

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL



Assessment Policy

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS

RESPONSIBLE PERSON - HEADTEACHER

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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.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure a profoundly personalised assessment toolkit has been created for every pupil across the school, to fully support their highly personalised 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 and quality assuring assessment for learning and classroom practice.
- Ensure that teaching and assessment is appropriately different 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.
- Ensure there is a focus on sequencing and evidencing a progressive curriculum for each pupil.
- 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 continue to share our Assessment Systems.
- To continue to reflect on our Assessment journey and make changes as needed.

2. Context and Philosophy

At Riverside School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and progressive curriculum personalised 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.

Our assessment framework stems from Government Policy to move away from standardised assessment levels 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.

At Riverside School we embraced this opportunity and are proud to have developed and formulated our own holistic and personalised 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 and to allow us to see the necessary whole school overview in order to identify any trends and enable us to plan next steps accordingly. The PRSs also provide us with a way of evidencing and highlighting individual pupil progress stories (see appendix 1 for an example RPS).

Our curriculum and assessment framework has been designed to provide both continuity and progression as our pupils travel through the four age-related phases of our school. Each phase has its own identity, running alongside the different pathways that provide the golden thread that weaves each pupil's educational journey together.

We have introduced five distinct pathways; Foundation pathway, Blue Sensory Pathway, Blue Active Pathway, Orange Pathway and Yellow Pathway. Our pathway model ensures that each pupil is provided with a meaningful and appropriate curriculum offer tailored to their individual needs and learning style.



In addition to our pupil's curriculums being personalised and driven by their individual PLPs, we use our pathways to support us to best group our pupils and classes in order to most effectively plan lessons, activities, experiences and social opportunities best suited to their needs and levels. These are based on their learning styles, communication partner stage, sensory and regulation needs and the approximate R Levels that pupils are working on and towards (see appendix 2 for further information).

Our curriculum framework is broad and balanced, as well as highly concentrated and

focussed where it draws upon existing frameworks such as Development Matters, Equals schemes of work, The Engagement Areas, SCERTS, the Moving On Curriculum and the Interoception Curriculum. It is designed to prepare our pupils for life outside and beyond Riverside School, extending their cultural capital and widening their worlds. It is also designed to fully support our mission: to transform our children's lives and the lives of their families.

We have continued to prioritise the five areas of Engagement because it is the right thing to do. It is statutory for schools to use the Engagement Areas 'Anticipation, Exploration, Initiation, Persistence, and Realisation'; and report on which KS1 and KS2 pupils working at P4 and below are being assessed using them. We have decided we will be using the Engagement Areas for all pupils (all ages) across the Blue and Orange Pathways and within the Early Years, as we feel this is the most meaningful thing for our pupils and staff (see section 14 and appendix 2 for further engagement information).

In line with our Belonging commitment, we closely examine pupil progress with a link to pupils' protected characteristics e.g., ethnicity, gender, pupil premium (see appendix 2 for examples).

"Personalising learning demands that schools transform their response to the learner from the largely standardised to the highly personalised" – Hargreaves 2009. We are proud of the systems we have developed, and are confident that they fully support this notion.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors

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

The Assessment and Achievement Governor will regularly liaise with the Assessment Lead, Deputy Headteacher Charlotte Downs and visit the school to monitor pupil progress. When visiting, the 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 focused on;
- Document these visits and identify any areas requiring improvement of further

- attention; and
- Report their findings to the PECT Committee.

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

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 and deliver robust quality assurance during line lead meetings, drop ins, learning walks etc.;
- Leading training, snapshots, learning lounges and moderations to support professional development and deeper learning;
- Ensure that every pupil is accessing the right assessment frameworks/ tools, linked to Pathways e.g., Engagement Areas for our Blue Sensory and Blue Active Pathways; and
- Maintain external links with other SEN schools to ensure that robust moderation takes place and to share best practice.

The role of Phase Leaders and Pathway Leads

Leaders provide ongoing support and share knowledge with the wider staff team. They complete 'drop ins' 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 personalised curriculums and to capture assessment for learning. We have clearly designated responsibility for the management of leadership of assessments; we believe this fully supports the quality of teaching and learning.

Phase and Pathway Leaders will:

- Provide professional advice and development to the teaching and support staff via class drop ins. 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;
- Cascade relevant training and offer expert support to the wider school as needed; and
- Scrutinising of Planning and Schemes of Work with sequencing and progression in

mind.

All of the above training and support will be linked to pupil's Pathways and Phases, ensuring a more focussed and targeted approach, appropriate to pupil's needs.

The role of Teachers

Teachers understand the importance of Assessment and Learning and this is reflected in our pupils' progress.

Teachers will:

- Take part in relevant training, focused meetings, working parties, workshops and seek support from established teachers, Pathway Leads and members of the SLT;
- Respond to advice given in the drop in template which members of the SLT and Pathway Leads use to offer support, guidance, reflections and robust challenge;
- Take part in appropriate pilot groups and whole school meetings to help shape and inform (these may be linked to Pathways);
- 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 leaders and Pathway leads;
- Attend their weekly meetings and reflect on their drop ins and any next steps given;
- Review and evaluate their planning regularly, ensuring sequencing, progression and 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 Pathway 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 Review paperwork and chair pupils' EHCP reviews, 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 ongoing 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;
 - Share next steps with TA's in order for them to fully support pupil progress;
 - Ensure Pupils Unique Profiles (UPs) reflect each pupil's Pathway; and
 - Ensure the Engagement Profile and Riverside Templates are used to support pupils in our Blue Pathways.

The role of Teaching Assistants

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. TAs are based within one of our four Pathways; Blue Sensory, Blue Active, Orange or Yellow Pathway.

Teaching Assistants will:

- Be involved in prior planning and preparation, and possess expert knowledge of the needs of individual pupils. This will support individual pupils or particular groups depending on the needs of the Pathway, class and lesson;
- Take part in all areas of assessment for the class in which they are assigned. They record evidence and track progress using iPads. iPads which contain their class Pupils' Personal Profiles;
- Be responsible for individual pupils Happiness Passports within their classes, ensuring these valuable and highly personalised documents are up to date, truly reflective and being used consistently by all professionals who offer support. They ensure the HP's are regularly shared with home and responsible for ensuring that any resources or interventions included within the HP are in place and the pupils are accessing and benefiting from them;
- Attend all relevant training opportunities including regular before and after school trainings and workshops linked to their Pathways. Information is also cascaded to them via their teachers, SLT and Pathway Leads; and
- Ensure resources and supports 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 within Pathways and or Phases in order to facilitate the sharing of good practice.

The role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- Be listened to and given the time, opportunity and resources needed to make their personal responses and contributions;
- Be supported to be aware of and part of their own learning journey and their priority next steps e.g., will have an overview of their PLP, UP and HP in an appropriate and meaningful way;
- Take part in meaningful and appropriate celebrations;
- Receive personalised praise, recognition and assemblies/ stars of the week, stickers, rewards etc., as appropriate to their age and stage, these will be different between Phases and Pathways;
- Take part in the leaver's survey and EHCP process where appropriate;
- Take part in self-assessment and peer assessment opportunities as appropriate;
- Take part in meaningful pupil voice opportunities as appropriate; via the Campaigners and similar Pathway appropriate initiatives;
- Feed into conversations and decisions around Community and Careers opportunities and experiences in a meaningful and appropriate way; and
- Be supported to *Be All That They Can Be*.

The role of the Parents/ Carers

Parents/ carer 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 identify predictions;
- Ensures that information is detailed, specific, personalised and understandable;
- Shares the progress their children are making and suggests things to support further progress at home, 'PLPs', 'Home Learning Plans', WOWs and UPs. Families contribute to both the PLPs and UPs;
- Be aware of and understand which Pathway, SCERTS Communication stage and R levels their child is working at/ towards; and
- Will understand how our internal assessment systems and information feed into and compliment the EHCP process.

4. External Monitoring

Charlotte Downs, Deputy Headteacher scrutinises 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.

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, the SLP use the language of age to make comparisons as they are using a selection of different assessment levels.

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

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

We use Little Wandle as our Reading Scheme throughout the school and Pathways, we are regularly visited to ensure high standards are maintained. We share our best practice and offer regular staff training throughout the year.

We share many of our assessment strategies and offer training to others, particularly on the Engagement Areas; as part of borough moderations, to ARPs, to external colleagues, to university students and those on teaching apprenticeship models etc.

5. Key Principles

Assessment is the judgment 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.

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 stakeholders;
- Embrace and complement 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 teachers next steps, sequencing and future planning.

Details of our Assessment Journey are outlined in Appendix 1.

6. Assessment Process

Meaningful assessment is fundamental to every pupil's educational process at Riverside School.

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

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.

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 creating opportunities that are meaningful to each pathway and cohort of learner.

All leaders are responsible for AfL and will deliver training to the staff that they line lead, sharing best practice and resources to support our wide range of pupils, in each Pathway.

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

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.

Methods of formative assessment include the following:

- Question and answer sessions;
- Hot seating;

- Quizzes;
- Pupils being given 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 'Evidence Me' 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/ therapist input in target setting for individual pupils both within the class and when on a 1:1 basis;
- Formal annual review of every EHCP, ensuring consistency with our PLPs;
- Statutory assessment where appropriate;
- Daily records and regular summaries of learning activities to inform future planning; and
- The five Engagement Areas are prioritised and used to support the Blue Pathways, to enable focus pupils to further increase their engagement levels, as well as to show greater engagement in an increased range of activities.

Class teacher assessment of individual pupils' curriculum needs and their priority next steps will take place twice a year prior to writing the pupil's 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, including the UP and Progress Report;
- Areas of strength and areas for development in the coming terms;
- The parent/ carer wishes for the pupil and any concerns addressed;
- Progress reports from our health professional/ therapy colleagues where appropriate;
- The pupil's views, by attendance at annual reviews and PLP planning meetings; and
- The pupil's ENCP.

Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

Summative assessment is important for:

- Accurate information regarding a pupil's attainment and progress; and

- Informing both parents/ carers and teachers of a pupil's attainment and progress.

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 are completed;
- Ensure Phonics Screening, SATS and Multiplication Tables Checks are completed if and where appropriate; ensuring all pupils have been assessed and support given in order for pupils to access and complete as appropriate; and
- Provide information about Pathway/ Phase/ Site areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future.

Methods of summative assessment include:

- Riverside Progress Scale and Unique Profiles (RPLs and UPs);
- Pupil 'Personal Progress Profile' folders, which include all of their observations;
- End of year exams;
- Projects and course work which contribute to a final grade;
- External examinations such as the Phonics Screening Tests; and
- Pupil Progress Report and EHCP Reviews.

In order to make a meaningful assessment of each pupil when they join Riverside School, 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.

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 RPS data stored 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 supports us to track our PLP and RPS assessment information.

Analysis of Assessment Information

Our RPS assessment data collated 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.

By providing a robust and reliable measure of progress and identifying potential areas of concern our RPSs will allow us to take informed and appropriate actions to improve

outcomes for pupils.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching Opportunities

Once the assessment information has been analysed and presented to the Leadership Team it will be discussed within Phase and/ or Pathway 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

Moderation is highly valued and conducted both in house and externally. We moderate our R Levels, PLPs, UPs and RPSs and have monitored RFL. We have included regular Engagement Area moderation opportunities including moderating video samples.

Moderation is conducted regularly; at least once per half term teachers and members of the SLT concentrate on a specific focus. Teachers bring pieces of evidence to support a pupil's level and/ or their professional judgments in an area.

'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., is one teacher's 'generalised' the same as someone else's?

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.

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 School hosts these events currently and is building an ongoing moderation portfolio on CD's. We have contributed suggestions which have been included in the events e.g., our critical friend approach and including Early Cognitive Levels and Early Years to the moderation.

Within the SLP we have assigned leaders for different subjects to chair meetings, share

best practice and further moderate.

Riverside takes part in progression guidance workshops (SLP) comparing data from other SEN schools to ensure we are confident with our expected progress, which we are.

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

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

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 our coding when making returns with the borough to ensure we are acting consistently in accordance with the local authority advice.

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 EHCPs to ensure they are consistently supportive of each other.

8. Early Years and Foundation Pathway

We work with our families to personalise our pupils' curriculums to ensure that they are unique and truly meaningful to them. Pupil curriculums use their EHCPs as the central focus and, throughout the year, each pupil will receive two Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs), which break EHCP outcomes into smaller and more focused areas of learning. Staff will use the first term to observe and build relationships with pupils, so that their Happiness Passport can be a true reflection of who they are and how best to support them.

We follow the Statutory Early Years Framework and Development Matters, meaning that every child will access learning that includes Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These areas of the curriculum are all met through structured and unstructured learning time. Most importantly, we know the importance of giving all of our pupils a meaningful and effective communication method. Therefore, Communication and Language activities are weaved into all areas of our curriculum and Total Communication methods are used to support our pupils in finding their voice. This can be through AACs, vocalisations, gestures, signing, PECS, communication books and many other ways. We pride ourselves on being able to adapt all seven areas of the Early Years Curriculum to meet our pupils' personalised needs and learning styles.

Our curriculum is supported by The Engagement Model and the 5 areas of engagement, which are:

- **Exploration** – Identifying pupil interests to increase motivation.
- **Realisation** – Observing how a pupil reacts to new stimulus.
- **Anticipation** – Developing pupil understanding of cause and effect.
- **Persistence** – Maintaining an activity long enough to achieve a desired outcome.
- **Initiation** – Developing a pupil independence.

Embedding these 5 areas within our curriculum allows our teachers to make learning truly irresistible, and gives our pupil the skills that they need to be curious about the world around them.

Our pupils have many opportunities to learn through play in the Early Years and our teachers ensure that play is a key Part of the curriculum. Pupils are immersed in topic-based learning by accessing activities that meet all seven areas of the curriculum during free-flow learning time. Pupils are the leaders of their own learning and have the opportunity to familiarise and master the different activities available to them. Our Early Years team use the '**Assess, Plan, Do, Review**' cycle, to adapt activities based on our pupils' responses.

Our staff have access to professional development opportunities linked to Early Years research and theories. To support pupils with their play skills, we have ensured that Schema Play is at the heart of our play curriculum. **Schema Play** identifies 9 schemas that children may display when they are exploring the world around them. The schemas are:

- Trajectory
- Transporting
- Rotational
- Enclosing
- Enveloping
- Orientation
- Connecting
- Transforming
- Positioning

The Early Years team's in-depth knowledge of Schema Play allows them to identify pupils' dominant play schemas and unique lines of enquiry. Staff then use this knowledge to seed the environment around them and plan engaging and motivating learning activities during free-flow and structured learning time.

Our staff understand the importance of high-quality play interactions, and in order to support our pupils' play skills we incorporate the ShREC model:

HIGH QUALITY PLAY INTERACTIONS AT RIVERSIDE



This model enables supporting adults to share pupil's play opportunities and match their responses based on their SCERTS partner stage. This means that pupils are always the leaders of their play and supporting adults are skilled in knowing when and how to interact with them in meaningful ways, extending their communication and reciprocal play skills.

Accessing the Early Years Curriculum at Riverside School means that every pupil is given the solid foundation in their first years at school to build upon their interests and develop secure attachment and positive relationships with their peers and supporting adults.

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 focused and spontaneous observations are used to provide evidence and assessment judgements are made using this information.

Focused Observations

Focused observations involve focusing on the pupil 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 focused observation is then analysed and the next steps are identified and planned for over the following week.

Spontaneous Observations

Short, spontaneous 'capture the moment' observations are made. Teachers and TA's document observations using class iPads/ iPods, using 'Evidence Me' software to document what the pupil has done. These are added to the pupil's 'Personal Progress

Profile' folders.

At the end of the day, class teams reflect and record next steps on their planning templates and documentation.

9. Key Stages 1 and 2

Teachers use assessment for learning to provide on-going assessment, through the use of focused 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 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, as appropriate linked to their Pathway.

Teachers use the pupil's PLPs to lead their pupil's personalised curriculum, they also use the Equals curriculum to ensure a wide breadth of subject matter is covered and sequenced. 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. RPSs 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.

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 'Evidence Me' programme and linked to the appropriate 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 added to the pupil's 'Personal Progress Profile' folders.

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. Twice yearly pupil progress reviews are used to identify and analyse progress and set targets in reading, writing and maths for classes and cohorts. Closing the Gap Templates are completed as needed and net steps actioned.

10. Key Stage 3

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.

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 appropriate tests may be used to identify progress and gaps in learning e.g., a spelling test.

11. Key Stages 4 and 5

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 is structured and sequenced in five one-year programmes; Adventurer, Explorer, Traveller, Voyager and Globetrotter. Courses of study include: World Studies, Independent Living and Vocational Skills as well as Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and RHSE as appropriate, offering a broad and balanced curriculum during their post-14 education.

The Moving On Curriculum also offers a breadth of experience which will support progress within pupils' Personal Learning Plans (PLPs).

'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.

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.

AQA certificates 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 in a meaningful way, irrelevant of Pathway. AQA unit awards are used to enable pupils to obtain meaningful accreditation to celebrate the work they have achieved. AQA unit awards are mapped at specific levels for our different Pathways. We have the highest aspirations for our pupils and what they are able to achieve. With this in mind, we carefully select a range of appropriately challenging and inspirational AQA unit awards which are personalised and meaningful to our pupils' futures, preparing them for adulthood.

Pupils are able to work through the unit awards at their own pace and have their individual achievements recognised.

A key focus within our secondary phase is Community and Careers education, which is an integral part of our curriculum. All pupils have opportunities to engage in meaningful community experiences. These include trips into our local community, internal and external community and work experiences to different places of work and interest.

12. Monitoring and Reporting

Reports to Governors will contain updates and analysis regarding assessment at the

school. 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.

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

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. A DVD or photo collage 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.

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. Some families prefer emails or phone calls and these are offered. We are currently exploring family friendly apps to further support positive engagement and opportunities to share holistic progress.

EHCP reviews take place once a year (twice for our Nursery and Reception aged pupils) 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.

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

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, teachers 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

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-whiteboard and questioning) to ensure that all pupils understand the lesson objectives?
- Are judgments based on the interpretation and evaluation of assessment information and evidence?
- Are strengths and weaknesses identified?
- What strategies to teaching assistants employ to support Assessment for Learning?
- Where appropriate, do pupils work independently, cooperate 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

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 target/ 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?

The above discussion points are not appropriate for many of our pupils. For these pupils 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.

14. Engagement at Riverside

Engagement is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities (Iovannone et al., 2003). Without engagement, there is no deep learning (Hargreaves, 2006), effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress (Carpenter, 2010).

At Riverside, we already have engagement at the forefront of our minds.

It is statutory for schools to report which Primary aged pupils are being assessed using the Engagement Model. This is the case for all KS1 & 2 pupils working at R4 and below (those working at an Early Cognitive Level – our Blue Pathway pupils).

The Engagement Model areas are: **Anticipation, Exploration, Initiation, Persistence and Realisation.**

We have decided to ensure that we are thinking about and referring to the five areas of Engagement for all pupils, irrelevant of their age, who are working at an Early Cognitive Level (R4 and below, including those within the Early Years).

The 5 areas are helping us to highlight and articulate the different skills involved. Rather than making one comment on increased engagement, we are reminded to talk about increased anticipation, or showing an ability to further explore or initiating more spontaneously.

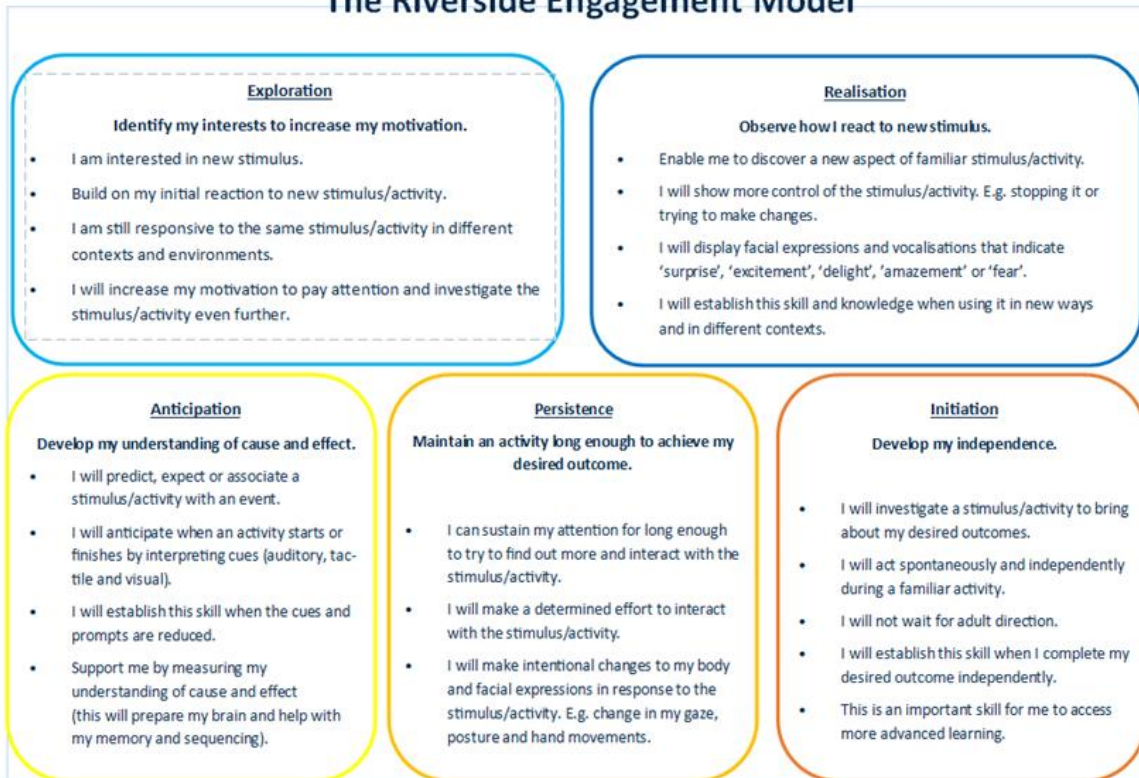
It provides us with more scope when we set focusses and improves the way we refer to, recognise and celebrate small steps of progress.

It supports us when talking to other professionals and families; increasing our vocabulary, shared understanding, and ensures we are using consistent language throughout the school and externally, and helps us to evaluate the effectiveness of our sessions, our teaching and when planning next steps.

We use the language of Engagement within our PLP focuses for our Blue Pathway pupils. For example, “I will remain focused and watch the items being removed from the surprise box. I will show anticipation when the surprise box is brought into the circle. I will do this by reaching towards the items”. We use our UPs retrospective achievement boxes to make a reflection for each Engagement Area.

Engagement Area language is also included within pupils Happiness Passports as appropriate and, as needed, Teachers use the Engagement Areas to reflect and inform their future planning.

The Riverside Engagement Model



Appendix 1 – Our Assessment Journey

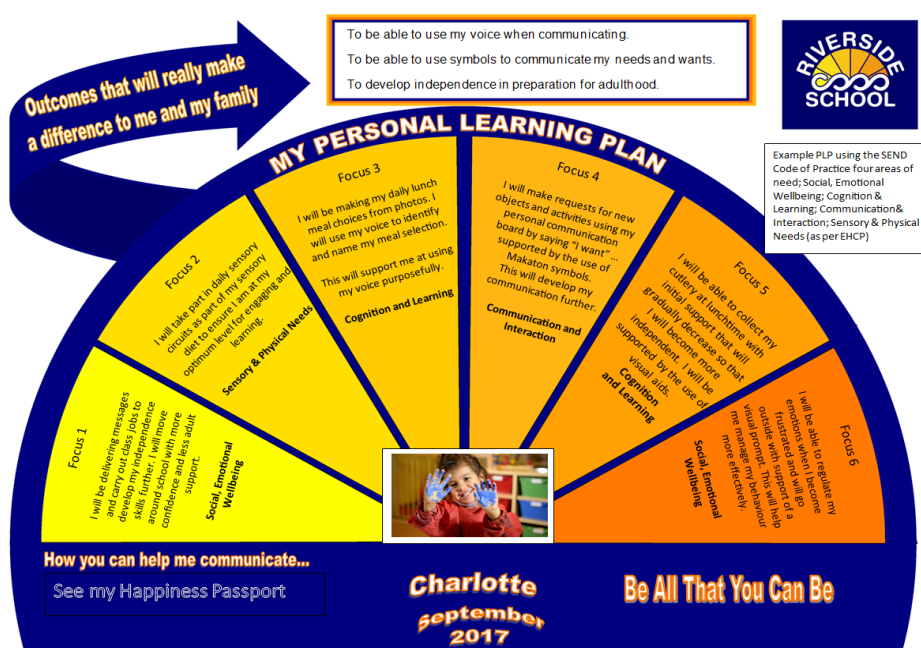
Our curriculum and assessment journey has continued to be one of tailoring our personalised assessment systems to complement our very personalised curriculums, as such we wholeheartedly place our pupils Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) and their subsequent Unique Profiles (UPs) and Riverside Progress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

We recognised that as we placed the main emphasis on progress made against the PLPs then we needed to ensure that the success made against the PLP focuses were fully captured in a rigorous and robust manner. In order to do this, we introduced our Riverside Progress Scales (RPSs). The RPS enables us to recognise progress when progress occurs, celebrate lateral progress, develop existing skills and enables us to see when pupils have acquired new skills within a level.

This deliberately moved us away from focusing on our R Levels. As we recognised 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.

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 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 ensures 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 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 teacher's 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.

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. EHCPs 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 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 and 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 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 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 document our ipsative assessment even further and 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 in personalised areas, most appropriate for each pupil. For pupils in our Blue Pathways, the language of the Engagement Areas will be used throughout their UP. See the below UP example for our Blue Pathway pupils:

My Unique Profile



Name:

Date: March 2019

Be All That You Can Be

My PLP Progress

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 1</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">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.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Generalised</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 2</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can engage in meaningful intensive interaction with familiar adults when in a calm and quiet environment and enjoy taking part in familiar 'identplay' activities such as flour splats or building blocks.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Developing</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 3</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">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.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Maintained</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 4</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">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.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Emerging</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 5</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can participate in familiar activities such as increasing independence and enjoy carrying out simple, familiar asks to show my sense of autonomy.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Developing</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3;">Focus 6</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">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.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: #0056b3; font-size: 10px;">Developing</p>

My 6 Key Achievements

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">Expressive Arts:</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can confidently participate in whole class performances in the PAH.</p>	<p>Emerging - I can do this with a high level of support; Physical, visual, spoken.</p> <p>Developing - I can do this with minimal support.</p> <p>Maintained - I can repeatedly do this and remember it after a break.</p> <p>Generalised - I can do this in different settings and with different people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">Wellbeing:</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can regulate my emotions by seeking comfort from familiar adults.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">School Value: Trust</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can trust familiar adults in Caterpillars class and have built strong, meaningful relationships with them.</p>		<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">Engagement:</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can engage enthusiastically for sustained periods of time during my favorite activities eg painting or sharing team sports.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">Skills for Life:</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">I can confidently vocalise my preferences and make choices.</p>		<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 10px;">Home Achievements:</p>

Aspiration Resilience Creativity Humility Integrity Trust Enthusiasm Courage Teamwork

My Unique Profile



Name:

Date:

Be All That You Can Be

My PLP Progress

I can Focus 1	I can Focus 2	I can Focus 3
I can Focus 4	I can Focus 5	I can Focus 6

My 5 Engagement Area Achievements and My Home Achievement:

I can (Include Anticipation)	I can (Include Persistence)
I can (Include Exploration)	I can (Include Realisation)
I can (Include Initiation)	I can Home Achievements:

Anticipation Exploration Initiation Persistence Realisation

It was important to us that we created a celebratory document where we could share all of the unique steps of progress that each pupil has made with their family as well as having a platform for pupils to see themselves and have a sense of pride in the things that they can do, and have achieved. The above UP enables us to do this.

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.

As such, we developed our gradients 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:

Focus 1 – Communication & Interaction - Amy will express a preference for an activity or an object, clearly showing what she wants to do.									
from dependent...		Independence						...to independent	
Pupils demonstrate this skill Independently									
The pupil requires support in the form of physical, gestural or spoken help to demonstrate this characteristic.	Support is still provided but there is a reduction in the level or frequency of prompting given.			This skill is demonstrated with minimal prompting required.			The pupil demonstrates this skill independently, with no direct prompting required.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
from approximate...		Fluency						...to accurate	
Pupils reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy									
The pupil requires considerable shaping in order to demonstrate this skill.	The pupil demonstrates increased purpose, but is not yet sufficiently accurate to demonstrate this skill.			This skill is demonstrated but may need refinement. The pupil demonstrates this skill with little faltering or hesitation.			The pupil demonstrates this skill in a smooth, swift and accurate manner. No further refinement is needed.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
from inconsistent...		Maintenance						...to consistent	
Pupils maintain competency over time through repetition and remember after a break.									
This skill has been observed on a single occasion only.	This skill is observed on more than one occasion but only intermittently.			This skill is reliably repeated but may need refreshing after a break.			This skill is consolidated and maintained over time. It is remembered after a break.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
from single context...		Generalisation						...to many contexts	
Pupils achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or with different staff.									
This skill is demonstrated in a single setting or context, with limited stimuli or materials and with the same staff.	This skill is repeated but with some variation in setting, context, materials or staff.			This skill is frequently, but not yet consistently, demonstrated in different settings and contexts, with different stimuli, materials and staff.			This skill is reliably demonstrated in different settings and contexts, with different stimuli, materials and staff.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Baseline - March 2019			Predicted Progress?				Progress Made - July 2019		

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 broken down into 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
- 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 toward 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?'. Fluency asks 'am I ensuring this skill is as good as it can be or am I pushing the pace and rushing on to the 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 MAAP.

As in MAAP, 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. One pupil may have a baseline of 2 and move up the scale to 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 are responsible for writing 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, 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 this 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 the four areas for each of their pupils. This information is then submitted to line leaders for data analysis, moderation and reporting.

UPs are sent home in February and July to celebrate with families all progress that has been made.

Observations and Recoding Evidence

It is vital that good quality ongoing observations are kept and referred to in order to justify judgements regarding 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 focussed 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 by 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 there 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 is a reflection of the nature of the way in which our pupils learn, as well as 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 that specific 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.

Evidence Me

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

'Evidence Me' 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 the context for learning, you could also link a piece of evidence to 'Cognition and Learning' and/ or 'Social and Emotional Wellbeing'. This would help us to 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.

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 Progress 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 the Preparing for Adulthood Pathway:

1. 'Employment' or 'Participation' (whichever is most appropriate for the 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 Progress 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 'Evidence Me' 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 prompts 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.

Referring to R Levels makes it easier to analyse and compare our data sets across the school where needed. 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. However, 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.

Appendix 2 – Pathway Descriptors

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL

PATHWAYS



FOUNDATION PATHWAY



I am starting my Riverside School Journey and I am learning about the world through different types of play. I am developing my attention and engagement and as such require short learning activities. I will build trusted relationships with the adults who support my learning.

BLUE ACTIVE PATHWAY



I have high levels of sensory processing needs and require a pro-active multi-sensory curriculum to support my regulation and engagement. To support my engagement for learning, I will be developing my exploration, anticipation, realisation, initiation and persistence.

BLUE SENSORY PATHWAY



I have a high level of complex physical/ medical needs. I need a therapeutic, sensory based adult led approach to support my learning. To support my engagement for learning, I will be developing my exploration, anticipation, realisation, initiation and persistence.

ORANGE PATHWAY



I am an explorer and an active learner. I am keen to initiate interactions with others, curious about the world around me and often seek further challenge. I can maintain focus for sustained periods of time and I persist with activities when challenges occur. I show satisfaction when reaching my goals.

YELLOW PATHWAY



I am a creative and critical thinker. I can think of my own ideas and find new ways to do things. I can make links, notice patterns and make predictions. I can plan how to approach a task, review my approach and change my strategy when needed.

BECKENHAM · PHOENIX · ST PAUL'S CRAY · WEST WICKHAM



Foundation Pathway

I am starting my Riverside school journey and I am learning about the world through different types of play. I am developing my attention and engagement and as such require short learning activities. I will build trusted relationships with the adults who support my learning.



Blue Active Pathway

I have high levels of sensory processing needs and require a pro-active multi sensory curriculum to support my regulation and engagement. To support my engagement for learning, I will be developing my exploration, anticipation, realisation, initiation and persistence.



Blue Sensory Pathway

I have a high level of complex physical/medical needs. I need a therapeutic sensory based, adult led approach to support my learning. To support my engagement for learning, I will be developing my exploration, anticipation, realisation, initiation and persistence.



Orange Pathway

I am an explorer and an active learner. I am keen to initiate interactions with others, curious about the world around me and often seek further challenge. I can maintain focus for sustained periods of time and I persist with activities when challenges occur. I show satisfaction when reaching my goals.



Yellow Pathway

I am a creative and critical thinker. I can think of my own ideas and find new ways to do things. I can make links, notice patterns and make predictions. I can plan how to approach a task, review my approach and change my strategy when needed.



 <p>Foundation Pathway Baseline, Engagement</p>	<p>Overview: Foundation: 3 Blue Sensory: 6 Blue Active: 10 Orange: 10 Yellow: 10</p>
 <p>Blue Active Pathway R1 – R4, Social Partner Stage, Engagement</p>	
 <p>Blue Sensory Pathway R1 – R4, Social Partner Stage, Engagement</p>	<p>Primary SPC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Sensory –Lions and Tigers, • Blue Active –Rabbits, Elephants, • Orange –Squirrels, Hedgehogs, Koalas, • Yellow –Foxes, Zebras,
 <p>Orange Pathway Primary : R4 – R6 Secondary : R4 – R8, Language partner</p>	<p>Secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Sensory – Odyssey, Cosmic, Apollo, Challenger • Blue Active --Gemini, Gravity, Discovery, Endeavour • Orange –Genesis, Pioneer, Lunar, Explorer • Yellow – Enterprise, Voyager, Viking, Atlantis
 <p>Yellow Pathway Primary : R6 + Secondary : R9 +, Conversation partner</p>	



Engagement Training for All Staff

Engagement Expectations

Anticipation, Exploration, Initiation, Persistence and Realisation.

It is statutory for schools to report which Primary aged pupils are being assessed using the Engagement Areas. A **requirement** for all KS1 & 2 pupils working at P4 and below (Blue Pathway)

At Riverside school we will be using the Engagement Areas for all pupils (all ages) across the **Blue and Orange Pathways & within the Early Years.**







'Engagement' is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities (Iovannone et al., 2003). Without engagement, there is no deep learning (Hargreaves, 2006), effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress (Carpenter, 2010).



As Specialist Teachers we always have engagement at the forefront of our minds

Historically guilty of over simplifying - 'they are engaged' or 'their engagement will increase'.

The 5 Areas help us highlight & articulate the different skills involved.

Rather than a comment on increased engagement, we are reminded to talk about increased anticipation, or showing an ability to further explore, or initiating more spontaneously etc.



The Riverside Engagement Model

Up in classrooms!

Blue Pathway

Orange Pathway

Early Years

Exploration

Identify my interests to increase my motivation.

- I am interested in new stimulus.
- Build on my initial reaction to new stimulus/activity.
- I am still responsive to the same stimulus/activity in different contexts and environments.
- I will increase my motivation to pay attention and investigate the stimulus/activity even further.

Realisation

Observe how I react to new stimulus.

- Enable me to discover a new aspect of familiar stimulus/activity.
- I will show more control of the stimulus/activity. E.g. stopping it or trying to make changes.
- I will display facial expressions and vocalisations that indicate 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'.
- I will establish this skill and knowledge when using it in new ways and in different contexts.

Anticipation

Develop my understanding of cause and effect.

- I will predict, expect or associate a stimulus/activity with an event.
- I will anticipate when an activity starts or finishes by interpreting cues (auditory, tactile and visual).
- I will establish this skill when the cues and prompts are reduced.
- Support me by measuring my understanding of cause and effect (this will prepare my brain and help with my memory and sequencing).

Persistence

Maintain an activity long enough to achieve my desired outcome.

- I can sustain my attention for long enough to try to find out more and interact with the stimulus/activity.
- I will make a determined effort to interact with the stimulus/activity.
- I will make intentional changes to my body and facial expressions in response to the stimulus/activity. E.g. change in my gaze, posture and hand movements.

Initiation

Develop my independence.

- I will investigate a stimulus/activity to bring about my desired outcomes.
- I will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity.
- I will not wait for adult direction.
- I will establish this skill when I complete my desired outcome independently.
- This is an important skill for me to access more advanced learning.

We use the Engagement Model Areas to reflect, improve our practice and inform future planning for our pupils




My Five Areas of Engagement

When I am highly engaged, you will see...

Detective Time!

Please detail what you see when they are most engaged.



Exploration

Tundi explores how he can use objects/toys in a range of ways. He will push, roll, throw and hit balls and shows delight in the affect he can have on these.

PHOTO

Realisation

Tundi is beginning to apply switch knowledge to other toys and looks at the effect the switch is having. He now doesn't only look at his favourite light up mirror. Tundi tends to have more interest in familiar activities presented in the same way as opposed to activities presented in different ways or new aspects of familiar activities/new activities.

Anticipation

Tundi will respond to some OoR/Photos/auditory cues (music) by dapping excitedly.

When the lunch time song is sung Tundi becomes excited and will run to the door.

Persistence

Tundi will try a number of ways to get something he wants. He will reach over and around things to access items.

When Tundi cannot independently access something he will point at what he wants and vocalise loudly towards an adult.


If adults do not meet or satisfy Tundi's wants and needs immediately he will continue to gesture and vocalise with increasing volume and larger movements.

Initiation

Tundi will initiate interactions by gesturing, vocalising and looking at what he wants. Tundi will loudly attract attention through vocalisations.

Tundi does not always approach people/lead people to what he wants to get his needs met.

Blue
Pathway



How to support my Engagement for Learning

Resources and Objects

Tundi's favourite resource is the light up mirror. Tundi likes to play with objects that dangle. He does not engage with switches, other than big ones in the classroom.

Activities

Tundi really enjoys slime, the foot spa and paint. Tundi responds well to and engages well with intensive interaction.

Environment/Room

Tundi is much more likely to engage with resources in the sensory room or the starlight room. He seems unable to complete the same or similar activities in other busier environments.

Times/Day/Events


Tundi is more alert in the morning and will persist with activities longer before break and snack time. Tundi also engages well as snack time; he will for example attract an adults attention to hand over the symbol and will persist if they do not give him immediate attention.


Support/Interaction/People

Tundi requires adult support and encouragement to engage with other activities and resources as he is not yet doing this spontaneously.

Blue
Pathway

We can then start to Widen Worlds...





Expectations

- Blue and Orange and Early Years pathways using Engagement Area language when recording/planning.
- Blue and Orange and Early Years pathways to display the Riverside Engagement Areas poster.
- Blue pathway to complete and display pupils individual Engagement Support documents (to be accessible in classroom). These should be completed by the end of the first half term.



Expectations –

- Blue and Orange and Early Years pathways to be including and providing activities/ opportunities for pupils to demonstrate engagement areas e.g. Attention Autism activity focussing on Anticipation. These will need to be detailed within your planning documentation.
- Blue and Orange and Early Years pathways to be including Engagement language in class reflections (daily/weekly).
- Blue and Early Years pathway to be using Engagement Area language within PLPs and UPs and Progress reports

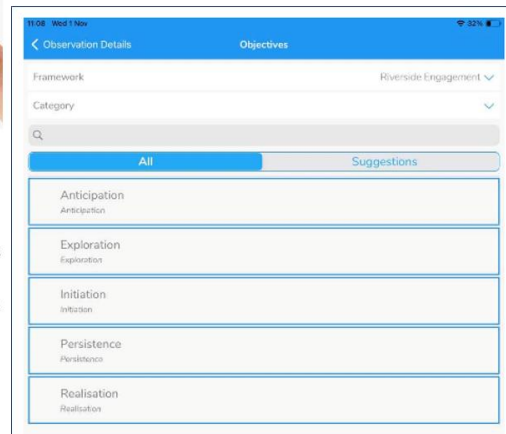


Recording –



Blue pathway to be using Evidence Me to record Engagement Areas.

At this stage there is no specific expectation of how many times each area should be recorded because we know every pupil's progress will be personalised. However, line leaders will be able to see a class overview of Engagement so may ask about any areas that are not being covered.



Refer to at a later date – all saved in Teacher Share – Teaching and Learning 2023-24, Engagement, 'Training Tuesday Engagement'

Exploration

This shows whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity; for example, whether they display more than an involuntary or startled reaction to the activity. Additionally, the pupil may be interested in and curious about the stimulus or activity; for example, they may notice it or reach out to it.

Exploration becomes more established when the pupil is still responsive to the same stimulus or activity when it is presented in different contexts or environments; for example, a different time of day, a different place or with different people.

Exploration is important in identifying which stimuli or activities interest the pupil and motivate them to pay attention and investigate them further, so that they can develop new knowledge and skills.

Can you think of an example of when a pupil has demonstrated this? Or an activity that could further support this area?



Realisation

This shows how the pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of a familiar stimulus or activity.

They will display behaviours that show they want more control of the stimulus or activity, for example by stopping it or trying to make changes to it. The pupil will often show what familiar adults consider to be 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'.

Realisation becomes more established when the pupil uses the newly developed skills or knowledge in new ways and in different contexts or environments.

This is important as it can keep the pupil excited in their education and prevents an activity from becoming routine.

Can you think of an example of when a pupil has demonstrated this? Or an activity that could further support this area?



Anticipation

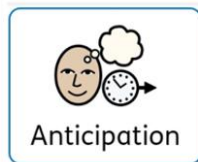
This shows how much the pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event.

They may anticipate that a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts such as auditory (what they hear), tactile (what they feel) and visual (what they see).

Anticipation becomes more established when the pupil shows awareness that a familiar activity is about to start or finish, even when cues and prompts are reduced.

Anticipation is important in measuring the pupil's understanding of cause and effect; for example if they do this, then something will happen. This prepares the brain and helps with the pupil's memory and sequencing.

Can you think of an example of when a pupil has demonstrated this? Or an activity that could further support this area?



Persistence

This shows whether the pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it.

Persistence becomes more established when the pupil shows a determined effort to interact with the stimulus or activity. They will do this by showing intentional changes such as changes in their gaze, posture and hand movement.

Persistence is important so that the pupil maintains an activity long enough to develop, reinforce, and apply their skills or knowledge so they can achieve their desired outcome.

Can you think of an example of when a pupil has demonstrated this? Or an activity that could further support this area?



Initiation

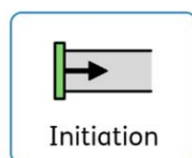
This shows how much, and the different ways, a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity in order to bring about a desired outcome.

The pupil will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity without waiting for direction.

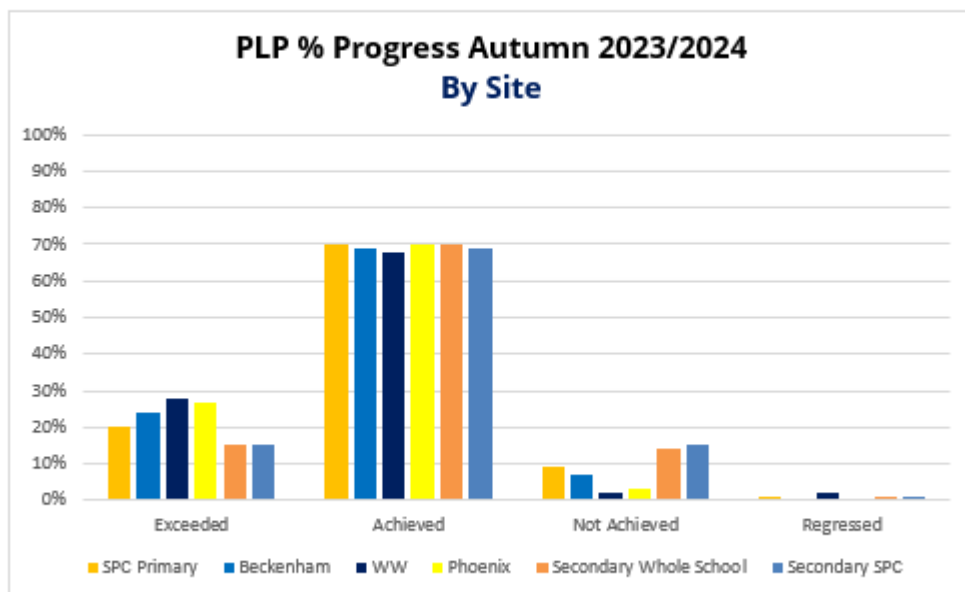
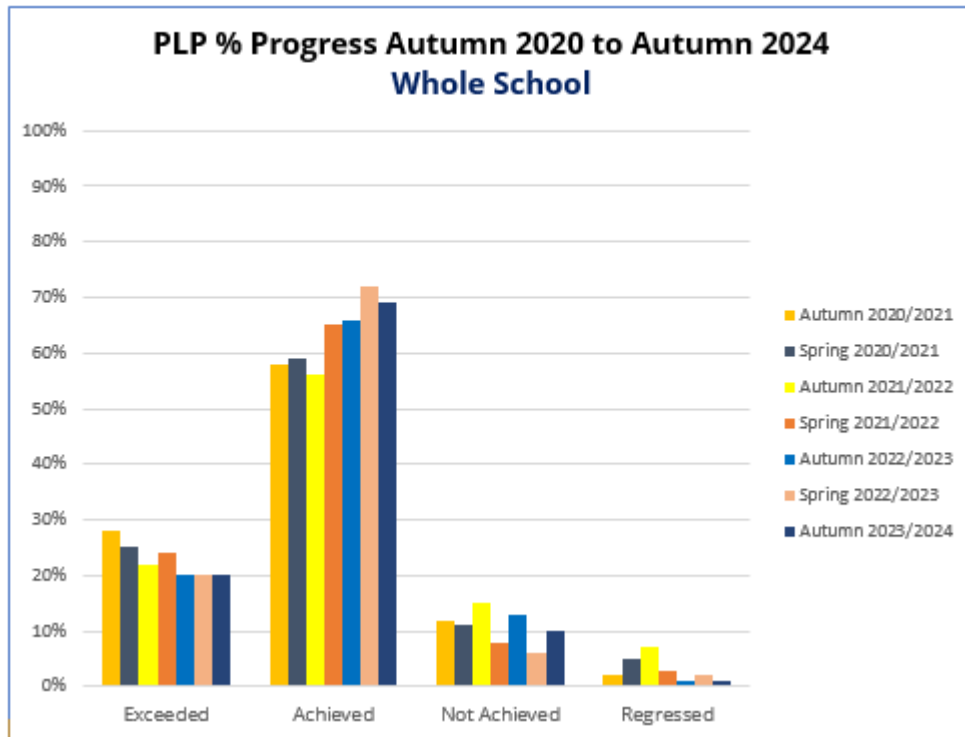
Initiation becomes more established when the pupil shows they understand how to create an impact on their environment in order to achieve a desired outcome.

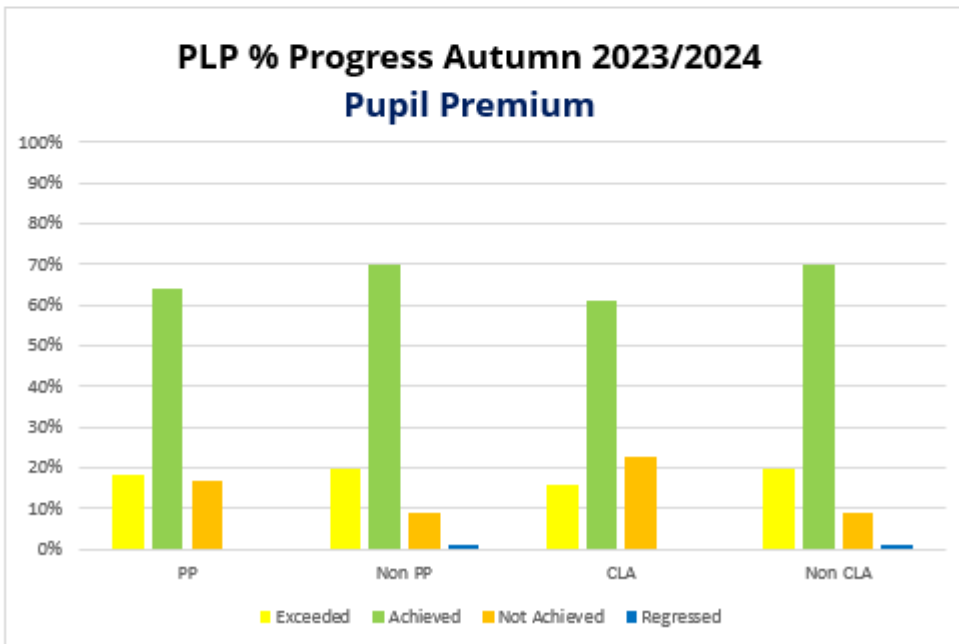
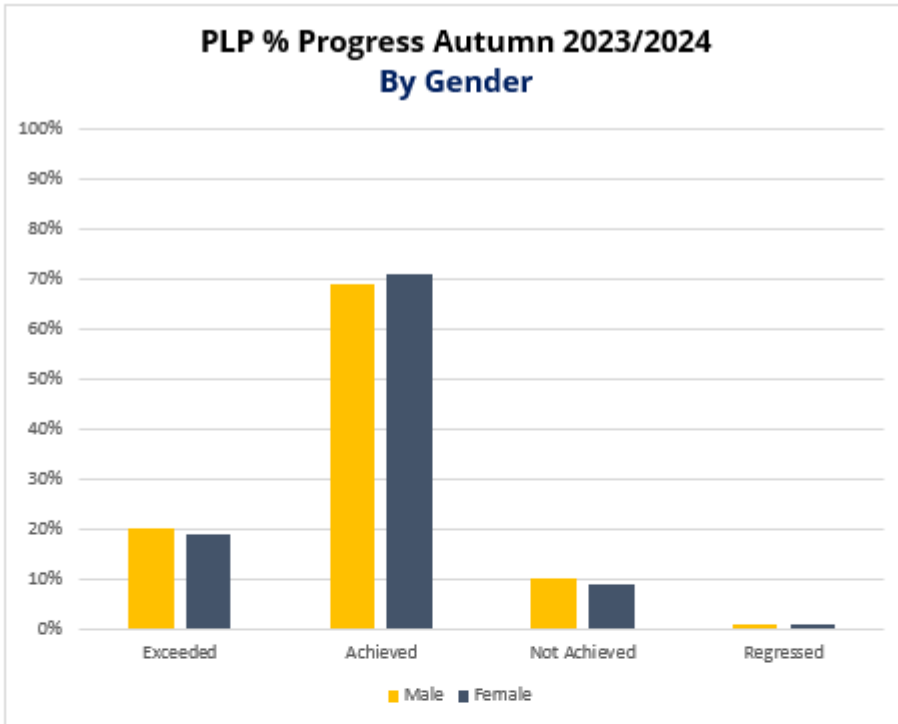
Initiation is important to establish how well the pupil is developing independence, which is required for more advanced progression.

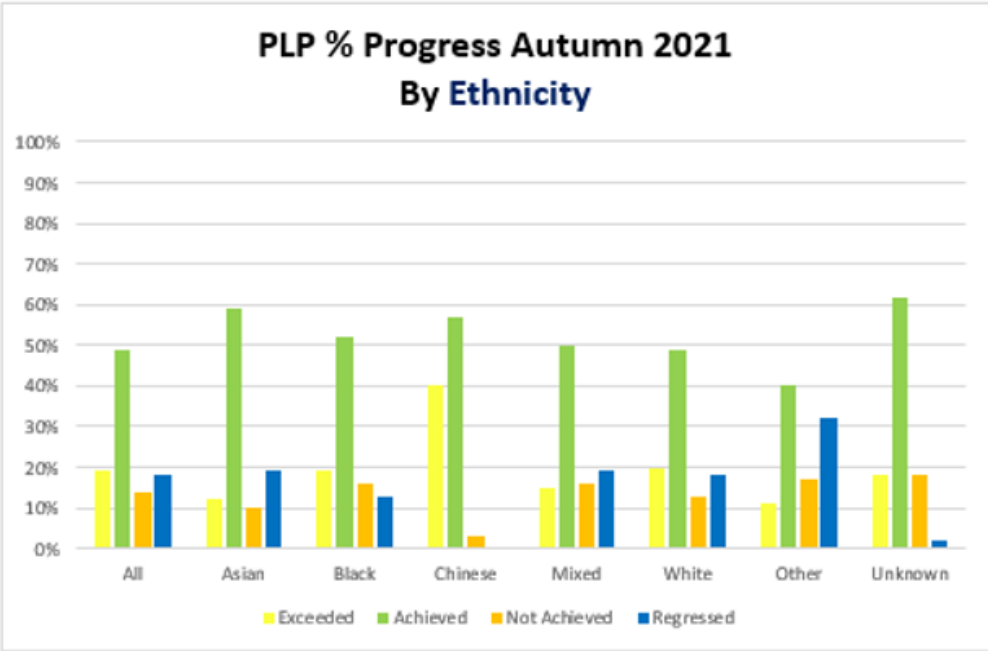
Can you think of an example of when a pupil has demonstrated this? Or an activity that could further support this area?



RPS Data – Protected Characteristics







NB Ethnicity categories based on Government GCSE results ethnicity categories.

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/a-to-c-in-english-and-maths-gcse-attainment-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest>