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Implementation:

Options Trent Acres School's Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Vision and Aims of the school;
- Curriculum policy, Marking and Feedback policy;

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Options Trent Acres School is an independent day school providing specialist education for children and young people aged 8 – 18 with a range of Complex Needs, including autism, Asperger's Syndrome, dyspraxia and ADHD, as well as impaired social or cognitive functioning due to early life trauma and attachment difficulties. All of our children have experienced disruption to formal education. For some pupils, this has resulted in long periods of absence which has impacted on their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The severity and complexity of many of our students' learning needs makes some conventional assessment tools and measures inappropriate. To enable the school to fully capture a student's attainment and progress, we assess in developmental, social, behavioural, clinical and academic areas. Assessment occurs in a range of settings and different contexts to take account of the difficulties that autism can bring to generalising and transferring skills.

It is essential that we support our pupils back into learning through rich opportunities that enable them to experience and celebrate regular success.

Pupils at Options Trent Acres have access to a wide reaching curriculum, covering the depth and breadth of the National Curriculum entitlement. Learning opportunities are adapted to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their individual needs are able to access learning.

2.0 THE PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT AT OPTIONS TRENT ACRES

- To identify pupils progress and needs, to evaluate the success of teaching and to motivate pupils.
- To embed ambition and aspiration in all teaching through appropriately challenging target setting.
- To provide appropriate information for a range of audiences: Pupils, parents, teachers, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders
- To make sure learning is planned and sequenced to meet pupils' needs and aspirations.
- To enable teachers to show how they are fulfilling their aims
- To support the teaching and learning process;
- To support Subject Leads and Pastoral Leads in the development of programmes of study;
- To support standardisation and moderation procedures;
- To raise learners' expectations of themselves re attainment and achievement;

3.0 THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT, RECORDING & REPORTING

Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole integrated Curriculum and wider learning opportunities. The main aim of the assessment process must be to support learning and progress.

1. The following key principles underpin effective assessment systems:
 - Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning
 - Assessment is fair and honest
 - Assessment is ambitious, stretching and challenging
 - Assessment is appropriate to the individual needs of each pupil
 - Assessment is consistent
 - Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information to all who are involved with the child

2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative and summative tool. Effective assessment provides:
 - A statement of current attainment;
 - A record of progress;
 - An acknowledgement of achievement and underachievement;
 - Information on learners' readiness for future learning;
 - Information on the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed and the current programme of study.

3. To be at its most effective, assessment should primarily be a continual process and not an infrequent, purely summative exercise. Pupils are assessed throughout lessons in accordance with teachers' planning on a lesson by lesson basis and more formally on a half-termly basis across all areas of the curriculum. Targets are set on a half-termly basis and reviewed with parents and carers. Trent Acres have chosen to assess half-termly as we feel it is important for our pupils to see incremental progress, this significantly boosts self-esteem and self-belief.

4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the National Curriculum and examination courses as well as indicate pupil progress. Upon admission to Trent Acres, learners are given a series of baseline assessments to support the school's understanding of potential curriculum pathways and curriculum provision. This also includes reading and spelling ages. Outcomes of baseline assessments are used to develop the Pupil Centred Plan (PCP) (Please refer to our SEND Policy).

6. Options Trent Acres School use SOLAR to measure and record pupil progress. Each subject area is broken down into skills and knowledge based steps, taken directly from the National Curriculum programmes of study. This is presented on SOLAR as age related expectations (ARE), however, the vast majority of our pupils arrive significantly below. We have therefore translated these into Trent Acres Steps. Targets for all pupils are ambitious and set at ARE to enable us to target learning precisely to pupils' gaps in knowledge. This again helps teachers to clearly identify the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils need in order to progress with their learning.

5. We recognise the potential for assessment to develop a positive self-image for the pupil. Marking and feedback will be positive and constructive and will support a healthy level of self-esteem. Teachers are expected to make sure that feedback is challenging, following the principle of what went well (WWW) and even better if (EBI) to stretch and challenge pupils' thinking and application of skills.

7. In addition to standard assessment, opportunities are taken to record significant points in a learner's development, which are invaluable for reports and for parent carer conferences. This is all captured using SOLAR and might include:

- A moment of 'breakthrough' in understanding;
- Interesting examples of problem solving strategies;
- Difficulties encountered/areas of weakness and possible reasons for them
- Social and emotional progress

8. Assessment has a common procedure:

- a) It is consistent across the department to provide an outcome which aligns with the School, and N.C./Exam Board standards;
- b) It promotes a common interpretation of the N.C./Exam Board grade descriptors;
- c) It is fair to pupils.

9. Assessment records:

- a) Are based on an agreed set of principles and purposes;
- b) Assess pupil progress against N.C./Exam Board criteria.

12. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties. PCP's are updated every half term using the following key:

Emerging	Developing	Secure
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13. Assessment gradually builds up into a profile for each pupil over their school career

14. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the evidence and assessment techniques being used and to review their own progress by a procedure containing an element of self-assessment.

15. Assessment records provide confidence between teachers across phases and enhance progression for pupils.

16. Recognition is given by the Head teacher and Governors for the time and resource implications of good assessment, and due allowance is made for this in the construction of the teachers' working day.

4.0 PROGRESS MEASURES AT OPTIONS TRENT ACRES SCHOOL

Using the SOLAR assessment system to record and monitor progress, the school benchmarks against age related expectations set out in the National Curriculum. This enables teachers to accurately record pupil progress and quickly identify gaps in learning. Teaching at Trent Acres is ambitious and aspirational, as such, all pupils are targeted towards achieving age related expectations through adapted learning and additional support. This approach also means that where pupils excel, the work can be adapted quickly to make sure that pupils' are appropriately stretched and challenged.

5.0 BASELINE ASSESSMENT

The baselining process at Trent Acres is undertaken in two phases: -

- Pre-admission referral and assessment stage
- Induction into school

The pre-admission phase enables us to make contact with parents, previous schools and other professionals working with the child, as well as spending time with the child to glean as much information as possible to support transition. Additional information and data provided by the placement commissioning local authority and interviews with relevant professional and family members, will inform the production of an admission plan for each pupil.

Once placements are agreed and pupils have joined the school, they will work, at their own pace through an induction timetable. This will consist of awareness and familiarisation sessions where pupils get to know staff and learn about the environment. Pupils will also take part in initial teacher assessments and appropriate clinical assessments to enable staff to build an accurate picture of starting points and how best to support learning.

The school benefits from a close working relationship with the Clinical Team who can offer additional information from a range of clinical measures, where available, such as: -

- Cognitive and Executive Function Skills
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Academic Skills
- Adaptive Behaviour
- Social Emotional Development
- Motor Skills and Physical Development
- Communication
- Sensory
- General Development
- Child Development

These assessments will allow the Clinical Team to draft

- Communication Plans;
- Cognitive Profiles;
- Sensory Profiles;
- and support in the service-wide development of Positive Behaviour Support Plans.

Where pupils are working at National Curriculum levels, subject specific assessments will be carried out as appropriate to the individual pupil. The baseline assessment is used (in conjunction with the individual Person Centred Planning) to inform future learning and target setting, which is then incorporated into each student's individual learning programme.

6.0 PUPIL CENTRED PLANS

PCPs are produced for all pupils who have needs which are over and above their learning needs. Pupils learning needs are identified and addressed within each pupil's daily curricular programme, most pupils are taught in small groups and some on a 1:1 basis, so by design each teacher's short term plan for that learning experience is tailored specifically to meet the pupil's needs. (See SEND policy for further information). PCP's take into account the aims of the Education Health Care (EHC) Plan and historical academic, social and emotional starting points. The PCPs are reviewed every six weeks prior to parent carer conferences.

Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the setting of their own targets and/or to approve targets set for them by their teacher, where appropriate. Pupils are given support in this process as appropriate. The progress each pupil has made towards meeting the objectives set out in their statement of SEN/EHC Plan and the key targets in their PCP are discussed at every parent/carers conference. Every pupil is encouraged to be involved in this process, which may mean he/she attends the meeting and/or makes a contribution.

7.0 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

At all key stages, formative assessment is completed throughout the school year. This is an on-going process, used to inform planning for future learning. Assessment opportunities are identified by the teacher within schemes of work and take place as part of classroom activities.

Our main academic assessment and tracking tool is SOLAR. Teachers and Tutors input data, which is backed up with evidence, for a Broad range of National Curriculum subjects. The data input is overseen by Emma Ashforth – Deputy Head Teacher.

8.0 TEACHER RECORDS

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to keep up-to-date, informative assessment records for their pupil. Effective assessment and record keeping are supported by:

- specifying time scales for recording progress;
- giving responsibility for observing and recording the assessment of pupils to their respective pastoral and subject leads as appropriate;
- involving students in their own assessment and recording process.

Regular monitoring and recording of pupils' responses and achievements across the curriculum helps to identify areas where they are making progress and where progress is not being maintained. The responses or reactions shown by children and young people with autism may vary from lesson to lesson, activity to activity and may be dependent on factors such as;

- preferences for certain members of staff;
- proximity to certain students;
- different environments;
- the time of day;
- access to favoured items of equipment;
- particular sorts of sensory experience;
- subject contexts;
- preferences for subject-specific experiences;
- emerging talents in particular subject areas;
- preferences for special interests;
- communication skills.

Keeping precise records of this information helps staff at Trent Acres build on what they know their students can do and make decisions about adjusting teaching methods, providing additional support or taking account of other factors such as health, medication, family circumstances etc.

Appropriate and practicable methods of recording all areas of engagement and progress are designed and actioned by the whole school team. This method of distributed leadership acknowledges the skills and in-depth knowledge that individual staff members have of individual students.

In addition to teacher assessments, other forms of evidence are used to support and track progression for students. This includes;

- PCP Target attainment data;
- Externally accredited work;
- Behavioural progression data from the Info Exchange system;
- Attendance data.
- Wellbeing data taken from the Warwick Edinburgh Well Being Scheme
- Positive behaviour comments taken from Class Dojo

However, due to the complex, unique and individualised learning pathways of our students, the most important element of assessment for Students at Trent Acres is the progress they have made from their original starting point on entry to the school. Starting points for the vast majority of Trent Acres pupils are significantly lower than children of a similar age due to prolonged absences from previous learning environments.

9.0 ACCREDITATION

Options Trent Acres School provides pupils with accredited opportunities from Key Stage 2 with the Asdan suite of qualifications. At Key stage 3 pupils can access entry level qualifications as well as some BTEC routes and functional skills. At key stage 4 pupils can access GCSE routes, BTEC and functional skills. Some A level opportunities are also available at post 16. Full details of our accredited opportunities are detailed in the prospectus and available upon request.

Pupils' baselines upon entry as well as formative assessment continually provide us with information regarding the appropriate level of qualification to be sought. The aim is to match the needs of the pupil with the appropriate pathway.

10.0 PROGRESS

For some students at Trent Acres School, achievements can be predicted and planned for and progress can be demonstrated in terms of increased engagement, knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers produce detailed half termly reports that take into account academic progress mapped to the child's individual plan as well as social and emotional progress and holistic development.

11.0 REPORTING TO PARENTS

- Parents and Carers receive daily updates via the Class Dojo system.
- Parents and Carers receive a progress report every half term where they are invited to school to meet with class teachers.
- An Annual Report for each student is made available to parents/carers.