



DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT

Assessment

January 2025

Reviewed & updated: January 2025 (Rachel Carli)

Next review date: January 2028

Durants School Policy on Assessment

Introduction:

Durants school caters for a wide range of Autistic pupils in terms of age, ability and learning style, and the assessments, or measurements of progress used, reflect this diversity. Assessment is a powerful tool in monitoring pupils' achievements/weaknesses, as well as having a better understanding of pupils' needs and thus being able to focus and monitor the level of teaching they need, more effectively.

Assessment is a continuous process and, although an important responsibility for the teacher, is carried out by all staff, including teaching assistants and speech and language therapists. Day-to-day assessments are based on frequent and informal tasks and questions, which prompt pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. What the pupils say or do is observed and interpreted, and judgments are made about how learning can be improved. Other assessments are semi-formal, such as class assessments, ASDAN, AET, Arts Award, AQA units of work and our software tool, Evidence for Learning (EFL) There are also opportunities for Entry Level exams, GCSEs.

Durants teachers have updated the Curriculum and transferred it over to EFL. The updated Curriculum consists of Learning Ladders for both Lower and Upper Departments, which Pathways are characterised under the Headings of: Engagement, Sem-iFormal 1, Semi-Formal 2, formal 1 and Formal 2. T

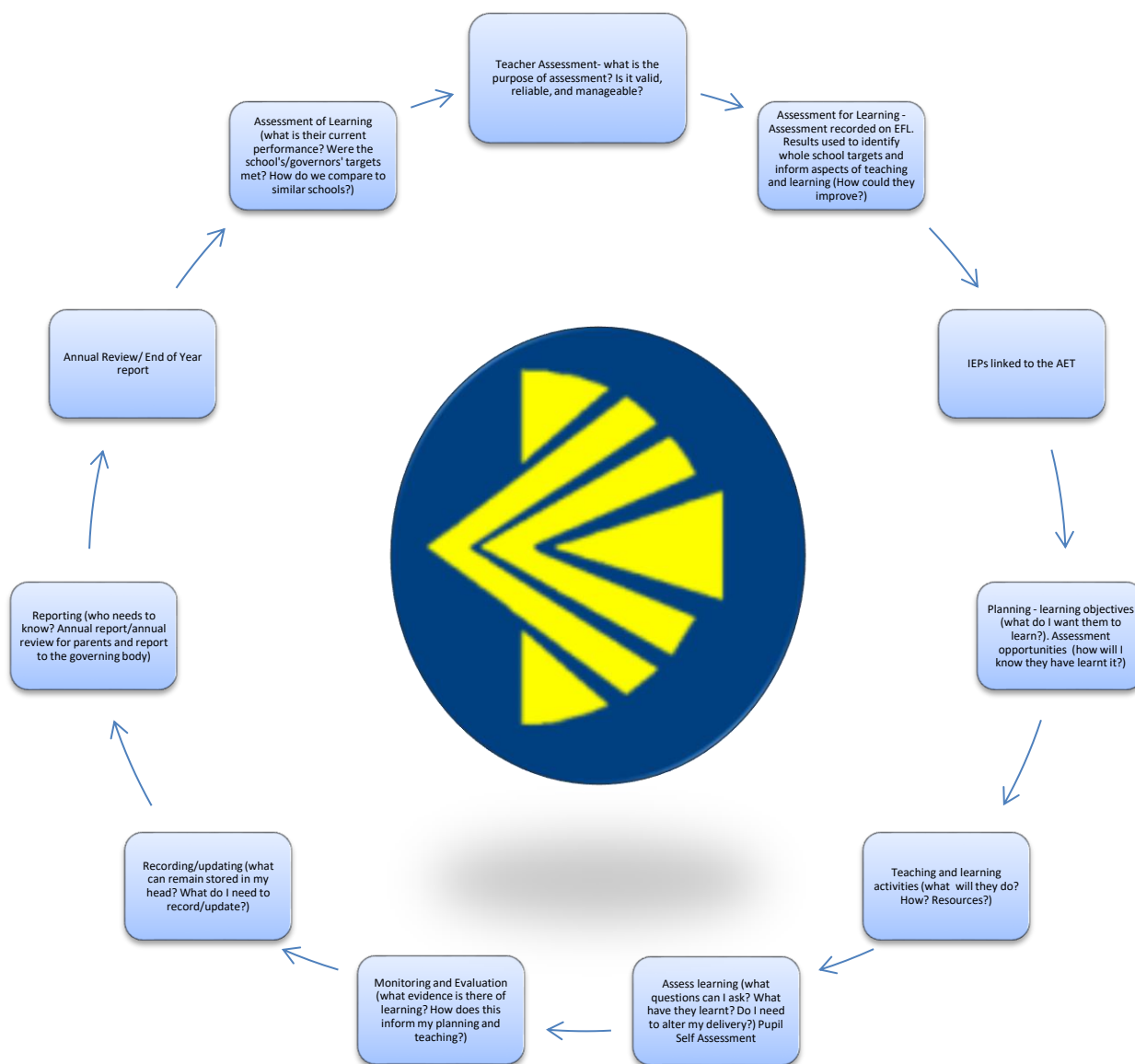
he Pathways for the Upper Department, entail Preparing for Adulthood under the Headings of Core Skills (English & Mathematics), My Health, My Future and My Options

Whilst using EFL Durants School want to provide an overall Autism specific way of recording pupil progress and have also continue accessing the AET (Autism Education Trust) progression framework (Phase 2) to ensure non-academic progress is captured in all aspects of learning. Work on this began in January 2024 and this will help capture a holistic interpretation of the progress all pupils make at Durants School.

The purpose of assessment

Assessment is used to monitor pupils' progress as well as being an integral part of teaching and learning, informing planning and target setting. It is used to help teachers to focus on the selection of short-term appropriate learning objectives and to take into account the development of long-term dispositions of their pupils. Assessment informs all levels of planning for individuals and groups. Teachers should ensure that assessments are carried out for annual progress reports, to inform individual educational plans and that these directly influence the curriculum carried out in the classroom. The following diagram illustrates this process.

DURANTS SCHOOL – ASSESSMENT POLICY



Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence, in order to decide where the pupils are within their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there, taking into account previous rates of progress. It gives a detail picture of the pupil, identifies strengths as well as difficulties and ensures appropriateness of the curriculum, specific resources, placement, etc.

Assessment also gives a picture of how well the school is doing and gives direction in setting challenging targets for improvement.

Assessment should be useful, not take too much time, add to teacher's knowledge, and be of direct benefit to the learning process.

Statutory obligations

National curriculum provision: annually.

End of Key Stage teacher assessment in English, Mathematics and Science, with the addition of all foundation subjects at the end of KS3.

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DURANTS SCHOOL – ASSESSMENT POLICY

Annual Review of EHCP.

Entitlement

In addition to the statutory requirements, the following teacher assessments will also be carried out in school.

- Initial assessment within the first term of joining the school. This includes an assessment of Communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, science and PSHE, against the I Can Statements or National Curriculum as appropriate.
- Assessment against the EFL termly
- Progress report in all subjects in June.
- Half-termly assessments of IEP targets.

Assessment of all subjects including Upper Department curriculum & ARP at Winchmore School (AQA Units, Entry Review, GCSE's) is carried out throughout the year as part of Durants record keeping procedure through, "I can" statements AET (Autism Educational Trust) and teachers report to the senior management team termly.

Assessment techniques

Teachers at Durants assess pupils' individual progress towards achieving their set IEP targets using a combination of assessment and target tools that are available to them.

Teachers' opinion backed up by evidence is as important as any formal test given, and is on-going throughout the year and used to inform planning and teaching. The following techniques are used:

- Observations
- Scrutiny of work (1 piece of work per pupil for each core subject (English, Maths, Science/*life skills* (*Upper dept.*)) electronically filed per term (3 pieces of work per pupil).
- Marking of pupils' work
- Formal assessments
- Questioning / learning walks
- Practical tests
- Discussions with and reports from parents and other professionals involved
- Evaluation on planning sheets
- Pupil's comments/ opinions for Annual Reviews
- Educational Psychologists' reports
- Therapists' reports
- Evidence-based Progress Files to be reviewed in November and May.

Target Setting

At Durants we set pupils' targets within our individual pupil progress charts, based on pupils' previous performance.

In the context of children with Special Educational Needs, types of needs that pupils have will have an impact on expectations of progress for these children. Targets are set in order for pupils to reach reasonable challenges both academically and with Units used to Prepare for adulthood.

Targets are expected to be 'aspirational' or 'challenging' to ensure pupils are provided with an environment that stimulates them to make the best progress possible. As a result, target setting in Durants now uses multiple sources of information to arrive at appropriate targets for each pupil including:

- Teachers' knowledge of the pupil and their circumstances
- EFL (Evidence for Learning)
- External Moderation with other SEN schools in the area Termly.

DURANTS SCHOOL – ASSESSMENT POLICY

Pupils currently in the Upper department & Post 16 will be assessed against their Progress, on the quantity of AQA units (comprising of Pathways which are broken down into the following categories: Core Skills (Mathematics, English), My Future, My Health and My Options)) alongside the AET objectives achieved in an academic year. The quantity of targets set in these learning zones vary according to the capability of each pupil.

AET (Autism Education Trust) Professional Guidance (Phase 2)

The Progression Framework has been designed to be accessible to practitioners in a range of education settings working with children and young people across the autism spectrum, some of whom may have additional learning needs or disabilities.

The content of the Progression Framework aims to address skills and understanding that children and young people may find difficult as a consequence of their autism but also strives to recognise and build on strengths and interests and to improve overall well-being. Most importantly, it aims to alert the practitioner to the fact that children and young people may need support in these areas and that their progress is dependent on this support. Where possible, the content of the Framework lays emphasis on supporting the child or young person to understand both their own and others' behaviour, what might be expected within certain situations and how this might be of benefit. It encourages practitioners to support the young person's independence through the development of skills such as self-regulation, self-expression and problem-solving.

The Progression Framework can be used to support the writing of outcomes for personal learning plans and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and have used it to identify and track small steps of progress. Most importantly, this framework tracks and identifies the non-academic part of pupils learning – covering mainly everyday life skills, which is an important part of pupils learning and may not be fully identified as achievements in the curriculum. The AET also links to Post 16 standards, to prepare pupils for the transition into adult life.

The AET consists of 8 framework areas:

1. Communication & Interaction
2. Social Understanding & Relationships
3. Sensory Processing
4. Interests, Routines & Processing
5. Emotional understanding & self-awareness
6. Learning & engagement
7. Healthy Living
8. Independence & community Participation.

Post 16

A professional competency framework has been developed by the Autism Education Trust (AET) in collaboration with Ambitious about Autism and consultants with expertise in autism. The framework sets out the knowledge and skills that are required for professionals in settings working with learners on the autism spectrum. There are 64 competencies in total, 36 addressing core skills and 28 advanced competencies. The competencies are divided into four main topic areas

1. THE INDIVIDUAL (how to understand and address their strengths and needs, including developing understanding of autism).
2. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS (with staff, parents/carers, peers and the wider community including the workplace).
3. CURRICULUM & LEARNING (preparation for adult life, including adjustments to the way in which activities are presented, selection of priorities and modifications to the curriculum).
4. ENABLING PARTICIPATION (how to enable participation in a wider range of environments for young people on the autism spectrum by making adjustments to the physical, sensory, social and communicative environments).

Pupils' involvement in assessment

Pupils should be involved in the assessment of their own work and progress as much as possible. When teachers state clearly what they want pupils to learn and why, the activity is given purpose and direction. Lessons should start with clear lesson objectives explained to the class. Thus pupils and support staff are told not only what they are to do but also why they are doing it and what they will learn from the activity. In the plenary session at the end of each teaching activity, pupils should be brought back together as a group and given a chance to talk about what they have been doing. For some pupils it will be more appropriate for the adults supporting them to give feedback. Pupils are given the opportunity to self-assess their completed piece of work. The plenary also provides an opportunity to assess whether or not IEP targets have been achieved, and to reward pupils, in line with the class's behaviour management system. When lessons conclude in this manner, they provide opportunities for regular, on-going self-assessment, teacher assessment and target setting.

Process

- All pupils are encouraged to be involved in their own assessment wherever possible by means of commenting on their work, photographs, sharing learning objectives, circle time, comments on Annual Reviews, Progress Files, etc, using appropriate language or some other form of communication that they can understand.
- A pupil has achieved a particular Learning Objective when the teacher is reasonably confident that the observed behaviour/work produced is regularly repeated over time. A "best fit" indicator is used or a pupil is able to complete a specific task from the I Can Statements.
- Formal and informal assessment covers aspects of knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviour.
- Internal and external moderation will continue in order to ensure consistency across the school.

External Awards

The school uses ASDAN, AQA Units awards, AET, Entry Level, Arts Award, GCSE's.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness and usefulness of the assessment policy will be monitored and evaluated by SMT.

To be valid judgments, Evidence for Learning must be moderated. This will take place twice a year, in December and June. Within each department teachers must present two pieces of work in each of the six areas of development (CLL (Communication Language & literacy), Maths, KUW (Knowledge & understanding of the world), PSHE) and file in the appropriate Moderation Folder so that other colleagues can assess and validate the levels awarded.

Teachers are electronically filing three pieces of work (Core subjects) per pupil, on a termly basis

- Lower & Middle Department (English, Maths, Science)
- Upper Department (English, Maths, Life skills)

External moderation also takes place twice a year with a special school catering for pupils with Autism and a mainstream school.