



Assessment Policy 2025-2026

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Background

Students who come to Northleigh have struggled in mainstream school, predominantly with anxiety. They have had periods out of school and the whole mainstream regime has meant that they have disengaged with learning and are averse to any system of review and assessment. Our priority for students is for them to attend school, ensure that they feel safe (so Northleigh becomes a safe place for them), which in turn will enable learning to take place.

Northleigh understands that assessment is key to measuring progress that students make but this only happens, once we are certain that any form of assessment will not have a detrimental effect on student's mental health and wellbeing. There is no time frame for this and every student will have a different transition into Northleigh.

Characteristics of Good Practice in Assessment

Assessment which:

Promotes and Supports Learning

- Identified what students know, understand and can do;
- Enables consistent monitoring of students' progress;
- Identifies individual learning styles;
- Identifies individual learning strengths and weaknesses;
- Encourages progression in learning.

Informs Teaching

- Assists lessons planning;
- Informs review of content and skills;
- Promotes a variety of teaching strategies;
- Enables consistent monitoring or teaching progress;
- Encourages self-reflection.

Is both Formative and Summative

- Promotes a shared learning culture;
- Provides clear and regular feedback;
- Diagnoses learning difficulties;
- Measures student performance;
- Identifies clear and shared targets for student progress;
- Promotes differentiation by outcome;
- Informs subject choice and career decision-making;
- Provides effective and progressive student records;
- Informs regular reporting to parents.

Uses appropriate and diverse strategies

- Is both formal and informal;
- Accommodates a variety of learning styles;
- Tests a range of skills;
- Encourages effective and standardised marking procedures (see summative and formative assessments);
- Is both quantitative and qualitative;
- Is carried out in a range of contexts.

Recognises all student progress and achievement

- Rewards progress, effort and achievement;
- Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning;
- Creates opportunities for self-direction;
- Fosters self-esteem and social development.

Develops the capacity for Self-Assessment

- Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria;
- Gives sensitive and constructive feedback;
- Supports students in self and peer assessment activities (where appropriate);
- Engages students in realistic target setting.

Types of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is clearly identified to allow staff the opportunity to relay the correct information at the correct time. Formative and Summative assessments are used.

Good day-to-day in-school formative assessment helps students to measure their knowledge and understanding and respond to feedback, provides parents/carers with a broad picture of where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie, and allows teachers to identify when students are struggling and what interventions are needed to close that understanding gap.

Day to day in-school formative assessment, for example:

- Questioning during lessons.
- Marking of students' work;
- Observational assessment;
- Regular short re-cap quizzes;
- Scanning work for student attainment and development.

Good in-school summative assessment will give students the opportunity to understand how well they have understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time, gives parents/carers an understanding of achievements, progress and wider outcomes of their children over a period of time, gives staff the opportunity to evaluate their delivery of a topic and the impact they have made and allows the school's senior management team to monitor performance of students, identifying interventions.

In-school summative assessment, for example:

- Short end of topic or unit tests;
- Mock examinations;
- Reviews for students with SEN;
- Functional Skills Examinations for selected subjects;
- Other assessments that enable us to show progress academically and/or emotionally.

When in-school formative assessment occurs, staff need to ask themselves the following questions:

1. What will this assessment tell me about students' knowledge and understanding of the topic, concept or skill?
2. How will I communicate the information I gain from this assessment to students in a way that helps them to understand what they need to do to improve
3. How will I ensure students understand the purpose and outcome of this assessment and can apply it to their own learning?
4. How will I ensure my approaches to assessment are inclusive of all abilities?
5. How will I use the information I gain from this assessment to inform my planning for future lessons? How could I improve, adapt or target my teaching as a result?

6. What follow up action should I take to plug gaps in knowledge and understanding or to support progression where learning is secure?

7. Is it necessary to record the information gained from this assessment? And if so, how can this be done most efficiently?

It is a requirement on staff that formative assessment occurs throughout lessons within good teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of staff to collect information at the end of each term or at the end of unit through summative assessment, information will need to be inserted on the data tracker.

Part of assessment involves monitoring and evaluating the curriculum focusing on teaching and learning, the performance of students, the effectiveness of staff and the standard of achievement across the whole of the school.

Throughout the academic year, staff will gather evidence of students levels from summative assessments which might need to be used if examinations do not take place.

Marking

The marking of students' work is an important assessment tool which is essential for both progression in student learning and effective teaching. Good practice is promote through regular, accurate and consistent marking by all teachers. Positive marking and feedback which recognise student achievement, highlights both strengths and weaknesses and provides clear guidance for improvement are to be encouraged.

Effective marking helps to:

- Recognise student achievement;
- Monitor student progress;
- Diagnose problems in learning;
- Provides feedback with regard to progress;
- Provides clear guidance for improvement;
- Records and reports student attainment;
- Assists in evaluation and planning.

In summary our aim should be that work is marked:

- Promptly regularly and consistently;
- According to agreed and shared learning outcomes, where appropriate as set out in Education, Health and Care Plans;
- According to agreed and shared assessment criteria, for example individual progression or examination specifications;
- Using both quantitative and qualitative criteria;
- For improvement, using constructive commentary.

However, we also recognise that for some students, particularly, when they start their journey with Northleigh, find the process of marking (tick/cross/wording), stressful and may cause them higher levels of anxiety, therefore, making them shut down. This can be a real barrier to learning, so some books/folder may not have any recognised marking in/on them. Teachers are expected in these circumstances to provide verbal feedback and keep a record of this feedback and progression.

Monitoring and Reporting

There is a programme for monitoring and evaluating over time which allows for different degrees of scrutiny and analysis for different areas of the curriculum at different times.

Key aspects of the monitoring and evaluating programme include: –

- Scrutiny and analysis of all examinations results - this takes place immediately after results are published in August. Staff will discuss their results analysis with the aim of identifying not only areas of strength but also areas to target for future improvement. When further data is available later in the year, further analysis takes place to inform future plans.
- Whole school development plan is monitored regularly throughout the year by the senior management team and/or the trustees.
- Personal Development Reviews/Wellbeing Meetings: We operate a yearly review, where staff are set personal objectives, alongside this, each term a wellbeing meeting takes place with staff, so that any issues raised can be put in place by the senior management team and/or the trustees.
- Lesson Observation: This can take place for several different purposes, for example, so the senior management team can monitor quality of overall teaching and learning - through both formal and informal lesson observation or monitoring the behaviour of students.
- Student Wellbeing Meetings: Each week a student is allocated one lesson with their Wellbeing Mentor, so ensure that they are feeling safe and any issues around their health and mental wellbeing as well as academic difficulties can be addressed.
- Documentation: Policy documents and staff handbook are all regularly reviewed and updated; school policies and schemes of work are all regarded as working documents.
- Academic Data Tracker: Data in relation to students' academic progress is tracked on a termly basis, this enables identification of any downward spiral, so that discussion can take place with regard to relevant intervention, using progression grids as a guide which differ on a subject basis and whether the student is following an enrichment or academic programme.
- Emotional Data Tracker: The emotional wellbeing of our students is as important to the school, as is their progress academically, to ensure that they are happy and thriving in our unique environment. At the present time, we perform a Boxhall Profile twice a year, like with academic subjects should there be any issues, then the appropriate intervention will be sought.
- Report to Parents: At Annual Review, End of Year Reports and at any time where concerns may be raised either by the school or parents/carers as to progression.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-assessment captures the attainment and progress of all students;
- Holding school leaders to account for improving students and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data.

Head of Centre

The Head of Centre is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to;

- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects;
- Analysing student progress and attainment, including individual students.
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement;
- Reporting to the Trustees on all key aspects of student progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years.

Examination Officer

It is the responsibility of the Examination Officer to liaise with appropriate staff/students/parents/carers/examination boards regarding all aspects of all Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 Examinations.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Identifying how students are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons;
- Marking in a positive, accurate, meaningful and diagnostic way;
- Compiling and maintain, individual student records;
- Evaluating learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching;
- Reporting to students, parents/carers and staff on individual progress.

Students

Students are encouraged to take an active part in their learning and to:

- Participate and contribute to discussions involving learning interventions and success criteria;
- Participate in the techniques of self/peer assessment and evaluation;
- Act on feedback provided by teachers and peers (where appropriate);
- Help foster a positive learning environment through positive behaviour;
- Set personal goals and targets through self-management;
- Value their learning;
- Accept responsibility for their learning;
- Understand that everyone has the potential to learn and succeed.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active part in the learning of their children and to:

- Liaise with school/staff of any difficulties that might arise;
- Work with school/staff to find solutions;
- Encourage their children to achieve their full potential.

Review Date: September 2026

Appendix A – Measuring Progression

Each student who arrives at Northleigh, comes from a different pathway and experience, which means that their starting points will vary and therefore progression will be different for everyone. Students are taught from a scheme of work according to their ability and progress is monitored on a termly basis using the following criteria:

| Descriptor | Teacher Assessment |
|-----------------|---|
| Working Towards | Asdan End of KS3 Enrichment Entry Level 1 Entry Level 2 Entry Level 3 F/S Entry Level 1 F/S Entry Level 2 F/S Entry Level 3 F/S Level 1 F/S Level 2 Cambridge National L1 Cambridge National L2 Cambridge Technical Award L1 Cambridge Technical Award L2 Cambridge Technical Certificate L1 Cambridge Technical Certificate L2 GCSE Foundation GCSE Higher A/S A Level |

We also provide an effort and engagement grade for our students as set out below:

| Descriptor | Effort |
|---------------------|---|
| Arrival | 1 Does not attend the lesson. 2 Regularly requires collecting. 3 Occasionally has to be collected. 4 Independently usually on time. 5 Independently always on time. |
| Behaviour (Conduct) | 1 Extreme dysregulation. 2 Often dysregulated. 3 Occasionally dysregulated. 4 Behaviour is usually good. 5 Behaviour is consistently good. |
| Classwork | 1 Does not engage with any classwork. 2 Rarely engages with classwork. 3 Usually engages with classwork. 4 Mostly engages with classwork. 5 Always tries hard to engage with classwork. |

At Key Stage 4 where students are working towards qualifications, they will be marked, according to the appropriate grading schemes.

Asdan Short Courses

Credits 1 to 6

Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals

Pass, Merit or Distinction

Functional Skills

Pass at Entry Level 1, Entry Level 2, Entry Level 3, Level 1 or Level 2

GCSE

Grades 1 to 9 (9 being the highest and 4 being considered a pass grade)

AS

Grades from E to A

A Level

Grades from E to A*

Monitoring of students is forensic with teachers completing Northleigh's data tracker termly and advising as to whether a student is meeting their appropriate target(s). Targets are realistic given individual students' capabilities and careful consideration is given to potential intervention(s) and the type of provision after Northleigh, providing students with skills for adulthood as well as appropriate academic and/or vocational qualifications. Staff also comment on whether a student is on track to complete the pathway they are working towards.