Thriveology Progress and Assessment Policy

Our Assessment Philosophy

At Thriveology our assessment identifies, understands and celebrates what children can do.

We assess to understand progress and determine what comes next—not to define children by their difficulties. Every piece of assessment contributes to a fuller picture of the child as a learner, making their strengths, achievements and developing independence visible.

We recognise that every child has a unique starting point and that meaningful progress may look different for every learner. Our assessment approach captures the small steps, significant achievements and developing independence that enable children to become increasingly successful learners.

Introduction

At Thriveology, we believe that every child can learn, develop and make meaningful progress when their individual strengths, needs and barriers to learning are understood and appropriately supported.

Our assessment approach reflects the individual, diverse needs of the children we support. It is created to recognise the whole child and capture progress across academic, developmental, social, emotional, communication, sensory, physical and independence skills.

How assessment is used:

- to form an individual baseline for each child and understanding their individual starting point
- to identify barriers to learning
- to inform planning and teaching
- to monitor progress towards EHCP outcomes and individual targets
- to celebrate achievement
- to identify where provision needs to change
- to provide evidence of meaningful progress
- to support transition on each child's educational pathway

Assessment Principles

Our assessment approach is based on six core principles:

- **Assessment is purposeful-** assessment has a clear purpose that helps us understand the child and improve their learning.
- **Assessment is holistic-** we recognise that meaningful progress occurs across many areas of development, including, academic knowledge, communication and interaction, emotional regulation, sensory and physical development.
- **Assessment is child-centred-** assessment begins with the individual child rather than an assumed age-related expectation considering, strengths, needs, previous experiences, EHCP outcomes and intended next steps.
- **Assessment recognises small steps-** for some pupils, a small step represents significant progress.
- **Assessment informs planning and teaching-** assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning at Thriveology. Staff use what they observe and learn about pupils to adapt teaching, provision, resources, environments and support.
- **Assessment is inclusive-** we assess children using their most appropriate means of communication and expression.

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What Progress Looks Like at Thriveology

We define progress as a meaningful change in a child's knowledge, skills, understanding, engagement, independence or ability to apply learning over time.

We recognise that progress is not always linear.

Children may experience periods where progress appears to slow, plateau or temporarily regress. Changes in emotional wellbeing, sensory needs, communication, health, relationships or circumstances may affect a child's ability to demonstrate previously acquired skills. At Thriveology we therefore consider progress over time and across different contexts rather than relying on a single observation or assessment.

Our Curriculum and Assessment Model

Our assessment approach reflects our three curriculum pathways:

Pathway 1 – Foundation and Re-engagement Pathway (Pre-Formal)

Assessment focuses on areas such as:

- Engagement and attention
- Communication and interaction
- Emotional regulation
- sensory responses
- exploration
- early cognition and anticipation
- emerging independence

Pathway 2 – Developmental Pathway (Semi-Formal)

Assessment focuses on:

- functional communication
- developing literacy and numeracy
- social understanding
- emotional development
- independence and generalisation of skills
- problem-solving and practical application
- generalisation of skills.

Pathway 3 – Formal Curriculum Pathway (Formal)

Assessment focuses on:

- knowledge and understanding
- reading, writing and maths
- science and wider curriculum learning
- application of knowledge
- independence
- learning behaviours
- social and emotional development

The pathways describe how a child accesses learning rather than defining the child. A pupil may work within different pathways across different curriculum strands.

SEMH observations and evidence inform specific, achievable IEP targets linked to individual needs and relevant EHCP outcomes. These are reviewed termly, or sooner where needed, alongside the child and parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate. Findings are used to celebrate small steps, adapt provision and identify when additional support may be needed. Assessment is not used to diagnose mental health conditions or to compare children against a single expected developmental pathway.

Progress is evidenced through meaningful observations over time and across contexts, including changes in participation, relationships, recovery following distress, ability to seek or accept support, and use of regulation strategies with decreasing adult prompting where appropriate. Staff consider the level of support and adjustments required, recognising that accepting co-regulation and communicating distress can themselves represent significant progress. Behaviour is understood in context and is not used alone as a measure of emotional wellbeing.

Staff establish an individual SEMH starting point using observations, the child's views and preferred methods of communication, information from parents/carers and relevant professionals, and EHCP outcomes where applicable. Assessment may consider emotional awareness and regulation, feelings of safety and belonging, positive relationships, communication of needs, engagement in learning, resilience, confidence, self-advocacy and increasing independence in using supportive strategies.

At Thriveology, social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) development is recognised as an essential part of each child's learning, wellbeing and readiness to engage. SEMH assessment is child-centred, strengths-based and sensitive to individual experiences, needs and circumstances. We recognise that progress may be gradual, non-linear and demonstrated differently across settings.

SEMH Progress and Assessment

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Every child has an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** while they are with us at Thriveology.

The IEP provides the link between the child's EHCP and their day-to-day learning with us.

IEP targets are developed from:

- the child's EHCP outcomes
- their individual strengths and needs
- their baseline assessment information
- their current developmental and academic starting points
- observations of their learning
- information from parents/carers and professionals where appropriate
- the child's views and preferences where they are able to communicate these

IEP targets are specific, meaningful and achievable, while maintaining appropriate challenge. Targets are reviewed termly or earlier where necessary.

Targets may relate to any area of the child's development, including:

- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- social, emotional and mental health;
- sensory and physical development;

Evidence of Learning

Evidence is collected throughout the child's time with us and is directly linked to their individual targets and curriculum learning.

Evidence may include:

- Observations- staff may record what each child does, how they respond, the level of support required and whether the skill is becoming more consistent.
- Quotes- children's own words or forms of communication provide valuable evidence of understanding, emotional awareness, preferences, social development and learning.
- Photographs- photographs may be used to capture meaningful learning experiences and demonstrate the application of skills.
- Children's work- outcomes of learning such as model, drawings, written work and creative work.

EHCP Review and Multi-Agency Working

Assessment information contributes to the monitoring and review of each child's EHCP outcomes.

Evidence gathered through everyday teaching and IEP assessment can be used to inform:

- EHCP reviews
- professional meetings
- discussions with parents/carers
- transition planning

- applications or referrals for specialist provision
- reintegration planning where appropriate
- decisions about the child's next educational placement

Celebrating Achievement

We celebrate progress, not perfection

At Thriveology assessment identifies and celebrates what children can do. Celebrating these achievements helps children develop a positive identity as learners and reinforces the belief that their progress matters.

Celebrating achievement does not mean giving praise for everything a child does or lowering expectations. Instead, it means recognising genuine progress from the child's individual starting point. Our four pillars – Educate, Inspire, Empower and Thrive, guide how we recognise and celebrate each child's journey: we Educate by valuing the knowledge and skills they develop; Inspire by acknowledging effort, curiosity and new possibilities; Empower by recognising growing confidence, voice, choice and independence; and Thrive by celebrating improvements in wellbeing, relationships, engagement and the ability to flourish. Every achievement, however small, is an opportunity to reinforce each child's strength and sense of belonging.

