



supporting YOUR future

# **Arbour House Assessment Policy**

**Policy Review Date:** September 2017

## **1. Our Rationale**

At Arbour House assessment provides the basis:

- for acknowledging achievement (academic and personal);
- for planning for learning;
- for recording experience, developing knowledge and skills;
- for reporting for a range of purposes and to different audiences eg: to parents, auditors, placing authorities.

It is our intention to have in place, a system for planning, assessment, recording and reporting which:

- meets our information needs in sufficient detail, but which is manageable (eg. must make efficient use of time);
- is jargon free, especially for reporting to parents;
- is clear, balanced and accessible;
- involves pupils in their own recording, reporting and target setting;
- can be monitored by the school senior leadership team.

## **2. Aims:**

Assessment of and for learning is ongoing, and should be seen as an integral part of an interactive learning process. The main purpose of assessing a pupil is to enable him/her to make the best possible progress in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding (Assessment for Learning).

Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting of pupil achievement is needed:

- to lead to improvement in learning outcomes for all pupils;
- to measure attainment;
- plan next steps in learning;
- to inform planning of individual programmes, focusing on priorities for future learning;
- to plan for progression, and maintain consistency and continuity;
- to provide a whole picture of the learner and the learning process;
- to inform the contents of reports to parents;
- to promote consistency between staff and others assessing the pupil;
- because we are accountable to pupils, parents, LAs, DfE, Ofsted;
- to provide evidence of the value the school adds to pupil achievement;
- so that at short notice, a supply teacher could continue with individual pupil programmes.

### **3. Implementation**

- In order to allow us to record pupil's prior attainment every pupil will have an initial assessment using CARS-2 and PEP-3 within 8 weeks of starting at the school. TTAP assessment will be used for secondary aged pupils;
- We use our own small steps assessment tool to assess curriculum subjects and this tool is used to support PEP-3 assessments in pathways 2 and 3. Teachers compare individual pupil's achievements against p/nc levels descriptors that are broken down into small steps and reported in typical age related terms;
- Assessments are made continuously by teachers and data is collated twice a year – once in December and once in May;
- Standard National Curriculum tests would be used for any pupils reaching the appropriate level;
- Assessment focuses on learning processes as well as outcomes;
- Statutory assessments are completed at the end of each key stage, where applicable to the ability of the pupils;
- Standardised assessments of reading are completed annually where appropriate;
- Externally accredited courses (AQA Functional Skills levels 1 – 3) are run across Year 9, 10 and 11. These offer opportunities to validate teacher assessments through moderation procedures as well as providing nationally recognized data;
- Pupils in Pathways 2 and 3 are assessed continuously, against National Curriculum and p levels;
- Other professionals (eg speech and language therapist) make assessments which form part of the whole profile of a pupil.

### **4. Base-line on Entry**

On entry to Arbour House School pupils are assessed using the Childhood Autism Rating Scale, CARS which is used to identify severity of social and communication needs whilst discriminating between children with autism and those with severe cognitive deficits, and in distinguishing mild-to-moderate from severe autism and a specific psycho-educational profile (PEP-3) where emerging skills are identified and, through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), ensure that effective and differentiated teaching targets are set according to individual need. PEP-3 is used to assess seven areas of development: imitation, perception, eye-hand co-ordination, fine and gross motor skills and cognition in terms of expressive and receptive language skills. These assessments will identify the Curriculum pathway pupils will embark on. Pupils social and emotional needs will be assessed using the Boxall Profile. This assessment will inform each pupil's emotional literacy programme.

## **5. Initial Target Setting:**

Individual targets will be set within the first two months of a pupil starting at Arbour House, regardless of the age of the pupil. These targets are linked to the objectives on the pupils' statement of special educational need or the outcomes on the Education health and Care plan. The results of the Baseline Assessment are used to help with this task. A multi-disciplinary approach is used – with input from speech/physio therapists, and parents are invited into school to discuss and agree the targets.

## **6. Process**

The components of assessment at Arbour House are:

### **Pathway 1 – Assessment Process**

The progress of pupils within each Phase 2 and 3 are recorded using the Phase Profile. The Profiles consist of 'typical achievements' which suggest that the pupil has mastered the skills, concepts and global understanding associated with the phases. There is no attempt to list all relevant achievements, and some of the items listed are specific to the MSI Unit Curriculum. The Profile are criterion-referenced measures of progress, not developmental checklists.

For each typical achievement, three levels of mastery are recorded:

- Aware – the pupil shows signs of being ready to learn the ability;
- Achieved in specific contexts – the pupil consistently uses the ability in some, but not all, relevant situations;
- Generalized – the pupil consistently uses the ability in all appropriate situations.

The emphasis on generalization is because this is a particular problem for pupils who have complex social and communication needs particularly within this stage, and one of the reason why they tend to show considerable peaks and troughs on assessment scales.

Pupils generally work within one Phase. They may work across two Phases as they reach the end of Phase 2 or if they have specific areas of high ability.

A range of other assessment strategies may be used to complement this which include PEP-3, Arbour House curriculum assessment tracking, Boxall Profile assessments and sensory profiling.

## **Pathway 2 – Assessment Process**

Assessment of key curriculum areas is supported by our own assessment criteria which enables small steps towards P levels to be recorded and reported in age related terms. These assessments cover numeracy, literacy, ICT, science, PSHE and citizenship curriculum areas.

TTAP assessments are used to assess secondary aged pupils. These assessments will be used in conjunction with TEACCH transitional assessment materials which help to identify an individual's principle transition goals, strengths and weaknesses. The TTAP can be used to facilitate educational and transitional planning. Emphasis is on evaluating the six major functional skill areas:

- Vocational Skills
- Vocational Behavior
- Independent Functioning
- Leisure Skills
- Functional Communication

A range of other assessment strategies may be used to complement B-Squared and TTAP which includes PEP-3, SCERTS, PECS assessments and sensory profiling.

## **Pathway 3 – Assessment Process**

Our assessment tracking system during early primary years supports National Curriculum milestones. Where appropriate end of key stage examinations and assessment tasks could be used to measure progress for some pupils. A range of other assessment strategies may be used to complement which includes PEP-3, SCERTS, TTAP and sensory profiling.

OCR Functional skills assessments are used to measure progress within the upper secondary phase.

Life Skills Curriculum is assessment using LCE assessment instruments to:

- Establish present levels of student competency;
- Setting individual targets;
- Guide program planning and instructional content;
- Measure student progress toward targets.

LCE includes three types of field-tested assessment instruments - competency rating scale, knowledge battery, and performance battery.

**The LCE Competency Rating Scale (CRS)** provides a valuable method for assessing each student's competency level through observation and interviews using a person who knows the student well, such as a teacher or parent. This informal and brief assessment process offers a relatively high degree of validity, and it may be used at all instructional levels.

**The LCE Knowledge Battery** is a criterion-referenced test designed as a pre- and post-assessment instrument to identify instructional needs.

The LCE Knowledge Battery consists of a 468-item multiple-choice test covering all LCE objectives within each sub-competency. And teachers may choose which sub-competency sections to test knowledge levels and instructional needs.

**The LCE Performance Battery** assesses a pupils' ability to *apply* the LCE competencies in their lives. It consists of two alternate forms for each of the 20 competency units. Most items are performance-based and composed as open-ended questions, role-playing scenarios, card-sorting exercises and other hands-on activities.

#### **7. Self-Assessment:**

The ethos at Arbor House is to involve pupils in every aspect of their learning which includes giving them the opportunity to participate in self-assessment. Because self-assessment becomes very important for the pupils as they grow older, we feel that developing these skills is essential from the start of school. Self-assessment takes place individually with the teacher or senior teaching assistant. Pupils are encouraged to talk about what they have been learning, including how they can improve, and the progress they have made. Visual representations of individual pupil targets are use as appropriate to enable pupils to be actively involved in reviewing their progress.

#### **8. Progress Files:**

Along with the teachers' records each pupil will have their own Records of Achievement. These are the property of the pupil although they are held in school unless a parent requests otherwise. Students are encouraged to choose pieces of work, photographs or larger pieces of work to include as a record of their progress. They must make the decisions about what to keep themselves as far as is possible and to be very involved in all aspects of producing the file. Whilst for the younger or less able pupils teacher involvement will be greater, the file will always be filled in alongside the pupil, involving them as much as possible in the process. In addition to a paper based version all work is photographed, this is compiled into an ICT based Record of Achievement and updated as they move through the school.

#### **9. Reporting to Parents:**

The main method of reporting to parents is through the Annual Review of EHCP and the Annual Report. The annual review process, where previous targets are reviewed and new targets are set, meets the statutory requirements in reporting to parents, and the additional information on other areas of progress and development provides much more detailed information on each curriculum area.

## **10 Equal Opportunities:**

By monitoring the curriculum coverage and experience of every individual pupil, and by monitoring the targets that are set for each pupil and their rate of progress, we will as a school be able to identify if all pupils are having access to a curriculum to which they are entitled and which is relevant to their special needs.

## **11 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Good assessment, recording and reporting procedures will enable pupils to make the best possible progress in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding, and will allow greater consistency of teaching and learning when pupils change class and/or teachers. The Executive Headteacher and Headteacher monitor pupil progress through scrutiny of pupil work, annual review reports, the setting of individual pupil targets and regular lesson observations. Pupil progress is analysed against the benchmark given in the 'Performance - P Scale - attainment targets for pupils with special educational needs' July 2014. External monitoring is routinely conducted for end of Key Stage Assessments (SAT's); 'P' Level assessments, as well as externally accredited courses. The senior leadership team regularly reviews this process.