicitly checking that the standard is being upheld and making the relevant adjustments where it is not
- The agreed standard does not change but the marker may have to make adjustments

4. Why do we standardise and moderate?

- It ensures the assessment process is fair to all students
- It helps to develop teachers
- It encourages professional dialogue about what excellent looks like in your subject area
- It helps to make decisions about curriculum development: for example, what needs re teaching/revisiting?
- When it is rigorous enough, it helps teachers to provide accurate data on current performance and supports accurate predictions of future performance.

Reporting

To allow parents and our partner schools to take an active role in supporting students, it is important that they have accurate, up-to-date information which includes both formative and summative assessments.

- **Interim summative reports** – Parents will be invited to attend half-termly reviews where there will be an opportunity to discuss the academic progress made by a student and how they are progressing towards their targets.

- **A full formative report** – A full report will be provided to parents and schools at least once per year. These reports will provide detail of how a student is progressing against the assessment criteria for each subject.

- **Management summary reports** – Reports on whole school and cohort progress will be made to the MSPRU, Advisory Panel and referrers each term. This will include the publication and analysis of performance in nationally standardised summative assessments (GCSEs etc).

➔ **5.** Appendices

Appendix 1: Responsibilities and Duties

The Advisory Panel will:
- support the school to deliver all aspects of the Policy
- ensure that the Assessment Policy is regularly reviewed and updated
- set realistic targets for achievement at Key Stage 4

The Head of Centre and SLT will:
- undertake a regular review of the Policy
- support and monitor staff in the implementation of assessment, recording and reporting practices
- be responsible for the maintenance of the SIMS Assessment Manager and its database
- ensure that there is a coherent strategy for the effective management of performance data
- set evidence-based progress targets which are agreed for all students in all subjects. These targets will be reviewed annually
- monitor progress towards their targets
- ensure staff receive training on the interpretation and use of data to inform their planning.
- ensure that there are specific details on how assessments will be made in all subjects and ensure this is regularly reviewed and updated
- ensure that student files are kept up-to-date
- undertake mentoring interviews following the school's guidelines
- be responsible for ensuring that the different types of report for their students are correctly completed
- monitor progress on a regular basis
- report on the personal, social and emotional development of students
- develop specific interventions for identified pupils to support their progress in a range of dimensions
- coordinate all aspects of the half-termly student reviews

Subject Leaders will within their subject areas:
- plan assessment opportunities into their schemes of work and regularly evaluate their effectiveness
- establish agreed subject criteria for assessment and marking which conform to whole school guidelines and provides a consistent framework across both Key Stages
- monitor the consistency of assessment and marking

- ensure that assessment information is systematically recorded and appropriate information is provided
- analyse performance data, monitoring progress of students towards their targets throughout the year
- identify the INSET needs of their team in relation to assessment
- maintain a portfolio of assessed work to ensure consistency of standards
- ensure that reporting deadlines and standards are met• gain the necessary expertise and knowledge about assessment in their area(s)
- ensure that students have a clear understanding of the assessment criteria
- regularly assess and mark students' work employing a range of assessment styles
- use the results of all assessments to monitor progress and plan future learning tasks which match each student's capabilities
- motivate students by giving them a clear picture of their level of performance, what they have done well and what they need to do better next time

SENCO will:
- analyse performance data and monitor progress for each student with a formal assessment of SEND.
- maintain such assessment records as described in the SEND policy
- Support all staff in developing materials to assess the academic progress of students

Students will:
- regularly review their work and negotiate learning targets with their subject teachers
- ensure that targets are recorded in their exercise books as appropriate
- seek advice about what to do to improve
- act upon the advice given by their teachers

Parents will:
- be involved in regular communication with the school in order to understand the learning needs of their son/daughter
- assist their child in achieving their learning targets

Appendix 2: Expectations of All Teachers

IncludEd Learning expects that all teachers must:

- take full account of the Characteristics of a Successful Lesson document found in the Teaching and Learning Policy and build these into their lessons.
- plan lessons to take account of the different learning needs of the students, using prior attainment data and assessment for learning information.
- display the intended learning outcomes/success criteria throughout the lesson, communicate them clearly to the class in language that they understand and refer to them as the lesson progresses to develop understanding and reinforce learning.
- ensure that the learning outcomes are not tasks but outline what the students are expected to learn in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- mark work regularly with constructive comments that tell the students what they need to do to improve their work and reach their targets.
- aim to involve the students actively in their learning through using a range of questioning techniques which support students to develop different ways of working.
- differentiate activities to meet the different abilities of the class, drawing on the full range of available methods.
- keep whole class, teacher directed learning to a minimum and rarely ask students to undertake mundane tasks such as copying or dictation.
- use mini plenaries to encourage the students to reflect on their learning; crucially, the plenary should also enable the teacher to assess how the students have progressed during the lesson, to inform their planning.
- work closely with other adult support in classes to share concerns, assessment and planning.

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

Diagnostic assessment	Before creating the instruction, it's necessary to know what kind of students you're creating the instruction for. Your goal is to get to know your student's strengths, weaknesses and the skills and knowledge they possess before taking the instruction. A baseline.
Formative assessment	Formative assessment is used throughout the instruction process. The goal is to monitor student learning to provide feedback. It helps identifying the first gaps in your instruction. Based on this feedback you'll know what to focus on for further expansion for your instruction.
Summative assessment	Summative assessment is aimed at assessing the extent to which the most important outcomes at the end of the instruction have been reached. How can we use summative assessment to check that it is embedded in long term memory? Spiral curriculum, interleaving, 'anchor' questions?
Norm referenced assessment	This compares a student's performance against an average norm. GCSE grades. This could be the average national norm for the subject History, for example. Standardised testing, Reading ages.
Criterion referenced assessment	It measures student's performances against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards. BTECs. It checks what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Criterion-referenced tests are used to evaluate a specific body of knowledge; it's a test to evaluate the curriculum taught in a course.
Ipsative assessment	It measures the performance of a student against previous performances from that student. With this method you're trying to improve yourself by comparing previous results. You're not comparing yourself against other students, which may be not so good for your self-confidence.

Appendix 4: Formative Assessment
The Principles of Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning is effective when students:

- show changes in their attitudes to learning and in their motivation, self-esteem, independence, initiative and confidence
- show changes in their responses to questions, in contributions to plenary sessions, and in explanations and descriptions
- improve their attainment
- ask relevant questions
- are actively involved in formative assessment processes, eg; setting targets, peer or self assessment, recognising progress in their written work, skills, knowledge and understanding.

To effectively use assessment for learning all teachers should:

- know their students well, know why students make mistakes, and be able to make judgements about next steps or interventions
- share learning intentions with students and use them to mark work or give feedback or rewards
- build in review time for themselves and their students
- encourage students to take responsibility for their learning by providing opportunities for students to describe their response to learning intentions or targets, the strategies they use and the judgements they make in relation to their progress
- give students examples of a variety of skills, attitudes, standards and qualities to aim for
- analyse students' performance in tests and use the information for future learning plans
- feel confident and secure in classroom practice.

In addition, teachers should produce plans with:

- emphasis on learning intentions and on sharing them with students and other adults in the classroom
- assessment criteria for feedback and marking, peer and self-assessment
- differentiated classroom groups
- built-in review time and flexibility

- notes of students who need additional or consolidation work
- time for guided group sessions for explicit formative assessment opportunities. To effectively use assessment for learning our school will continue to develop an ethos that:
- values positive attitudes to learning and promotes trusting relationships
- encourages and builds self-esteem
- believes that all students can improve and measures individuals against their own previous attainment instead of against other students
- uses data to inform planning
- provides support, guidance and appropriate training for teachers
- encourages review and self-evaluation at individual, subject and school level.

Appendix 5: Formative Feedback

Characteristics of Effective Feedback

- feedback is more effective if it focuses on the task, is given regularly and while still relevant;
- feedback is most effective when it confirms that students are on the right track and when it stimulates correction of errors or improvement of a piece of work;
- suggestions for improvement should act as "scaffolding" i.e. students should be given as much help as they need to use their knowledge;
- students should be helped to find alternative solutions if simply repeating an explanation continues to lead to difficulties;
- opportunities need to be provided for students to improve on earlier efforts;
- feedback on progress over a number of attempts is more effective than feedback on performance treated in isolation;
- the quality of dialogue in feedback is important;
- students need to have the skills to ask for help and the ethos of the school should encourage them to do so;
- grades, marks, scores and ticks have little effect on subsequent performance.

Examples of Written Formative Feedback

- comments should refer to previous set criteria;
- start with a positive comment;
- advice on how to achieve targets should be given: e.g. 'You need to …' 'You can do this by …';
- teacher menu of comments displayed on board or OHP. Students record comments relevant to them;
- stars and wishes (positive comments and target);
- WWW and EBI (what went well and even better if);
- What's hot and what's not;

Examples of Oral Formative Feedback

- teacher-student interviews, especially valuable with coursework drafts. Students record two targets from discussion;
- student-student discussion. Students record two targets from discussion;
- teacher menu delivered verbally. Students record two points for development in their work;
- Use phrases such as 'I really liked… but have you thought about…';