RIVERSIDE SCHOOL

Assessment Policy

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS

RESPONSIBLE PERSON – HEADTEACHER

April 2021

Contents

Appendix – Our Assessment Journey; PLPs, UPs and EHCPs, R Levels

1. **Statement of Intent**

Every child has the right to the best possible education. We aim to ensure that all pupils, regardless of ability, special educational needs (SEN) or circumstances, reach their full potential and gain the skills and knowledge necessary to lead truly meaningful lives. Due to the wide variety of learning styles and needs at Riverside School, we have decided that a 'one system for all' approach to assessment would not be beneficial or appropriate. This policy provides a context and explains procedures aimed towards ensuring high quality assessment throughout the school for all.

It aims to:

- Ensure a profoundly personalized assessment toolkit has been created for every pupil across the school, to fully support their highly personalized curriculums;
- Ensure consistency within the different frameworks through a fostering of professional knowledge and understanding, benchmarking and robust moderation throughout the school;
- Ensure there is a collective vision and philosophy of high expectations for all;
- Provide a unified focus for monitoring assessment for learning and classroom practice;
- Ensure that teaching and assessment is appropriately differentiated for all and that the needs of every pupil are being met;
- Establish trends and areas for improvement, and ensure next steps and interventions are planned accordingly to improve outcomes for all;
- Enhance the professional development of all staff, including strengthening networks with local SEN schools to share best practice and influence the world of SEN; and
- To share our Assessment Journey.

2. Context and Philosophy

2.1 At Riverside School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and progressive curriculum personalized for every pupil. The pupils at Riverside School have severe and complex needs, which require particular attention and responsibility to be given to the issue in evidencing their progression and celebrating their achievements.

2.2 Our Assessment Framework stems from Government Policy to move away from standardized assessment levels as we knew them and a drive towards schools deciding how to measure pupil progress. The national picture indicated that many schools were left with more freedom in this matter than they might choose, and deciding how to measure progress and benchmark with other schools was causing concern.

2.3 At Riverside School we have embraced this opportunity and are proud to have developed and formulated our own holistic and personalized curriculum and assessment frameworks. In 2015 we introduced 'Personal Learning Plans' and 'Unique Profiles' for all our pupils and we developed our own set of assessment levels which we named 'R Levels'. In 2020 we introduced and embedded our Riverside Progress Scales (RPSs) to help us to document our ipsative assessments even further and to allow us to see the necessary whole school overview in order to see any emerging trends and patterns and enable us to plan next steps accordingly. The RPSs also provide us with a way of evidencing and highlighting individual pupil progress stories (see appendix 1 for an example RPS).

'Personalising learning demands that schools transform their response to the learner from the largely standardized to the highly personalised' – Hargreaves 2009

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors

3.1 Governors will receive termly Assessment and Achievement reports from the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher, which culminates contributions from all assessment leads and analyses the assessment information from all pupils for each term.

3.2 The Assessment and Achievement Governor will regularly liaise with the Assessment Lead Charlotte Downs and visit the school to monitor pupil progress. When visiting, they will:

- Visit classes;
- View recordings of specific sessions as appropriate;
- View samples of pupils' work or observations made of sessions;
- Talk to pupils about their experiences;
- Talk to teachers and lead teachers about their experiences;
- Read updated case studies and hear about personal achievements made;
- Scrutinise assessment information, reflect on any specific trends and offer support and challenge as needed;
- Ensure any next steps that have been agreed are being focused on;
- Document these visits and identify any areas requiring improvement or further attention;
- Report their findings to the PECT Committee.

3.3 The wider Governing Board will also visit the school regularly to increase their knowledge of classroom activity and will be presented with the termly Assessment and Achievement information at appropriate Governor meetings and the PECT Committee meetings.

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team

3.4 The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Review and comment on planning, ensuring assessment for learning is evident;
- Quality assure all PLPs, UPs and RPSs, ensuring they are consistent and supportive to the EHCPs. Taking accountability for the progress of pupils in their given area/ phase.
- Ensure assessment information is reviewed regularly and closing the gap conversations continue to take place;
- Report on the quality of Assessment and Achievement in the Governor's report;
- Act as role models for teaching staff; teaching in class, running lunch clubs, leading assemblies;
- Leading training, snapshots, learning lounges and moderations to support professional development and deeper learning;
- Ensure that every that every pupil is accessing the right assessment frameworks/ tools; and
- Maintain external links with other SEN schools to ensure that robust moderation takes place and to share best practice.

The Role of the Lead Teachers

3.5 Lead teachers provide ongoing support and share knowledge with the wider staff team. The complete 'Drop In's' as needed and give advice on teaching and learning and ways to create and provide truly responsive training environments. They offer advice and support of best practice to implement both personalized curriculums and to capture assessment for learning. We have clearly designated responsibility for the management and leadership of assessment; we believe this fully supports the quality of teaching and learning.

3.6 Lead teachers will:

- Provide professional advice and development to the teaching and support staff via class 'Drop In's'. These will offer both support and challenge as needed.
- Run clinics/ workshops on specific areas of interest or on certain interventions and strategies as needs arise; and
- Cascade relevant training and offer expert support to the wider school as needed.

The Role of the Teachers

3.7 Our teaching team are fully on board our assessment journey. Through the Teaching and Learning Framework, teachers understanding of Assessment for Learning is improving and this is reflected in our pupil's progress.

3.8 Teachers will:

- Take part in relevant training, focused working parties, workshops and seek support from established lead teachers and members of the SLT;
- Respond to advice given in the 'Drop In' template which leads teachers and members of the SLT are using to offer support, guidance, reflections and challenge;
- Take part in appropriate teacher pilot groups and whole school meetings to help shape and inform;
- Continue to be aware of the purposes of assessment and of the need to apply standards consistently;
- Continue to embrace the autonomy and ownership given to them within all the assessment frameworks and recording systems;
- Ensure pupil progress is being captured and next steps are identified accordingly;
- Monitor and evaluate their teaching and the progress their pupils are making, ensuring regular closing the gap conversations impact positively on pupil outcomes;
- Seek professional dialogue and next steps from their line leader and Assistant Headteacher;
- Attend their weekly meetings, and reflect on their 'Drop In's' and any next steps given;
- Review and evaluate their planning regularly, ensuring next steps are evident and that this information is successfully cascaded to the whole class team;
- Set appropriate and challenging focuses for pupils based on personal needs, ability, learning preferences and motivators;
- Collaborate with colleagues internally moderate regularly and where appropriate take part in external moderations, training sessions and meetings to improve practice;
- Involve parents and other professionals in the monitoring process;
- Ensure that all Assessment Frameworks and SOLAR are up to date each half term and truly reflect the progress made;
- Ensure that video and photographs are used to capture the before and after when implementing new interventions to show progress and share with colleagues and families;
- Lead training about particular areas of interest and to share best practice;
- Complete Annual Reviews and EHCPs, assessing the progress of their pupils and planning their next steps accordingly;
- Use a range of assessment tools and materials (including analysis of pupil's work in books, pupil observations, guiding reading records and results of class tests), alongside on-going focused marking and notes of pupil observations, to inform their future planning;

- View and collaborate before and after video footage of pupils following specific interventions;
- Document individual and group achievements through case studies, when advised to;
- Use planning for assessment. Lessons should contain clear learning objectives from every pupil PLP, based upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each child. We strive to ensure all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability and need;
- Use focused marking where appropriate to assess children's progress in relation to the planned learning objectives, use this information when planning for subsequent lessons; and
- Share next steps with TA's in order for them to fully support pupil progress.

The Role of Teaching Assistants

3.9 Teaching Assistants are actively involved in all aspects of the pupils' day to support their learning and wellbeing. Every pupil at Riverside School has a Key Support TA.

3.10 Teaching Assistants will:

- Be involved in prior planning and preparation, and possess expert knowledge of the needs of individual pupils. They will support individual pupils or particular groups depending on the needs of the class and the lesson;
- Take part in all areas of assessment for the class in which they are assigned. They record evidence and track progress using iPods/ iPads which contain their class 'Pupils' Personal Profiles';
- Attend all relevant training opportunities including regular snapshots and are invited to join after school workshops. Information is cascaded to them via lead teachers, SLT of their class teacher;
- Ensure resources are prepared in advance and made readily available to pupils. They will help to ensure they are accessible to all and cater to pupils' different learning styles. Resources are shared between teachers and departments in order to facilitate good practice via our Resources Support Staff;

The Role of Pupils

3.11 Pupils will:

- Be listened to and given the time needed to make their personal responses;
- Be supported to be aware of and part of their own Learning Journey and their priority next steps;
- Take part in meaningful and appropriate celebrations;
- Share their UPs, offer personalized praise, stars of the week, stickers, rewards etc.;

- Take part in the leaver's survey and EHCP process if appropriate;
- Take part in self-assessment and peer assessment opportunities where appropriate; and
- Be supported to Be All That They Can Be.

The Role of the Parents

3.12 Parents and pupils at Riverside School have an entitlement to an assessment process which:

- Highlights success and progress;
- Focuses on the things that truly matter to themselves and their families;
- Identifies needs and how those needs will be addressed;
- Provides opportunities to discuss, review and celebrate achievements;
- Works in partnership to meet learning focuses and predictions;
- Ensures that information is detailed, specific, personalized and understandable;
- Shares the progress their children are making and suggests thigs to support further progress at home, 'PLPs', 'Home Learning Plans', 'WOW Houses' and UPs. Families contribute to both the PLPs and UPs; and
- Ensures families have a platform to share their celebrations and achievements made at home, via the UPs.

4. External Monitoring

4.1 Charlotte Downs, Assistant Headteacher scrutinizes all available assessment information and discusses the school's self-evaluation, along with all matters arising from it, with the SLT, the Governing Board and the SLP (Specialist Learning Partnership) a group of leaders from a growing number of SEN schools in the region.

4.2 The support of leaders from the SLP is used to evaluate the work of the school through professional discussion, moderation and assessment information comparisons, including expected progress levels. As a group we use the language of age to make comparisons as we are using a selection of different assessment levels.

4.3 Ofsted Inspections will be used to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to develop an action plan for improvement.

4.4 The Equals Curriculum is used to give a wide breadth of subject matter to our pupils, as such we take part in external Equals Moderation and Workshops.

4.5 As a Read Write Inc (RWI) flagship SEN school, we are regularly visited to ensure high standards are maintained. We share our best practice on their website as well as our own and offer training.

4.6 Riverside will lead the way by sharing many of our assessment strategies training others.

5. Key Principles

5.1 Assessment is the judgement we all make about a pupil's attainment based on knowledge gained through using frameworks, observations, questioning and marking. Formal and Informal assessments inform our future planning for individual pupils.

5.2 We believe that assessment should:

- Be integrated into teaching and learning in an ongoing manner to inform teachers of where pupils are in their learning and enable rigorous tracking of pupil progress;
- Indicate strengths, areas for development and targets for progress;
- Form the basis of dialogue with all with all stakeholders;
- Embrace academic and holistic learning;
- Take a variety of forms – formal, informal, summative and formative;
- Motivate pupils and **actively involve them** wherever appropriate in review and personal target setting;
- Raise the expectations of success and celebrate a broad range of personal achievements; and
- Be proportionately manageable and always inform teacher's next steps and future planning.

5.3 Details of our Assessment Journey are outlined in Appendix 1.

6. Assessment Process

6.1 Assessment is fundamental to every pupil's educational process at Riverside School.

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

6.2 Formative assessments can create a positive learning environment where pupils if able can see the steps necessary for their own success. It enables teachers to set appropriate work at the level necessary for the children's continuing progress.

6.3 Formative assessment is a powerful way of raising pupils' achievement. It is based on the principle that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to the aim and how they can achieve the aim. Riverside will continue to prioritise Assessment for Learning (AfL) throughout the school.

6.4 A lead teacher will overall responsibility for AfL and will deliver training to the wider school and share best practice and resources to support our wide range of pupils.

6.5 Due to the wide variety of learning styles and needs, a 'One System for All' approach would not be beneficial or appropriate. Best practice is shared and strategies and resources made available for teachers to use as needed to support individual pupil progress.

6.6 Formative assessments are used to:

- Identify children's strengths and gaps in their skills/ knowledge;
- Identify the next steps for learning;
- Inform future planning;
- Enable appropriate strategies to be employed;
- Facilitate the setting of appropriate targets for the class, group and individual;
- Track the child's rate of progress;
- Facilitate an evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
- Inform future teaching and learning strategies; and
- Identify individuals and groups for specific intervention support.

6.7 Methods of formative assessment include the following:

- Question and answer sessions;
- Hot seating;
- Quizzes;
- Pupils being provided opportunities to follow-up teachers' marking with questions;
- Pupils are encouraged to take part in opportunities to mark their work (self-assessment), and that of their peers (peer-to-peer assessment);
- Where appropriate the learning objective of a lesson is explained at the start and is displayed or referred to throughout;
- Pupil PLPs are displayed in the classroom and where appropriate and meaningful pupils are supported to be aware of them and what they are focusing on;
- Class teacher informal assessments – holistic pupil observations during learning activities, pupil feedback, teacher questioning, weekly marking and ongoing class dialogue;
- Responses made to pupils during interventions such as Intensive Interaction and vice versa;
- Observations made via class iPods/ iPads using the 2 Build A profile' App, include next steps to inform future practice and support;
- Case studies documenting a pupil or a group of pupils' progress journey and next steps;
- Health professional input in target setting for individual pupils both within the class and when on a 1:1 basis;
- Formal annual review of every EHC Plan, ensuring consistency with our PLPs;

- Statutory assessment where appropriate;
- Daily records and regular summaries of learning activities to inform future planning;
- Engagement profiling is used where appropriate to enable focus pupils to move further up the Engagement Ladder, as well as show greater engagement in an increased range of activities.

6.8 Class teacher assessment of individual pupils' curriculum needs and their priority next steps will take place twice a year prior to writing the pupils PLPs. These take place in the form of structured conversations or via written templates completed by/ with the parent/ carer, key worker, multi-agency staff where appropriate and the pupil where able; and refer to –

- Current pupil progress and achievements;
- Areas of strength and areas for development in the coming term;
- The parent/ carer wishes for the pupil and any concerns addressed;
- Progress reports from our health profession colleagues where appropriate;
- The pupil's views, by attendance at annual reviews and PLP planning meetings; and
- The pupil's EHCP.

Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

6.9 Summative assessment is important for:

- Accurate information regarding a pupil's attainment and progress; and
- Informing both parents and teachers of a pupil's attainment and progress.

6.10 Summative assessments:

- Identify attainment through one-off tests at any given point in time;
- Record performance in a specific area on a specific date;
- Provide end of key stage test data against which the school will be judged;
- Ensure statutory assessments at the end of KS1 and KS2;
- Provide information about cohort areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future;

6.11 Methods of summative assessment include:

- Riverside Progress Scale and Unique Profiles (RPSs and UPs);
- Pupil Personal Profile folders, which include all of their observations;
- End of year exams;
- Projects and course work which contribute to a final grade; and
- External examinations such as the phonics screening tests.

6.12 In order to make a meaningful assessment of each pupil when they join Riverside, pupils will be baselined and the data will be submitted and input into SOLAR within their first half term. This will allow us to create a full and accurate picture from which we can measure and predict future progress.

6.13 The Stepping Stones document supports staff within the EYFS to robustly baseline their pupils in preparation for moving them onto the R Levels in year 1.

6.14 Moving on from baseline assessment, all pupils will be formally assessed on an ongoing basis. This will be underpinned by a rigorous half termly moderation process to ensure that the data within SOLAR is robust. Every pupil's RPS tracker is quality assured twice a year and closing the gap conversations take place to address any anomalies and plan next steps accordingly. SOLAR tracks our PLP and RPS assessment information.

Analysis of Assessment Information

6.15 Assessment data from SOLAR will be analysed at least twice a year and support will be put in place to ensure that pupils who are not making expected progress are supported to close gaps by the teacher. This will allow us to analyse, evaluate and benchmark the attainment and progress of our pupils against the attainment and progress of other pupils nationally of the same age, level of prior attainment and categories of Special Educational Need.

6.16 By providing a robust and reliable measure of progress and identifying potential areas of concern, SOLAR and our RPSs will allow us to take informed and appropriate actions to improve outcomes for pupils.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching Opportunities

6.17 Once the assessment information has been analysed and presented to the Leadership Team it will be discussed within phase meetings and one to one meetings with individual teachers and class teams. Decisions will be made in the meetings on how to move forward by enhancing teaching and learning opportunities for the coming term.

7. Moderation

7.1 Moderation is highly valued and conducted both in house and externally. We moderate our R Levels, PLPs, UPs and RPSs and have moderated RFL. We have started Engagement Profile moderation opportunities including moderating video samples.

7.2 Moderation is conducted regularly; once a half term teachers and members of the SLT on a specific focus. Teachers bring three pieces of evidence to support a pupil's level. Tables are set up to cover different levels and teachers split up accordingly.

7.3 'Critical Friend' objects of reference cards are used and teachers take turns to be the critical friend and challenge in a supportive way, as it was historically found that teachers find it hard to challenge evidence that their colleagues brought. As a group they then complete moderation sheets and attach the work evidence. We have updated our moderation forms to include 'main points from discussion' as we want the focus to be on rich discussion and next steps. Teachers also moderate as part of their individual planning groups once a term without SLT support. The moderation focuses on ensuring that teachers judgments of levels or language used to describe progress made is consistent e.g., one teacher's 'generalised' is the same as someone else's.

7.4 Feedback from internal moderation included teachers wanting to take this opportunity (a time when they were organised as colleagues supporting pupils working at particular levels) to share good practice and ideas for teaching strategies etc. We have now included this within the moderation meetings.

7.5 External moderation is conducted regularly with schools attached to the SLP. Riverside's Equivalency table is used for support as schools are now using different systems. This ensures moderation using age as a common language. Teachers have found these events really useful and this provides reassurance of the levels we are giving to our work as our moderating examples have always been agreed. The Glebe hosts these events currently and is building an ongoing moderation portfolio on CD's. We have contributed suggestions which have been included to the events e.g., our critical friend approach and including Early Cognitive Levels and Early Years to the moderation.

7.6 Within the SLP we have assigned leaders for different subjects to chair meetings, share best practice and further moderate.

7.7 Riverside takes part in progression guidance workshops (SLP) comparing data from 8 SEN schools to ensure we are confident with our expected progress, which we are. We are meeting in November to compare levels of progress made by pupils within the last school year.

7.8 Riverside liaises with schools who use SOLAR to moderate expected progress and flight paths when setting our own expected progress levels.

7.9 Local Authority Moderation is also used and has provided feedback stating that a range of meaningful ways to moderate is used and judgements were validated.

7.10 Borough briefings are attended regarding moderation and making returns to ensure that we are confident with deciding if we have any pupils eligible for particular assessments e.g., for the phonics screening, we check all age-appropriate pupils at two points throughout the year. We also check all our coding when making returns with the

borough to ensure we are acting consistently in accordance with the local authority advice.

7.11 Equals moderation events are also attended to support our Equals curriculum and assessment. During the summer term, teachers in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 are involved in formal teacher assessments as part of end of key stage assessments and LA moderation. We are passionate about moderation and do this extensively both inhouse and externally, this year we have begun to moderate our PLPs and UPs alongside our EHCP's to ensure they are consistently supportive of each other.

8. Early Years

8.1 Pupils within the Early Years access the same curriculum and assessment frameworks as those pupils in KS1 and 2. This is because our frameworks are truly personalised and every pupil's curriculum and framework stems from their unique PLPs. The Early Years Stepping Stones Framework and Assessment Information is also used to support pupils who are in our nursery provision on an assessment place. This information will then be used to support their transition to their next provision.

8.2 The Early Years Stepping Stones framework includes additional smaller steps of progress within the Prime Areas of learning which are considered to be of the most importance for our pupils.

8.3 The Prime Areas of learning include: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal and Social and Emotional Development. The levels of development progress through an alphabetical progress system from A1 to F3. By removing the term "months", profoundly personalised progress is shared with families without the worry that they are focussing on these terms and making age related comparisons with neuro-typical children.

All pupils are given a best fit developmental level for each of the Prime Areas of Learning, which is included within their Annual Review Paperwork. Both focussed and spontaneous observations are used to provide evidence to assess and complete the Stepping Stones Profile, and termly judgements are made using this information.

Focussed Observations

8.4 Focussed observations involve focussing on the pupil for approximately ten minutes and documenting what they do (this may involve written note taking or video recording). If appropriate, the adult will support play when conducting this observation. The focussed observation is then analysed and the next steps are identified and planned for over the following week.

Spontaneous Observations

April 2021

8.5 Short, spontaneous 'capture the moment' observations are made. Teachers and TA's document observations using class iPods/ iPads, using the 2 Simple Programme or use sticky notes to document what the pupil has done. These are then linked to the appropriate band and filed into the pupil's individual learning journal along with other observations.

9. Key Stages 1 and 2 (and EYFS)

9.1 Teachers use assessment for learning to provide on-going assessment, through the use of focussed marking and/ or observations of children's work, against learning objectives and success criteria. This information is then used to assess progress towards meeting learning targets learning targets and focuses, and to identify and set next steps for each child. These are within their RPSs, R Levels, PLPs and other personalised Assessment Frameworks they may be accessing.

9.2 Teachers use the pupils' PLPs to lead their pupils personalised curriculum, they also use the Equals curriculum to ensure a wide breadth of subject matter is covered and the R Levels may be used to help guide next priority areas and support teacher's knowledge and understanding when planning lessons and next steps. Pupils receive regular and timely verbal feedback on their progress in appropriate and motivating ways. PSs are used to track the progress made against focuses written in the PLPs and UPs are used to celebrate and share any progress made with families.

9.3 Annotated plans and planning notes made by teachers and other adults involved with each pupil record other important information about the progress of pupils in the class. Teachers and TAs document observations using class iPods/ iPads, which are then recorded on the 2 Simple programme and linked to the appropriate R Level or PLP focus and filed into the pupil's individual profile. These can be in the form of written observations, photographs or video clips. These are then printed out regularly and added to the pupil's 'Personal Profile' folders.

9.4 Teachers are responsible for analysing RPSs on SOLAR and print the tracking grids twice a year. They then annotate these and alert the Assessment Lead to any anomalies or if any Closing the Gap conversations are required. Interventions and strategies can then be planned and implemented. Termly pupil progress reviews are used to identify and analyse progress and set targets in reading, writing and maths for classes and cohorts.

10. Key Stage 3

10.1 As well as continuing the Equals Curriculum, PLPS, UPs, RPSs, R Levels and other personalised Assessment Frameworks, all Key Stage 3 pupils are also either on the Discovery or Explorer Arts Award. This monitors their participation in arts activities,

encourages an awareness of artists and their work, celebrates sharing their art skills and supports identification of what they enjoy and achieve in the arts.

10.2 Pupils complete the Arts Award throughout their time in the Key Stage 3 phase. Award coursework is submitted for moderation at the end of Key Stage 3. In some classes where appropriate tests My be used to identify progress and gaps in learning e.g., a spelling test.

11. Key Stages 4 and 5

11.1 The Equals 'Moving On' Curriculum is used to support our pupils to be involved in a stimulating and appropriate curriculum to best prepare them all for their future. It includes subjects within Vocational Studies, World Studies and Independent Living, offering a broad and balanced curriculum during their post-14 education.

11.2 The Equals Curriculum contains five separate one-year programmes of learning: Adventurer, Explorer, Traveller, Voyager and Globetrotter.

11.3 'Moving On' is not intended to be a prescriptive programme of work, but a tool to assist schools, colleges and day centres with their planning and accreditation.

11.4 An 'Options' approach is used to allow our pupils and their families to choose which subjects to take, thereby individualising their own learning programmes, whilst taking into account their motivations, passions and interests. This also helps to prepare those pupils who may transition to a college environment where they may take different subjects taught by different teachers in different settings.

11.5 AQA certificates will cover a range of further subjects to ensure that every single pupil is able to take part and leave with a CV of skills and accreditations. This will involve every pupil within the Key Stage. This means that every pupil where possible is enrolled in two option subjects; ranging from subjects such as Food Technology, Art Award, Design Technology, Switch Skills, Making Connections, Media Studies, ICT Advances Skills, Swimming, Physical Education, Rebound Therapy, Health and Wellbeing, Art, Home and Gardening and Performing/ Expressive Arts.

11.6 Pupils are able to work through the Unit Awards at their own pace and have their individual achievements recognised.

12. Monitoring and reporting

12.1 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the PECT Committee.

12.2 Reports to Governors will contain updates and analysis regarding Assessment at the school.

April 2021

12.3 Reporting to parents/ carers provides the opportunity for communication about their child's achievements, abilities and future targets. Twice yearly UPs are written and shared with families and where appropriate pupils in order to have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, motivation and self-esteem. Home Learning Plans are sent home twice a year to support families to understand the ways in which they can be supporting their child's learning and progress at home.

12.4 Opportunities are provided for two parent consultation events either in person, on the phone, via Zoom or email/ paper correspondence so that parents can discuss how well their child has settled and are able to be involved in the outcome/ focus setting process.

12.5 A yearly written report is produced which includes the results of the whole school RPSs and includes any statutory tests and assessments which may have taken place, and gives information relating to progress and attainment.

12.6 A DVD is produced by the class team for every pupil, showcasing their personal achievements and progress throughout the year in a truly meaningful way for the whole family to share.

12.7 Class teams complete the home school contact book daily, answering any questions that arise. Parents are also given the opportunity to discuss their child's progress further and such appointments are welcomed.

12.8 EHCP reviews take place once a year in order to review pupils' outcomes and progress and make up to date relevant changes as needed; these are written and reviewed in line with pupils PLPs to ensure that together these documents are consistently working towards achieving the same focuses and outcomes.

12.9 RPSs are completed twice a year for all pupils and are updated on SOLAR and added to all pupils 'Personal Profile' folders.

12.10 R Levels are used for professional dialogue/ moderation purposes – in order to do this teachers decide a best fit and say which R Level pupils are approximately working within. Once a year teacher's also make a best fit judgment in order to complete the R Level section within pupils' Annual Review paperwork.

13. Self-Evaluation

Discussion with Senior Leaders

13.1 Senior leaders discuss the following questions to assess the quality of assessment at school:

- How is assessment used to inform planning, ensure appropriate challenge, set targets and provide feedback?
- To what extent do teachers use assessment within the lesson (for example mini-whiteboards and questioning) to ensure that all pupils understand the lesson objectives?
- Are judgements based on the interpretation and evaluation of assessment information and evidence?
- Are strengths and weaknesses identified?
- What strategies do teaching assistants employ to support Assessment for Learning?
- Where appropriate, do pupils work independently, co-operate to solve problems, develop workplace skills and understand what they need to do to improve?
- What happens if pupils are absent or have long term ill health? What support is in place to help them?

Discussion with Pupils

13.2 Where pupils are able to cognitively understand and discuss their own learning, the following questions should be discussed with pupils to assess the quality of assessment at school:

- Do you know your targets/ focuses? What are they?
- How do you know when you have achieved your targets/ focuses?
- Who helps you to achieve your targets/ focuses? What sort of things do they do?
- What happens if you can't achieve your targets/ focuses?
- Tell me about this piece of work. What were you learning?
- Show me a piece of work that you are really proud of or makes you feel happy. Why?
- What do you think the school could do to make learning more enjoyable/ interesting for you?
- What do you find challenging/ difficult?

13.3 The above discussion points are not appropriate for many of our pupils. For them, time is taken to make meaningful relationships, to observe, to use our expert knowledge of individual pupils, to gain input from multi agency professionals and families in order to gain an accurate picture of the quality and impact of assessment at Riverside School for all pupils.

Appendix 1
Our Assessment Journey
Our curriculum and assessment journey has continued to be one of tailoring our personalised assessment systems to complement our very personalised curriculums, as such we wholeheartedly place our pupils Personalised earning Plans (PLPs) and their subsequent Unique Profiles (UPs) and Riverside Progress Scales (RPSs) at the centre. As such they form the basis of both our individual and whole school assessment framework.

We recognise that as we place the main emphasis on progress made against the PLPs then we need to ensure that the success made against the PLP focuses and fully captured in a rigorous and robust manner. In order to do this, we have introduced our Riverside Progress Scales (RPSs). The Riverside Progress Scale enables us to recognise progress when progress occurs, celebrate lateral progress, develop existing skills and enable us to see when pupils have acquired new skills within a level.
This deliberately moves us away from focusing on our R Levels. As we recognise that assessment led teaching can result in a lack of process-based teaching occurring. The Riverside Progress Scale celebrates professional judgment and views this as crucial and pedagogically sound. This sentiment echoes the assessment journey we have been on as a school.

We have continued to use the same format for our PLPs and UPs when presenting to families; they continue to cover all four areas of the SEND Code of Practice or Preparing for Adulthood Pathways and work alongside the EHCPs. We are confident that the areas are wide enough and give enough scope to ensure that no learning opportunities will be missed.

April 2021

Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) and Unique Profiles (UPs)
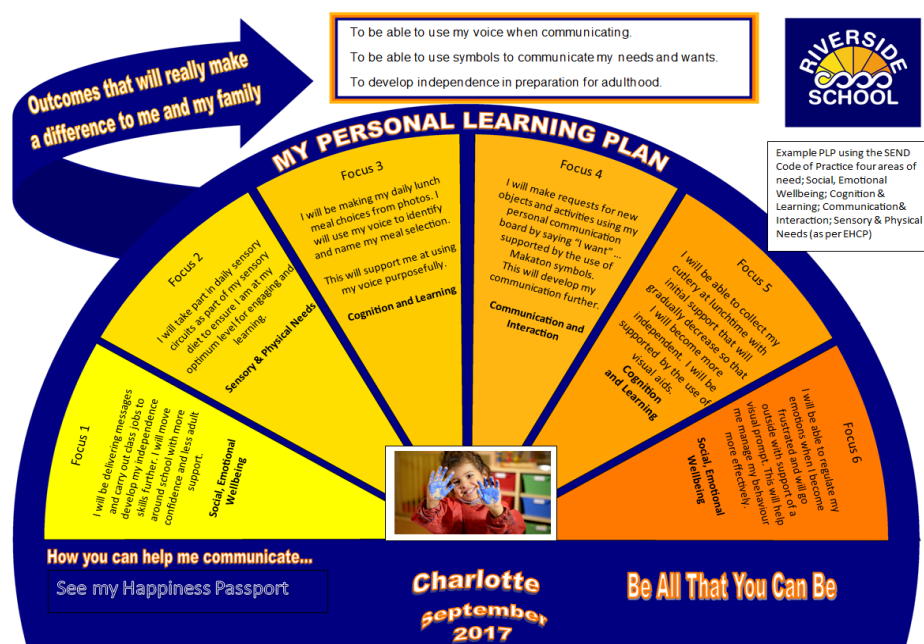
In November 2015, we launched our Personal Learning Plans (PLPs). These replaced what were previously Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We were passionate about focussing on the factors that really make a difference to our pupils' lives and the lives of our families. We were also fully committed to ensuring that the new PLPs reflected what Families felt were the most important factors at that point in time. We ensured that every pupil's class teacher included the key support worker in the process and also consulted with the therapists who know and work with each of them. The idea was that, together, we would identify the significant and meaningful outcomes and ensure that what we are teaching every day works towards achieving them. We pride ourselves on offering each pupil a personalised curriculum and we believe the PLPs fully support this holistic process.

The PLPs achieve this by outlining the three main outcomes that have been decided upon and then breaking these down into six key focus areas. These then enable the whole class team, therapists and families to support our pupils on their journey to achieve them. For example, one pupil's main outcome was to be able to walk down the aisle at her mother's wedding. The key focus areas were then based around ways to support this, including lots of physical and gross motor skills activities. They also featured creative ways to include numeracy and literacy focuses, such as 'to listen to instructions as we play hide and seek with the class bear and count the steps I take to find him'.

We wanted to respond to our teachers' requests to have the time to work on the things that really matter and we also wanted to be able to show the progress our pupils are making in all these personalised and hugely important areas.

April 2021

Each pupil receives two PLPs each academic year, one written in September and one written in March. These are reviewed at two points of the year, the first being in February and the second in July.

As part of the SEND Reforms, the new Education, Health and Care Plans were designed to look at outcomes as each pupil progresses through school and beyond. EHC Plans have replaced statements of special educational needs. They include special educational provision, health provision and social care provision.

We are confident that our PLPs support this process and ensure that every pupil has every opportunity to fulfil their potential and Be All That They Can Be. Following the current national campaign to raise the profile of the Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and reflecting the fact that all of our pupils have an EHCP, we have ensured that all PLP focuses fully complement all EHCP outcomes. We signpost our PLP focuses to ensure that each of the four areas of the SEND Code of Practice are referenced within our PLPs, thus ensuring consistency and best practice.

The four areas are:

1. Cognition and Learning
2. Communication and Interaction
3. Sensory & Physical Needs
4. Social, Emotional Wellbeing

Following the raised profile of the outcomes included in the London Borough of Bromley's 'Pathways for Preparing for Adulthood', we also decided that it would be beneficial to include these outcomes on all PLPs for pupils in Key Stage 4/5 e.g., Years 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14. These are pathways that fully complement our Key Stages 4/5 Moving On Curriculum.

The four areas are:

1. Employment or Participation (whichever is most appropriate for the individual pupil)
2. Independent Living
3. Community Inclusions
4. Health Pathway

We continue to highly value family contributions towards the PLPs. They are written alongside the EHCPs, ensuring the outcomes within the EHCPs and complement the focuses and outcomes within the PLPs and vice versa. We continue to be committed to ensuring these two documents support each other.

To complement our PLPs, we produced our Unique Profiles (UPs). We wanted to show an overview of all the different elements which make up our pupils personalised and truly

holistic curriculum. We wanted to share these with families and other professionals on one clear page and celebrate the progress that our pupils make in each of these areas.

We wanted to show the progress our pupils make in all areas of their school life, for example rebound therapy, swimming, wellbeing, eye gaze, skills for life, etc. One pupil's school day will look completely different to another pupil in the same class according to their individual needs, interests and learning preferences, and the assessment tools are therefore different for each pupil. We are very proud of the diversity within our curriculum and our assessment tools used to reflect this. By doing so, we are now in a position to evidence the outstanding progress that our pupils make.

We looked at curriculums at a number of other specialist schools and researched ways to document holistic progress. By starting this process early in the aftermath of 'Life without Levels', we embraced the national drive for schools to do what is right for their pupils. We drew upon the work of Penny Lacey and used her notion of 'Scruffy Targets' to guide our thinking and development of our new systems. This is an alternative approach to the well-established targets which we felt were no longer always the most appropriate for our pupils and gave teachers the confidence and autonomy to write outcomes that were challenging, meaningful and appropriate.

Our achievement and assessment journey focused on tailoring our personalised assessment systems to complement our personalised curriculums, as such we committed to fully ensuring that our pupils PLPs and their subsequent UPs be considered the main indicators of successful progress for our pupils both individually and to inform our whole school assessment information. We introduced our RPSs to help us to document our ipsative assessment even further and to allow us to see the necessary whole school overview in order to see trends and patterns as well as being able to focus and highlight individual pupils' progress stories.

The UPs are completed at two key points in the year; February and July. They document the progress made within each PLP focus area as well as capturing a further 6 key achievements made within the areas of 'Expressive Arts', 'Engagement', 'Skills for Life', 'School Value', 'Wellbeing' and a 'Home Achievement'.

My Unique Profile

Name: Date: March 2019

Be All That You Can Be

My PLP Progress

Focus 1
I can confidently use PECS to express my choices when offered a choice of up to 6 familiar objects or 10 different colours in both group and 1:1 activities and show strong preferences for my favorite things.
Generalised

Focus 2
I can engage in meaningful intensive interaction with familiar adults when in a calm and quiet environment and enjoy taking part in familiar 'Identiplay' activities such as flour splats or building blocks.
Developing

Focus 3
I can walk to the toilet independently when shown a toilet visual accompanied by a verbal instruction and enjoy attempting to pull my trousers up and down, selecting a new pad independently and placing my pad in the bin.
Maintained

Focus 4
I can drink from my 'sippy cup' when the lid has been removed with adult support/modelling and encouragement and show great persistence when completing TEACCH tasks such as coloured peg matching or pencil control.
Emerging

Focus 5
I can participate in familiar activities such as TAC-PAC, mark-making and story time with increasing independence and enjoy carrying out simple, familiar asks to show my sense of autonomy.
Developing

Focus 6
I can take part in structured adult-led activities and understand the verbal instruction "Charlie's turn". With adult encouragement I can participate in a range of sensory activities and enjoy doing these as independently as possible.
Developing

My 6 Key Achievements

Expressive Arts:
I can confidently participate in whole class performances in the PAH.

Emerging – I can do this with a high level of support; Physical, visual, spoken.
Developing – I can do this with minimal support.
Maintained – I can repeatedly do this and remember it after a break
Generalised – I can do this in different settings and with different people

Wellbeing:
I can regulate my emotions by seeking comfort from familiar adults.

School Value: Trust
I can trust familiar adults in Caterpillars class and have built strong, meaningful relationships with them.

Engagement:
I can engage enthusiastically for sustained periods of time during my favorite activities eg painting or shaving foam splats.

Skills for Life:
I can confidently vocalise my preferences and make choices.

Home Achievements:

Aspiration Resilience Creativity Humility Integrity Trust Enthusiasm Courage Teamwork

In documenting the progress made we were conscious that in the past we had found it challenging to show the progress made by our pupils working at early cognitive levels as language around targets have suggested 'they can' or 'they can't'. We wanted to take into account meaningful factors for deep learning such as prompting that may be needed or the level of sustainability.

The gradients we developed and used within our UPs showed whether pupils could use their new skill independently, with different levels of support, if they can remember it over time and if they can generalise the skill and use it in different contexts or with different people. We believed this was far more meaningful for our pupils and their families and gave us real scope to teach new skills at a more profound level, giving us the confidence to take the time needed. Our UPs enabled us to celebrate progress made in relation to four tiers by using the scale below:

- **Emerging** – I can do this with a high level of support; physical, visual, spoken
- **Developing** – I can do this with minimal support
- **Maintained –** I can repeatedly do this and remember it after a break
- **Generalised –** I can do this in different settings and with different people

The above key was successful to a point but we began to realise that we needed more sophistication in the system. Feedback and reflection about our scale indicated that it was

now too simplistic for the rates of progress and detail or achievement that we wanted to show. As we moved away from assessing the R Levels as an indicator of progress, we needed to make sure that we had a system in place which enabled us to be more robust and confident with both the focuses that are written within the PLPs and the way in which we assess and evidence the progress made against them, within the UPs.

As the UPs were now our main assessment, we wanted to ensure that they enabled us to fully track progress within the PLPs, to identify any trends and introduce interventions as needed within both the 'SEND Code of Practice' areas and 'The Preparing for Adulthood Pathways'.

As such we further developed our gradients used within the UPs and introduced the '**Riverside Progress Scale'** (RPS) to more robustly assess the development of the four aspects of skill on a four-point scale. The four aspects are: **Independence, Fluency, Maintenance and Generalisation.**

See the below example of the '**Riverside Progress Scale'.**

The Riverside Progress Scale enables us to:

- Use a common vocabulary for observation and recording;
- Provide a framework for recording progress against skills which are not easily being broken down into smaller and smaller steps;
- Provide a framework for recognising progress where the same skills are being practiced and refined over time;
- Provide a framework for evaluating qualitative differences in performance as well as quantitative differences; and

April 2021

- Celebrate the various strengths and needs which our pupils have in different aspects of skill development, for example, a pupil's ability to maintain skills in relation to their ability to refine them or to work without support.

The four aspects which are taken to characterise skill development are not hierarchical but may develop concurrently, namely:
- **Independence –** pupils progress from being wholly dependent on support towards being completely independent of support.
- **Fluency –** performance progresses from being hesitant and approximate towards being consistent and reliable.
- **Maintenance –** performance progresses from being inconsistent towards being consistent and reliable.
- **Generalisation –** progress is from practising a skill in a single context towards practising it across a range of settings with different people and materials.

Definition of Terms:

Independence
Independence is about increasing independence.
There is progression from being able to perform a task only with maximum support to being able to complete the task independently. Types of support may include:
- Physical help
- Spoken help
- Gestural help

Fluency
Fluency is about combining speed and accuracy.
For example:
- Hitting a switch with increasing speed and/ or accuracy
- Signing with greater accuracy and fluency
- Speaking – producing speech sounds with increasing clarity
- Writing – formatting shapes with increasing control

Maintenance
Maintenance is about becoming more consistent over time.
For example:
- An isolated response or action is repeated and repetitions become more consistent and reliable

Generalisation
Generalisation is about performing in different settings with different people.
Skills which have been learnt in one context are applied in an increasing range of contexts. For example:
- Using a communication aid to ask for a drink in a café
- Approaching staff to ask for assistance in the local college

These four aspects provide a common language with which to frame and articulate judgements, since they offer both a framework for assessing pupil progress and a set of reminders for teachers. For example, independence prompts the teacher to ask 'am I stepping back enough or am I providing too much support here?' Fluency asks 'am I ensuring that this skill is as good as it can be or am I pushing the pace and rushing on to next stage too quickly?' Maintenance asks 'am I providing sufficient repetition for this learning to become truly embedded and, so to speak, second nature?'. Finally, generalisation is a reminder to teachers to provide a range of contexts in which the pupil can initiate and practice a learned skill.

In order to ensure consistency of judgements we have provided each of the four aspects with a rating scale and descriptors, adapted from those used in MAPP.

As in MAPP, the criteria for success will vary from pupil to pupil and from focus to focus. There is no expectation that a value of '10' should be recorded for each aspect before a focus is judged to have been achieved. This type of assessment and how we are adapting and using it, is an ipsative form of assessment (that is, it compares a pupils' present attainment with their own prior attainment, how they have progressed from their starting point). We find it useful here to consider the analogy of going to the gym; when you are working out, you are trying to beat your personal best and improve upon your fitness, not that of the person working out next to you.

This may seem confusing given that the Riverside Progress Scale will include numbers, but this numbering is simply a matter of convenience. The rating scale could just as effectively be labelled 'a' to 'j' as '1' to '10' and the same representation would result. The importance of this data recording is that it gives a visual profile of progress, of relative strengths (between focuses set and between aspects of learning) and enables us to critically evaluate progress so that assessment can be fed back into planning, teaching and learning. By doing this we will be in a better position to critically evaluate progress made amongst individual pupils and between groups of pupils if needed. This enables us to further identify trends and plan next steps and interventions as necessary. The data will allow us to see trends within the 4 areas, for example if 'generalisation' was consistently gaining a lower score, could that indicate that further support needs to be given in that area before moving on to a next step?

In order to make meaningful assessments of each pupil, pupils will be baselined, using the Riverside Progress Scale. This will allow us to create a full and accurate picture from which we can measure and predict future progress and to inform our next steps. There will be clear recommendations and descriptors for the Riverside Progress Scale to help teachers make these judgements.

For each PLP focus there will be a baseline made against each of the below areas:

Independence Scale – from dependent to independent (1-10)

Fluency Scale – from approximate to accurate (1-10)

Maintenance Scale – from inconsistent to consistent (1-10)

Generalisation Scale – from single context to many contexts (1-10)

Teachers will make an informed judgement about when enough progress has been made before moving on to a new focus area. One pupils 'achieved' will be different from another pupil's 'achieved'. One pupil may have a baseline of 2 and move up to the scale to a 4 and that may be deemed progress enough to say they have achieved that focus area to the best of their ability. Another pupil may start at a 3 and progress to a 9 or a 10. This is where teacher judgement is essential and the process relies upon the teacher knowing the pupil exceptionally well and being able to justify why a 4 would be classed as an 'achieved' for that pupil.

The How?

Teachers write their PLPs. For each focus written (6 focuses for each pupil), a judgement will be made about the pupil's baseline e.g., their starting point in relation to each of the four areas:

Independence, fluency, maintenance and generalisation

For example:

Focus 1 – Communication and Interaction – 'Amy will express a preference for an activity or an object, clearly showing what she wants to do'.
Independence – 2, Fluency – 2, Maintenance – 1, Generalisation – 1.
Once the baseline has been determined, teachers then use their professional judgement to predict the rate of progress that will be made in each of the four areas by March or July, much the same as when a prediction was made and entered on SOLAR.
Class teams record and gather evidence using their iPods/ iPads; using the software '2Build a Profile'.
In February and July before the UPs are written, teachers review their evidence and use their professional knowledge and judgement to make a final statement of progress made against each of the four areas for each of their pupils.
This information is then to be submitted to line leaders for data analysis, moderation and reporting.
UPs go home in February and July to celebrate with families all progress that has been made.

Observations and Recording Evidence
It is vital that good quality ongoing observations are kept and referred to in order to justify judgements about pupil progress. The significance of this type of assessment is that

focuses can be worked towards and teaching delivered in a truly holistic and personalised way. These observations are focused on the individual learning intentions e.g., focus areas written with the PLPs and we also encourage the recording of unanticipated responses and outcomes; wow moments, which can feed into next steps and the six summative achievements within the UPs.

Twice a year at the review mark; February and July, teachers update the assessment sheets with all progress made. They also indicate whether the focus has been achieved, is to be continued or is to be discontinued. Again, this is not determined by a number scale but teacher judgement and detailed knowledge of the pupil.

The question then arises, 'How do we know that the progress demonstrated is good progress?'
This question cannot be answered through benchmarking since as previously explained these assessment results are ipsative and these is no benchmarking or comparative data we can use to make meaningful comparisons. We confidently believe that this is not a limitation or a negative but a reflection of the nature of the way our pupils learn and an indicator of how well our teachers know their pupils. It is their knowledge and professional judgement which is at the heart of this assessment. It is also then our teachers who will be held accountable in terms of this. As such we continue to ensure supportive and robust Quality Assurance measures through teacher PLPs, weekly line leader meetings, weekly drop ins, moderation meetings, quality assurance of PLPs and UPs etc.

Line leader conversations reflect the robustness of this process and teachers will be able to explain and justify why a '4' is a '4', and why that constitutes good progress for an individual pupil. We absolutely believe that the knowledge and outstanding practice held within our teaching body puts us in a perfectly placed position to be able to confidently say how our pupils are achieving and what their next steps should be. We believe this supersedes any previous notion of a P or R Level as an indicator of success and progress both at an individual and whole school level.

2Build a Profile
We now have the most effective assessment tools and systems in place to capture and evidence the diverse ways in which our pupils achieve and succeed. We believe by using the iPods/ iPads and the '2Build a Profile' app we are best placed to capture all the evidence we need to document the progress of our pupils.

'2Build a Profile' allows us to make 'links' to multiple areas of learning. Enabling us to cross reference and use evidence more smartly than before; for example, if 'Girls Club' was context for learning, you could also link in a piece of evidence to 'cognition and learning' and/ or 'Social and Emotional wellbeing'. This would help us analyse trends further, show how much is being evidenced and see how progress is being made within different areas/ times/ contexts for learning. This supports a process-based system culture for staff, makes tracking and documenting pupil learning more meaningful and allows class teams and leaders to instantly go back and reflect on pupils' learning.

April 2021

Linking like this allows us to give more people access and the ability to contribute to a pupil's learning journey such as therapists, members of the expressive arts team, family members, and they could contribute towards assessment by documenting or linking progress they have also seen being made.

Virtual Post-it Note

Recording Evidence 'On-the-go'

Class teams make observations by taking a picture or recording and writing an observation note to go with it, they then tag which PLP focus area it links to and any other Riverside Approaches.

The expectation for observations is that for each pupil at least one observation should be made per day and by the end of the week there should be evidence of an observation made for each PLP focus area.

These observations are printed out and added to each pupil's 'Personal Profile' Folder. The folders are divided into sections to enable clear progression to easily be seen.

There is a section for each Area of Need:
1. Cognition and Learning
2. Communication and Learning
3. Sensory and Physical Needs
4. Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Or Preparing for Adulthood Pathway:
1. 'Employment' or 'Participation' (whichever is most appropriate for the individual pupil)
2. Independent Living
3. Community Inclusions
4. Health Pathway

Any observations and evidence linked to any of these areas are then filed in the correct section of the pupil's 'Personal Profile' folder. The evidence in these folders will contribute towards the judgements made within each pupil's RPS and subsequently documented in the UP. There is also a useful coverage overview on the 2Build a Profile app, which allows the class team to see how many observations they have made towards each focus area. This helps to highlight any gaps and prompt teams to focus on areas they may be lacking

evidence in.

R Levels
In order to create our 'R Levels' we consulted with our colleagues at SOLAR and formed links with Wilson Stuart School in Birmingham, a special school with a similar cohort of pupils to Riverside. Wilson Stewart was one of the first schools to devise and develop their own set of descriptors. We used these levels as our starting point and, as a leadership assessment team in consultation with our teachers, we personalised these, re-writing many of them and making them appropriate for our pupils.

Notably we devised a set of early cognitive level descriptors (R1i-R3ii) to ensure we were capturing all the progress for pupils working at these early levels. We also separated and personalised speaking and listening level descriptors to ensure we were supporting our pupils with 'spiky' profiles in these areas as Wilson Stuart did not distinguish between two strands.

All our pupils are now working on R Levels, making it easier to analyse and compare our data sets across the school. R Levels range from R1i to R18 and can be compared with other schools nationally using different systems by referencing our pupils' age equivalency.

We joined a Specialist Learning Partnership of senior leaders with other local special schools to analyse, benchmark and moderate assessment across our schools in order to ensure we are addressing the issue of national benchmarking in this time of change. As previous progression guidance for target setting was no longer suitable, we worked with schools from the Specialist Learning Partnership to compare and share best practice in setting appropriate and challenging predictions.

We have now deliberately moved away from using SMART Targets or R Levels as our main form of assessment. We recognise that that type of assessment led teaching could result in teachers wearing blinkers e.g., teachers only looking for that one R Level strand to work towards and put on SOLAR. Whereas our Riverside Progress Scale facilitates the assessment of process based learning. It recognises progress when progress occurs. It celebrates lateral progress; developing existing skills and acquiring new skills within a level. The Riverside Progress Scale celebrates professional judgement and views this as crucial and pedagogically sound. This sentiment echoes the assessment journey we have been on as a school. Teachers now use R Levels to refer to as needed and to support their pedagogy and understanding. We are using them as they were intended; as descriptors rather than prescriptors.