



Assessment Policy

Written	August 2026
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Role	Headteacher
Last Review	August 2026
Full Review Date	August 2027

Our Ethos

At Ysgol y Rhos we cater for both boys and girls in the age range of 8 to 16 years. We understand that many of the pupils who come to the school have had a turbulent and often disrupted past educational experience. Most have been to a number of schools, have been subject to exclusion, and struggle to maintain their learning in more mainstream settings; often subject to low self-esteem, low confidence in learning and a high level of disengagement from the education system. Further, the risks presented by their Adverse Childhood Experiences, and associated problematic and complex interpersonal skills development, have impaired their ability to be integrated into, and educated by, mainstream schools. Many of our learners come with a range of additional learning needs, some with a statement of special educational needs, an individual development plan (IDP), or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan), as applicable. At Ysgol Y Rhos we seek to offer a fresh start for all our pupils and work to provide an experience of education that is commensurate with each individual's needs and abilities. We support pupils to re-engage, to address gaps in their previous education and empower them to both participate in, and take responsibility for their education, and their future.

Introduction

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It is used to understand each pupil's starting point, identify strengths and barriers, agree meaningful next steps, adapt provision, recognise progress and evaluate the impact of teaching and support. It is not used simply to generate data or compare pupils without regard to their individual circumstances.

The school has chosen to organise its curriculum and assessment broadly through the Curriculum for Wales framework and its progression principles. Curriculum for Wales is not mandatory for independent schools; the binding requirements for this school include the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024 and other applicable legislation. Where the school adopts Curriculum for Wales guidance, it does so to strengthen coherent, learner-centred practice.

United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Our assessment policy has also been written with due regard for the UNCRC demonstrating our commitment to the promotion and protection of children's rights ensuring that the voice, welfare and dignity of all our pupils is paramount to the work that we do. Our assessment policy encompasses the UNCRC in the following ways.

Article	Theme	Links
Article 2	Non-discrimination	Assessment methods, reasonable adjustments and interpretation of evidence must not disadvantage a pupil because of disability, ALN, race, language, sex, religion, care experience or any other status.
Article 3	Best interests of the child	Decisions about assessment, targets, support and pathways place the pupil's educational and wider best interests at the centre.
Article 6	Right to life, survival and development	Assessment identifies appropriate support and challenge so each pupil can develop academically, socially, emotionally and personally.
Article 12	Right to be heard	Pupils are supported to understand their progress, contribute to targets, reflect on learning and express views in reviews and planning.

Article 16	Right to privacy	Assessment information is handled lawfully and securely; pupils receive information about progress in an accessible form.
Article 23	Rights of disabled children	Assessment and evidence-gathering are accessible and aligned with the support and additional learning provision required by the pupil.
Article 28	Right to education	Assessment supports access to education and the development of talents, abilities, identity and respect for others.

Legal Guidance and Framework

This assessment policy has been developed with due regard to the following legal guidance and frameworks;

- The Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, especially Standard 1 on quality of education, teaching, progress and assessment, Standard 2 on UNCRC knowledge and understanding, and Standard 6 on annual progress reporting.
- Welsh Government, Independent schools registration and operational guidance (2024).
- Welsh Government/Hwb, Supporting learner progression: assessment guidance, used by the school as an adopted framework for effective practice.
- Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and associated Curriculum for Wales guidance, where relevant to the school's chosen curriculum model.
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021, where applicable.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to assessment records and information sharing.

Aims

The aims of assessment at Ysgol Y Rhos are to;

- Establish reliable starting points and a rounded understanding of each pupil.
- Support day-to-day learning through responsive teaching, feedback and pupil reflection.
- Identify, capture and reflect on progress over time, including small but significant steps.
- Inform curriculum planning, adaptation, intervention, additional learning provision and pastoral support.
- Maintain ambitious but realistic expectations, taking account of pupils' prior attainment, needs and interrupted educational histories.
- Enable pupils to understand what they can do, what they are working towards and how to improve.
- Provide parents, carers, placing authorities and other authorised partners with clear, accurate information.
- Help leaders and the proprietor evaluate provision, equity and the impact of teaching without narrowing the curriculum.

Principles of Effective Assessment

Assessment at Ysgol Y Rhos will be purposeful, proportionate and rooted in professional judgement. It will draw on a range of evidence rather than a single test or score. Staff will distinguish between attainment, achievement, progress, engagement and wellbeing, while recognising the ways in which these may interact.

- Validity: the method assesses the intended knowledge, skill or disposition.

- Reliability: judgements are supported by agreed criteria, moderation and more than one source of evidence where appropriate.
- Authenticity: evidence reflects what the pupil can understand and do, with the level of support recorded when material.
- Inclusivity: barriers are anticipated and reasonable adjustments made without lowering legitimate learning expectations.
- Manageability: recording is sufficient to improve provision and demonstrate progress, but does not create unnecessary workload.
- Positive use: information leads to action, feedback, adaptation or celebration; it is not collected without a defined purpose.
- No fixed ceilings: progression-step descriptions and age-related information are reference points, not labels or predictions of potential.

Purposes of Assessment

Supporting Individual Pupils Day to Day

Teachers use questioning, observation, dialogue, retrieval, practical work, low-stakes checks, pupil self-assessment and review of work to decide what to reinforce, reteach, adapt or extend. Feedback may be verbal, written, visual or practical and should be timely and usable.

Understanding Progress Over Time

Staff consider progress from the pupil's individual baseline and across a body of evidence. This includes the security, breadth, transfer and increasing independence of learning, not merely task completion. Progress may be recorded against Curriculum for Wales descriptions of learning/progression steps, course specifications, individual plan outcomes and other agreed measures as appropriate.

Understanding Group Progress and Improving Practice

Leaders review patterns for classes, areas of learning and experience, key stages/pathways and relevant pupil groups. Analysis is used to evaluate curriculum coverage, teaching, intervention and equity. Small cohorts are interpreted carefully: percentages, averages and comparisons will not be presented in ways that mislead or risk identifying pupils.

Assessment Cycle

On Entry and Baseline Assessment

The school gathers previous records, the pupil's own views, information from parents/carers and placing authorities, IDPs/statements/EHCPs where applicable, prior qualifications and relevant professional reports. Baseline assessment is completed after an appropriate settling-in period which can vary from pupil to pupil. Baseline assessments will always avoid over-testing a pupil whose engagement or emotional state would make results unreliable.

The school currently uses GL Assessment tools, International Dyslexia Learning, (IDL) and may use diagnostic or curriculum-linked assessments including reading, spelling, literacy and mathematics measures. The assessments will be administered by class teachers. Scores are interpreted alongside classroom evidence, attendance, engagement and contextual information. Standardised scores are not treated as a complete picture of ability or potential.

Planning from Assessment

Baseline and ongoing evidence informs curriculum placement, schemes of learning, personalised learning plans, (PLPs), SMART targets, interventions, additional learning provision, access arrangements and pastoral strategies. Targets should be meaningful, understood by the pupil, sufficiently challenging and reviewed at planned intervals. PLP targets are generated and reviewed termly utilising recorded assessment data on the schools

online assessment program SLEUTH and teacher input. PLP targets are discussed and agreed with pupils and form a part of all pupils self-assessment process within their class books.

Ongoing Formative Assessment

Teachers make assessment part of normal teaching through clear learning intentions, responsive questioning, checks for understanding, feedback and opportunities to apply learning. Staff adapt explanation, scaffolding, pace, grouping, resources and challenge in response to evidence. Pupils should have regular opportunities to reflect, identify success and contribute to next steps in an accessible way.

- Pupils are expected to write learning outcomes at the start of each new piece of work.
- When completing marking teachers are expected to evaluate pupils performance against these learning outcomes following the process of “What Went Well” and “Even Better If”
- Following on from teacher feedback pupils will always be encouraged to act on this feedback for example by being asked to revisit a piece of work to address misconceptions or to complete an extension task to deepen understanding.

Periodic and Standardised Assessment

Summative assessment may be used at appropriate points to summarise learning, identify gaps, inform reporting or prepare pupils for qualifications. It complements rather than replaces formative assessment. Test conditions, permitted support and any departure from standard administration must be recorded so that results are interpreted accurately. Periodic assessment most commonly includes;

- At the end of each topic of work pupils will complete an end-of-topic assessment. This will be an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the topic taught.
- Following completion of the end-of-topic assessment teachers will offer prompt feedback using the feedback card shown below. Teachers will be expected as with formative assessment feedback to offer comments on “What Went Well” and “Even Better If”
- Following on from teacher feedback pupils will always be encouraged to act on this feedback for example by being asked to revisit a piece of work to address misconceptions or to complete an extension task to deepen understanding.

End-of-Topic Assessment Feedback:
What went well:
Even better if:
Pupil response:

Review and Reporting

Each pupil receives an annual written report on progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught, unless a parent or carer has agreed otherwise with the school. Reporting is clear, balanced and specific: it identifies strengths, progress, current attainment or curriculum position where meaningful, support provided and next steps. Reports should not rely on unexplained codes or scores.

Parents/carers and authorised partners receive additional updates through the school's agreed review cycle. Pupil voice is included in an accessible form. Where a pupil has an IDP, statement or EHCP, educational evidence contributes to the relevant person-centred or statutory review arrangements.

- PEP Meeting Reporting – Termly (Social Workers, Virtual School, Parents / Carers)
- LAC Review Reporting – 6 Monthly (Social Workers, Parents / Carers, IRO)
- TAC Meeting Reporting – 6 Weekly (Carers, Therapy team)

Evidence and Recording Expectations

A balanced evidence base may include work in books or folders, practical outcomes, photographs where consent and data-protection requirements are met, digital work, teacher notes, discussion, observation, quizzes, formal assessments, moderation records, qualification evidence and progress towards individual outcomes. No single format is required for every subject or pupil.

- Records must be accurate, dated where necessary, attributable and sufficient to explain the judgement or action taken.
- The level of assistance, scaffolding or prompting is recorded where this changes the meaning of the evidence.
- Missed or incomplete assessment is not automatically recorded as low attainment; the reason is identified where known.
- Behaviour, attendance and engagement information may provide context but must not be substituted for subject attainment.
- Teachers update agreed records within the school's timescale. Leaders avoid duplicate data entry unless it serves a clear purpose.

Assessment and progress information is recording on the schools online platform TAITH. Behaviour and attendance data is recorded on the schools MIS SLEUTH and personal development progress is recorded on the online platform Gridmaker.

Progression and Making Judgements

Progression is understood as increasing effectiveness, breadth and depth of knowledge, deepening understanding, refinement and application of skills, and growing independence. Judgements are based on the learning that has been secured and can be demonstrated over time and in different contexts.

Progression steps are broad reference points and are not equivalent to levels, fixed age expectations or term-by-term checklists. Where the school reports a progression-step position, staff should describe the evidence and degree of security and avoid false precision. Pupils may show different levels of development across aspects of an area or subject.

Inclusion ALN and Reasonable Adjustments

Assessment arrangements are adapted so pupils can demonstrate learning without avoidable barriers. Adjustments may include additional time, rest or movement breaks, a low-distraction space, accessible language or format, assistive technology, a reader or scribe where permitted, alternative response methods and planned emotional-regulation support. For external qualifications, only adjustments allowed by the relevant awarding-body and JCQ rules are used. Access arrangements will in the first instance be assessed and approved by the schools ALNCO, Sam Thomas, (interim) for external qualifications this will be completed in conjunction with the schools exams officer, Fred Smith.

The school distinguishes between an access arrangement, which removes a barrier, and help that changes the construct being assessed. Staff record this distinction when it affects interpretation. Assessment contributes to the identification and review of possible ALN but does not, by itself, constitute diagnosis. Concerns are referred through the school's ALN procedures.

Enrichment opportunities real life experiences:

At Ysgol y Rhos we believe in providing enrichment activities and real-life experiences to pupils because:

- pupils are able to safely experience learning opportunities in the wider community.
- these experiences exploit interests and talents.
- these experiences increase the probability of success.
- these experiences help build routes to future options.
- these opportunities build self-esteem and confidence in learning in a wider context.
- these opportunities offer different avenues and styles of learning and achievement.

Qualifications, Controlled Assessment and Examination

For pupils following accredited courses, assessment follows the current specification and awarding-body requirements. Internally assessed, non-examination assessment and controlled tasks are planned, supervised, authenticated, marked, internally standardised and submitted in accordance with current rules. Suspected malpractice is addressed through the relevant examinations policy. Predicted or working-at grades are clearly distinguished from awarded results.

Moderation and consistency

Moderation supports a shared understanding of progression, improves the reliability of judgements and develops teaching. It may include reviewing annotated samples, discussing criteria and support given, standardising qualification work, cross-subject dialogue and, where available, external professional collaboration. The purpose is to reach the most defensible judgement, not force artificial uniformity.

- Teachers prepare representative evidence, including work that illustrates different degrees of security and independence.
- The group discusses the criteria and records any agreed adjustment, action or professional-learning need.
- Qualification standardisation follows awarding-body requirements and is documented separately where required.
- Leaders check whether expectations are ambitious, equitable and applied consistently across phases and subjects.

Quality Assurance and Professional Development

Quality assurance will examine the quality and impact of assessment rather than simple compliance. It may include learning walks, work scrutiny, discussion with pupils, moderation, review of plans and records, sampling reports, analysis of progress and checking that agreed actions are implemented. Findings feed into supervision, appraisal, professional learning, curriculum review and the School Development Plan.

Data Protection, Confidentiality and Retention

Assessment records are personal data and may include special-category data. They are collected and shared only for clear educational, legal, safeguarding or commissioning purposes and in accordance with the school's privacy notices and data-protection arrangements. Access is role-based. Information sent electronically must use approved secure systems. Staff must not keep unnecessary duplicate records on personal devices or unapproved platforms.

Records are retained and disposed of in accordance with the school's retention schedule, examination requirements and any applicable legal hold. Where assessment information is shared with a receiving school, placing authority or professional, only relevant and proportionate information is disclosed through an authorised route.

This policy is reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. However, where there are changes to legislation/guidance or in response to recommendation from any significant incident, review of the policy will take place immediately.

Policy Created By	Sam Thomas	04/08/2026
Policy Approved By	Catrin Jones	04/08/2026

Appendix 1 – Target and Reflection Sheet

Subject:		Topic:			
Lesson	Lesson objective	Teacher target	Student target	PLP target	Target Met Red, Amber Green

End of Topic Reflection	
What Went Well?	How I could Improve?

At the start of each new topic of work pupils, with support from their teacher, will be expected to complete a target and reflection sheet. This will be included in the class books / folders. This sheet will outline the lessons and learning outcomes to be completed throughout a unit of work. Pupils and teachers will also together set targets for this lessons linking these to their PLPs. Following the completion of a unit of work pupils will revisit this sheet to determine how strongly they think they have achieved these targets and also reflect on their progress though out the unit of work as a whole.