

Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

More Than Ed | Independent School

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Responsible Person: Hayley Winstanley

1. School Context

More Than Ed is an independent specialist school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs across Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. Many of our pupils have experienced significant trauma and a range of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Almost all have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) identifying SEMH as a primary need, frequently alongside needs in communication, cognition, learning or sensory processing.

Our provision is highly individualised and predominantly delivered one-to-one, with teaching adapted through trauma-informed practice. All pupils follow the same broad curriculum, but content is sequenced and pitched to meet each pupil at their actual developmental, language and processing level rather than their chronological age or Key Stage.

2. Rationale

At More Than Ed we recognise that every learner's journey is unique and as such we do not follow standardised assessment procedures. Instead, our approach to assessment is rooted in flexibility, inclusivity and relevance to each student's individual needs. We utilise a range of alternative data collection methods, enabling us to capture progress and achievement from multiple perspectives. By triangulating this information, we are able to build a holistic picture of each student's development, ensuring that assessment is meaningful, purposeful and reflective of their strengths, challenges and personal growth.

3. Aims

The primary purpose of assessment is to understand each student's individual starting point and support their ongoing development. All our learners join us at different stages of their school journey, often with gaps in their education due to social, emotional and mental health needs or experience of trauma. Traditional assessment methods do not always capture their abilities, progress or potential.

Our assessment aims are therefore to:

- Identify gaps in learning and provide the right support to address them.
- Recognise and celebrate personal achievements, both academic and non-academic.
- Provide a holistic picture of progress, considering emotional, social and behavioural development alongside academic outcomes.
- Inform teaching, curriculum planning and intervention strategies that are responsive to our students' needs.
- Enable students to understand their own progress and become active participants in their learning journey.
- Ensure that parents, carers and external professionals have a clear and accurate understanding of each student's development.

By focusing on these aims, assessment becomes a tool for empowerment, not comparison, helping every student to experience success and growth in ways that are meaningful to them.

4. Assessment Methods

Establishing an accurate and meaningful baseline is essential to understand each student's starting point and informing their personalised learning plan.

To capture a holistic baseline, we use a range of standardised and diagnostic tools alongside teacher observations and student voice. These include:

- **GL Assessments (Maths and English):** these provide core data on academic skills, highlighting strengths as well as areas where learning has been missed or delayed. Results support targeted teaching.
- **Speech and Language Assessment:** conducted for every student to screen for underlying communication difficulties, which may impact both learning and social interaction. This then allows targeted support and informs planning.
- **Salford Reading Test:** assesses reading accuracy and comprehension, helping us to identify specific gaps in literacy and plan work appropriate to the student's ability.
- **FFT Success for All Phonics Reading Assessment:** where a student requires phonics teaching in order to learn to read, the FFT Success for All Phonics online Reading Assessment is used to assess grapheme–phoneme correspondence (GPC) accuracy, decoding accuracy, reading fluency and comprehension. This pinpoints precisely which phonic skills are secure and which require further teaching, providing an accurate starting point from which to plan a tailored phonics programme.
- **Teacher observations and learning behaviours:** formative assessment takes place during lessons. Staff record evidence of engagement, confidence, resilience and social interaction, providing a qualitative dimension to the baseline.
- **Student Voice:** where appropriate, students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning experiences, strengths and challenges, helping to build an accurate picture of their starting point.

This multi-layered approach ensures that baseline assessment is not limited to academic ability but also recognises the wider developmental and communication needs that may affect progress. This information is collated, analysed and shared with staff so that teaching, curriculum planning and pastoral support are aligned to each student's need from the outset.

5. Ongoing Assessment

Assessment at More Than Ed is not a one-off event but a continuous process that not only informs teaching and learning on a weekly basis, but also adaptations that may be required to the curriculum and subject content. Because our students' needs are often complex and dynamic, assessment is designed to be flexible, responsive and integrated into classroom practice.

Weekly Planning and Feedback

- Teachers use daily observations, questioning and student work to monitor progress against individual targets.
- Assessment outcomes are discussed with other teaching staff and planners, ensuring that lessons are adjusted in real time to address emerging gaps, consolidate understanding and stretch learning where appropriate.

- Staff record key observations and strategies that have had an impact, so that successful approaches can be built upon and shared across the team.

Formal Data Capture

- Maths and English progress is assessed formally with data captures relevant to the individuals' targets.

Triangulation of Data

- Academic progress, engagement levels and qualitative teacher observations are combined to create a robust picture of each student's learning journey.
- The triangulated approach ensures that no single piece of data drives decision making in isolation.

By embedding assessment within the teaching cycle, we ensure that learning remains relevant, personalised, and responsive to the needs of our students. This process not only supports academic progress but also contributes to the development of confidence, resilience and positive learning behaviours.

6. Assessment by Subject

Alongside the formal data captures for Maths and English, subjects are assessed and tracked in ways that reflect our learners' SEND and their level of progress. Many subjects are assessed across four ascending levels – Foundation, Core, Enhanced and Enhanced Plus – with pupils moving up as they securely achieve at each level. Executive Functioning, Art, Cooking, SEL, Philosophy for Children and all other non-statutory subjects are assessed through Learning Walks by the Subject Lead, Evidence for Learning, CPOMS, and staff and student voice. The sections below set out what is taught in each subject and how progress is assessed and tracked.

English

What is taught: English is built around core literacy strands rather than half-termly topics: Speaking and Listening; Word Reading and Comprehension; Writing Composition; and Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation. Where appropriate, and particularly at Key Stage 4, pupils also work towards accredited Functional Skills English qualifications.

How it is assessed and tracked: Each strand has banded objectives across Foundation, Core, Enhanced and Enhanced Plus, and progress is tracked through regular data captures against these objectives. Reading ages are monitored using the Salford Reading Test, and communication needs are informed by Speech and Language screening. Where a student is taught to read through phonics, the FFT Success for All Phonics scheme of learning is followed and progress is tracked half-termly using its online Reading Assessment, which monitors GPC knowledge, decoding accuracy, reading fluency and comprehension so that teaching can be matched precisely to the next steps. Functional Skills progress in Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening is tracked across Entry Levels 1–3 and Level 1 at three points in the year (December, March and July), leading to accredited qualifications.

Mathematics

What is taught: Mathematics is organised by strand – Number; Money, Handling Data and Statistics; Time; Measure; and Shape – taught and revisited at the appropriate level for each pupil. At Key Stage 4 the focus moves towards accredited Functional Skills Mathematics.

How it is assessed and tracked: Pupils are assessed against detailed criteria within each strand, generating a percentage-secure score per strand at each data capture. Criteria are banded as Foundation, Core and Enhanced and, at Key Stage 4, aligned to Functional Skills levels (Entry Level 1 to Level 2). The trackers calculate progress between data captures and predicted progress to the end of Years 10 and 11, leading to accredited Functional Skills qualifications where appropriate.

Science

What is taught: At Core level, pupils study The Circle of Life (life cycles) and Investigating Light; What Keeps Me Alive and Well? (animals, healthy eating and exercise) and How Can I Grow My Own Food? (plant needs and farm to fork); and What Does It Mean to Be Alive? (habitats, living and non-living) and What's Under the Pit Tops? (rocks and fossils). At Key Stage 4 the curriculum broadens into chemistry, physics (electricity, forces, magnets, space and the solar system), biology (animal types, life cycles, habitats and the human body) and environmental science (global warming, pollution and recycling). Across all units pupils work scientifically and study seasonal change, including daylight, weather and the concept of BST.

How it is assessed and tracked: Science is assessed through scientific strands, with pupils building from Foundation to Core to Enhanced to Enhanced Plus as they securely achieve at each level. The strands are:

- To ask simple questions and use observations to find answers to these questions.
- To gather and record data in different ways.
- To conduct enquiries and fair tests.
- To explain how or why observed things have happened.
- To be aware of the constant cycle of changes of seasons, daylight and BST and how these affect everyday life.

Geography

What is taught: At Core level, pupils study National Explorer (maps, compass points and the human and physical features of the local area) and International Explorer (continents, Europe, climate zones, oceans and pollution); Hot, Hot, Hot! (comparing the UK with a hot country) and The Big Chill (the polar regions and the Inuit); and life in Australia, followed by the Jurassic Coast (coastlines, fossils, erosion and the rock cycle).

How it is assessed and tracked: Geography is assessed as part of Humanities through humanities strands, building Foundation to Core to Enhanced to Enhanced Plus. The geography strands are:

- To name and locate the world's 7 continents and 5 oceans.
- To name, locate and identify the characteristics of the 4 countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

- To recognise and name human and physical features of the United Kingdom (Core – and other countries).
- To identify seasonal and daily weather patterns of the United Kingdom (Core – and around the world).
- To use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical and human features.
- To use simple fieldwork and observational skills (for example, following a simple map with a key).
- To use the 4 compass points and locational and directional language to describe location and routes on a map.

History

What is taught: At Core level, pupils study Local History Detective (local sites, sources and timelines) and War and Remembrance (the First World War, a local war hero and Remembrance Day); Changes Within Living Memory (the history of computing and communication) and Significant Local Places (Conisbrough Castle); and Significant People from the Past (great explorers such as Columbus, Earhart and Aldrin) and Events Beyond Living Memory (the Great Fire of London, the Gunpowder Plot, Henry VIII, the Magna Carta and the Norman Conquest).

How it is assessed and tracked: History is assessed as part of Humanities through humanities strands, building Foundation to Core to Enhanced to Enhanced Plus. The history strands are:

- To know significant individuals from my locality.
- To recognise changes within living memory.
- To know significant historical places in my locality.
- To understand the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements.
- To know events beyond living memory around the world.

Computing (ICT)

What is taught: Pupils work through Word Processing and Data; Presentation Skills and Online Safety (cyberbullying, online purchasing, personal information and online communication); and Introduction to Coding (sequences, repetition and sprites) and Online Communication (email, attachments and online collaboration). All pupils follow the same scheme of learning regardless of Key Stage, with work pitched to the individual.

How it is assessed and tracked: Computing is assessed against seven assessment targets covering these units, at two levels – Core and Enhanced – so that pupils progress on the same target as their skills develop. The targets cover saving, retrieving and organising work; word processing; entering and using data; creating presentations; staying safe online; communicating responsibly online; and creating and correcting simple programs. Progress is evidenced through Learning Walks by the Subject Lead, Evidence for Learning and pupil work.

Physical Education

What is taught: PE follows a rolling programme of sports across the year: rounders, badminton and basketball in the autumn; cricket and pickleball in the spring; and football followed by sports day preparation in the summer. Each unit covers rules, core techniques and skills, and game play.

How it is assessed and tracked: PE is assessed through teacher observation against skill-based criteria, with progress captured on Evidence for Learning and summarised in report comments generated from a skills rubric. Alongside technical skill, assessment recognises participation, teamwork, resilience and self-regulation.

Art

What is taught: Art units across the year include Drawing, Painting, Street Art, Art and Design, Comics and Cartoons, Digital Art, Pop Art, and studying an artist.

How it is assessed and tracked: As a non-statutory subject, Art is assessed through Learning Walks by the Subject Lead, Evidence for Learning, CPOMS, and staff and pupil voice, capturing creative development, engagement and personal expression.

Cooking

What is taught: Cooking is a practical programme themed by half term – British dishes, international dishes, flour skills, baking, school desserts and quick meals – developing cooking techniques, food hygiene and independence.

How it is assessed and tracked: As a non-statutory subject, Cooking is assessed through Learning Walks, Evidence for Learning, CPOMS, and staff and pupil voice, focusing on practical skills, independence, safety and life-skills progress.

Executive Functioning and Outdoor Education

What is taught: Delivered through a carousel of Executive Function activities (sequencing, attention and listening, problem-solving and communication) and longer creative projects, alongside Outdoor Education sessions that use hands-on, environmental activities to build fitness, teamwork, resilience and problem-solving.

How it is assessed and tracked: As non-statutory provision, this is assessed through Learning Walks, Evidence for Learning, CPOMS, and staff and pupil voice, focusing on planning, organisation, self-regulation, flexible thinking, working memory and attentional control.

Enrichment and Focus Fridays

Alongside the subject curriculum, weekly Focus Fridays mark national and cultural events – for example Black History Month, World Mental Health Day, Safer Internet Day, anti-bullying week, Remembrance, and a range of cultural and religious festivals. These build cultural capital and support spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and wider personal development, and are captured through Evidence for Learning and pupil voice.

7. Recognising and Evidencing Regression

We acknowledge that progress for students with complex SEMH needs and experiences of trauma is rarely linear. Periods of regression are a natural and expected part of their learning

journey. These moments do not signify failure but instead reflect the challenges they face in managing their emotional wellbeing alongside academic demands.

Why Regression Matters

- Regression can provide a valuable insight into a student's underlying needs at a given time.
- Documenting regression ensures that staff respond appropriately, adapting teaching, support strategies and curriculum access.
- By recognising these patterns, we can prevent students from becoming disengaged and provide timely intervention.

How Regression is Evidenced

- **Assessment Data:** dips in data collection results.
- **Teacher and Staff Observations:** qualitative evidence of changes in behaviour, confidence or resilience. This information is recorded on Evidence for Learning or CPOMS depending on the level of disengagement.
- **Student Voice:** where appropriate, students are encouraged to share their own perspective on challenges they are experiencing.

Responding to Regression

- Teachers and support staff review evidence collaboratively to adapt planning on a weekly and half-termly basis.
- Where regression is linked to wider SEMH needs, therapeutic or pastoral support is prioritised before academic demands are increased.

By evidencing regression as carefully as progress, we ensure that planning remains accurate, supportive and sensitive to each student's journey. This reflective approach ensures that every child continues to move forward in the long term, even if short-term setbacks occur.

8. Recording of Assessment

Accurate and consistent recording of assessment is essential to ensure that progress and regression are evidenced, shared and acted upon. At More Than Ed we use a combination of digital platforms and structured systems to capture both qualitative and quantitative data. This ensures that all staff have access to reliable information when planning for individual needs.

Recording Systems Used

- **CPOMS:** used to log safeguarding concerns, behaviour incidents and SEMH-related observations. This information provides valuable context when analysing progress and identifying barriers to learning.
- **Evidence for Learning:** a digital portfolio platform where staff upload photographs, annotated work samples and observations of learning. This captures a broad range of academic, social and personal development outcomes, providing a holistic record of each student's journey.

- **Data Capture Spreadsheets:** used to record ongoing objective outcomes for Maths and English, these spreadsheets allow staff to see gaps in learning and where targeted planning needs to take place.

Consistency and Accountability

- All staff are expected to contribute to recording in a timely and accurate manner.
- Subject leads and senior leaders monitor the quality and completeness of records as part of the school's quality assurance process.

Purpose of Recording

- Inform curriculum planning and intervention.
- Evidence both progress and regression.
- Provide transparency when reporting to parents, carers and external agencies.
- Ensure accountability across the school and support continuous improvement.

Through these recording systems More Than Ed maintains a comprehensive evidence base that captures each student's achievements, challenges and development over time.

9. Reporting of Assessment

Reporting is a vital part of the assessment process. It ensures that parents, carers and external agencies have a clear understanding of progress, regression and achievements. Our framework balances formal data with qualitative evidence and celebrates the successes of every student.

Reporting to Parents and Carers

- Twice-yearly reports provide a summary of progress in core subjects, personal development and engagement.
- Achievement postcards are sent home when a student achieves an AQA Unit, a Functional Skills qualification, or any other formal qualification.
- Reports highlight individual strengths and achievements and areas requiring further support.
- Celebrations of success are central, ensuring that parents and carers see the full scope of their child's development, not only the academic outcomes.

Statutory and Formal Reporting

- **Education, Health and Care Plan reviews:** assessment evidence is collated to inform annual reviews, ensuring targets remain relevant and achievable.
- **Personal Education Plans:** for looked-after children, assessment outcomes and engagement data contribute to PEP meetings, providing a rounded picture of progress.
- Reports for external agencies are tailored to requirements but always reflect the holistic nature of the assessment at More Than Ed.

Celebration and Student Voice

- Students are encouraged to contribute to reporting by reflecting on their own achievements.
- Successes, whether academic, social or personal, are shared and celebrated with families, fostering motivation and self-esteem.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our students and reflects best practice in assessment for children with SEMH needs.