



ASSESSMENT POLICY

2025-26

Responsibility	Head Teacher
Date of next review by	October 2026

Signed:
Head Teacher

Date: 29.09.25

Signed:
Deputy Head Teacher

Date: 29.09.25

The Aspire Academy

“The quality of assessment has a significant impact on attitudes to learning and on attainment in schools by stimulating and challenging pupils to work hard and by encouraging teachers to focus on how to improve the learning of individual pupils”
(Ofsted, “Good Assessment in Secondary Schools”)

Objectives:

- To provide clear guidelines on the school’s approach to assessment
- To establish a coherent approach to assessment across all subjects
- To provide a system of assessment that is clear to staff, pupils, parents and carers and commissioning schools
- To ensure that assessment and marking leads to all pupils making progress
- To provide meaningful feedback to pupils to offer advice on how to improve and raise attainment

Practice guidelines:

Classroom practice linked to teaching standards:

- Learning objectives must be established at the start of each lesson
- Success criteria related to grades/levels at KS4 and bands at KS3 must be shared with pupils
- Success criteria should be modelled throughout lessons
- Skillful questioning must be used to assess attainment (using, for example, Bloom’s Taxonomy) and set targets for further progression
- Learning should be monitored throughout lessons to continuously assess the pace and strength of progress and, if necessary, to intervene to address misconceptions by reshaping and modifying teaching to meet pupils’ needs
- Plenary phases must be used within lessons to assess progress and summarize learning
- Progress should be praised and achievement rewarded through comments and the school’s system, with points recorded on Arbor after each lesson
- Exemplar material should be made available in the classroom

Marking and Feedback:

- Learning objectives and learning outcomes are used as the framework for oral and written feedback. They should be shared and made clear to the pupils in advance of attempting a task.
- Pupils should receive regular and detailed feedback on their work, which is constructive, informative and focused, so that they understand how they are progressing and what steps they need to take to improve.

- Return assessed written work and feedback on oral work normally within 10 working days of its completion/submission dedicating class time to its return, for discussion and pupil reflection.
- All pupils' work should be acknowledged and marked in accordance with the guidance provided, with some selected work assessed at least twice each half term (for subjects with more than one lesson a week) and once each half term for those with one lesson a week.
- Teachers are responsible for recording marks or comments for pupils' work in their mark books to ensure that evidence is available to inform discussions with pupils, parents, carers and colleagues.
- Pupil targets are based upon all available data and are centrally recorded within Arbor
- Teacher Assessed Bands [KS3], GCSE Grades [KS4] and Assessment criteria for Vocational courses are used to measure progress

Baseline Assessments on Entry using GL Assessments:

- GL NGRT English baselining assessment for reading
- GL NGST English baselining assessment for spelling
- GL PTM Maths baselining assessment

In addition, baseline testing takes place for phonics, Thrive and sensory audit.

Progress Checks and Reporting:

- Performance data is collected 4 times per year (3 for Year 11) and published three times a year for every pupil.
- Teacher Assessed Bands [KS3], GCSE Grades [KS4] and Assessment criteria for Vocational courses are published to commissioning schools, pupils and parents and carers.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The role of the Classroom Teacher in assessment:

- Setting and communicating appropriate, differentiated learning objectives for each lesson and each unit of work
- Communicating assessment criteria
- Providing opportunities for pupils to engage in peer and self-assessment opportunities where relevant
- Marking and assessing work regularly, including live marking
- Assessing work against KS3 Band descriptors and KS4 Syllabus criteria and communicating marks to pupils
- Giving feedback that supports all pupils to make progress
- Recording all appropriate data and information in a range of ways
- Providing accurate data half termly, or as requested, for progress tracker checks in Arbor
- Providing data and information for colleagues on pupil transfer
- Keeping up to date with pedagogical research and good practice related to assessment strategies

- Providing statutory data as required
- Liaising with the SENDCo to ensure data is shared and pupils' needs are being met

The role of the Subject Leaders in assessment:

Subject Leaders should lead their subject by ensuring:

- Appropriate assessment data is used to identify any pupils who are underachieving
- They provide feedback to pupils, parents and carers when progress and achievement is particularly good
- They intervene with support and challenge strategies where a pupil is underachieving in relation to expectations
- Regular liaison takes place with Senior Leaders/Heads of Year/Subject teachers concerning individual pupil progress

The role of the SLT in assessment:

Senior Leaders should provide leadership in ensuring that:

- All teachers plan for formative and summative assessment and identify assessment opportunities
- Assessment for Learning takes place, including appropriate feedback to pupils
- A range of evidence is produced to support judgements regarding progress, achievement and attainment
- The feedback that teachers give to pupils is diagnostic, formative and understood by pupils - monitored through book sampling and lesson observations
- Regular moderation/standardisation is planned for within the subject area
- Whole school deadlines and statutory requirements are met
- Regular monitoring of the progress of individuals and groups takes place, and action is taken to promote achievement and progress
- Analysis of assessment data takes place
- Liaison with the school's Examination Officers re: entries for all examinations are current and up to date

The role of the Examinations Officer in assessment:

- To liaise with appropriate staff/pupils/parents/carers/commissioning schools/exam boards regarding all aspects of external assessment and take responsibility for the organization, entry and invigilation of all internal school examinations

The role of the Data Manager/Deputy Head Teacher in assessment:

- To ensure that all centrally held data in relation to pupils' attainment, achievement and progress is kept up to date within Arbor
- To assist in providing data analysis and reports related to the attainment, achievement and progress of individual pupils, and groups of pupils, across the school in conjunction with the administration office

How progress is measured:

Pupil progress is recorded at four periods across the academic year and the results of these assessments are entered onto the relevant Arbor mark book. These assessments enable The Aspire Academy to provide half termly reports to parents and referring schools advising the current level of performance for pupils.

Assessment in Key Stage 4:

- In Key Stage 4 assessment for GCSE subjects, including English and Maths is based on the 9 – 1 GCSE grading system to monitor progress against baseline assessment.
 - We have extended the 9-1 GCSE grading system,
 - Firstly, with sub-levels at each grading level (e.g. 3a, 3b, 3c) to provide a wider scope and accuracy of grade within each level, and
 - Secondly, to provide a wider range of levels before pupils attain the GCSE Grade 1; starting with Functional Skills EL3, EL2, EL1, moving down to WB (Working Below) in exceptional cases for pupils not attaining Entry Level 1.
- For vocational subjects e.g. Food, Motor Vehicle - data is collected using the 'Formative Tracking' Arbor mark books which track the completion of the units of the accredited course.
- All data is closely monitored to help determine the progression pathway for every pupil and/or the action plan of intervention/support. Attainment is continuously reviewed to identify pupils who require support to fulfil their potential.

Assessment in Key Stage 3:

- In Key Stage 3 academic subject data is collected using a similar extended grading system – with Aspire Bands from Band 8 to Band 1
- For vocational subjects, data is collected using the 'Formative Tracking' Arbor mark books which replicate the unit elements of the schemes of work.

Appendix

Marking Expectations:

Pupils should receive regular, timely and detailed feedback which is constructive, informative and focused, so that they understand how they are progressing and what steps they need to take in order to improve.

1. Teachers should be working within the context of the school Assessment Policy.
2. Teachers are responsible for recording marks and comments on pupils' work so that evidence is available for discussions about progress with pupils, parents, colleagues, referring schools and other agencies.
3. Teachers have a responsibility to provide feedback on pupils' literacy skills in addition to the assessment of subject specific criteria. It is also important that teachers correct the spelling of subject specific terminology.
4. Assessed written and oral work should be marked and returned within 10 working days of completion.
5. When work is returned, class time should be given to discussing the marking and allowing time for pupil reflection.
6. Marking should be carried out using green ink.
7. Teachers should use common marking symbols (see below):

Circle and sp in margin = spelling mistake

sp The van exploded twenty yards from the hotel entrance.

Circle and p in margin = punctuation error

p Tom had fish chips and peas for his dinner.

Circle and cap in margin - capital letter needed

cap On the table, there were several copies of the daily mirror newspaper.

Straight line underneath and gr in margin = grammatical error

gr The two girls should have told there parents where they were going.

Wavy line underneath and exp in margin = poor/informal expression

exp So I was like thinking of going down the village.

^ = Insert word missing

The leaves on the [^] were turning red in the autumn.

Forward slash and np in margin - New Paragraph

I opened the front door and turned up my collar against the wind. It was a cold day and snow was being whipped through the trees. / Arriving at school, I was frozen to the core. The playground was empty; everyone was sheltering inside the building. Reluctantly, I removed my coat and trudged to my first lesson. / It wasn't until break that I started to thaw out, at last beginning to regain control of my fingers...