

Assessment Policy

Legislation / guidance that informs this document

- National Curriculum and Assessment from September 2014 (Gov.uk)

Other Red Balloon policies that should be read in conjunction with this one

- Curriculum
- Marking

Statement of Intent

Red Balloon aims to use assessment to inform teaching and learning. In order to learn effectively students need to be in their 'zone of proximal development', and for teachers to practise well they need to monitor student progress and use that monitoring to inform future practice.

Responsibility for implementation

Headteachers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of existing assessment policy and contribute to its development: the daily responsibility for ensuring high quality practice may be delegated and each teacher is responsible for ensuring the quality of their own practice.

Current Red Balloon focus

Red Balloon Centres work ongoingly to develop tracking / monitoring systems that will better inform student progress.

Our intention is to monitor individual student progress against projected outcomes grounded in:

- information from previous providers – to include KS2 outcomes where available;
- baseline assessments carried out upon admission to a centre;
- assessment of the impact upon progress of either non school attendance or mental health issues that may have preceded referral to the centre.

Assessment for a purpose

Assessment should be an ongoing process for teacher and learner and will be intuitive and internalised during much of the learning process.

Red Balloon Centres will assess student attainment at point of entry to a centre, identify learning (academic and wellbeing) targets, track progress against those targets and provide informative data to receiving schools or establishments when students transfer.

Red Balloon Centres will assess student progress in four main ways.

1. Staff, together with commissioning agents, parents/carers, the student and other involved agencies, will determine intended outcomes (ie the purpose of the placement). Most usually one of the intended outcomes will be identification of the next placement (eg return to mainstream for KS4, sixth form or further education college at year 12). Progress against intended outcomes will be monitored through twice-yearly review.
2. Staff will assess academic attainment in core subjects (maths, English and science) at point of entry. These assessments will be based upon a mixture of information received from previous educational providers, normative and diagnostic testing and teacher observations and assessment. If any student is identified as requiring a literacy or numeracy 'intervention' / 'catch up' programme, then that will be provided and progress monitored. Progress within the three core subjects will be monitored by the use of age appropriate levels and against projected GCSE outcomes
3. In the broader curriculum areas (technical, human and social, aesthetic and creative and physical) staff will map the curriculum and monitor progress through age appropriate levels.
4. Given that all students referred to Red Balloon will have met difficulties in engaging with learning, usually as a result of some trauma that that they have experienced, it is essential that we know and evaluate how effectively our wellbeing provision enables students to re-engage effectively with learning. To that end centres have developed tracking systems that monitor wellbeing progress.

NB Centres will work with local schools as appropriate and may adopt some of their assessment tools if they seem likely to add to the pertinent data that can be generated.

The information generated through the tracking of progress will be used:

- with each student to plan effective further provision;
- as part of ongoing management conversations about the quality of Red Balloon provision and ways in which we might improve practice.

It is essential that all staff remain mindful of the impact of a student's emotional state upon their learning, and acknowledge that learning that has been deemed to be mastered may be negatively affected (to the point of being forgotten / unlearned) during periods of emotional stress and may, therefore, require re-learning.

Working with SEND students

Given the bespoke nature of all Red Balloon assessment work, there should be no major difference in the assessment processes undertaken with students with statements or EHC plans, but coordinators must ensure that:

- appropriate referral procedures have been followed including a clear assessment of whether we are able to meet all identified educational needs;
- an up to date version of the student's statement or EHC plan is received and filed and relevant information made available to all staff;
- formal reviews of progress are undertaken at required intervals - representatives from the SEND department of the local authority must be invited, and a record of the meeting made and shared with all relevant agencies – there must be a formal review at least annually.

Centres must identify a member of staff with responsibility for ensuring that the needs of SEND students are well met.

Policy updated Sept 2019 by Bob Sproson, Director of Education - for annual review.