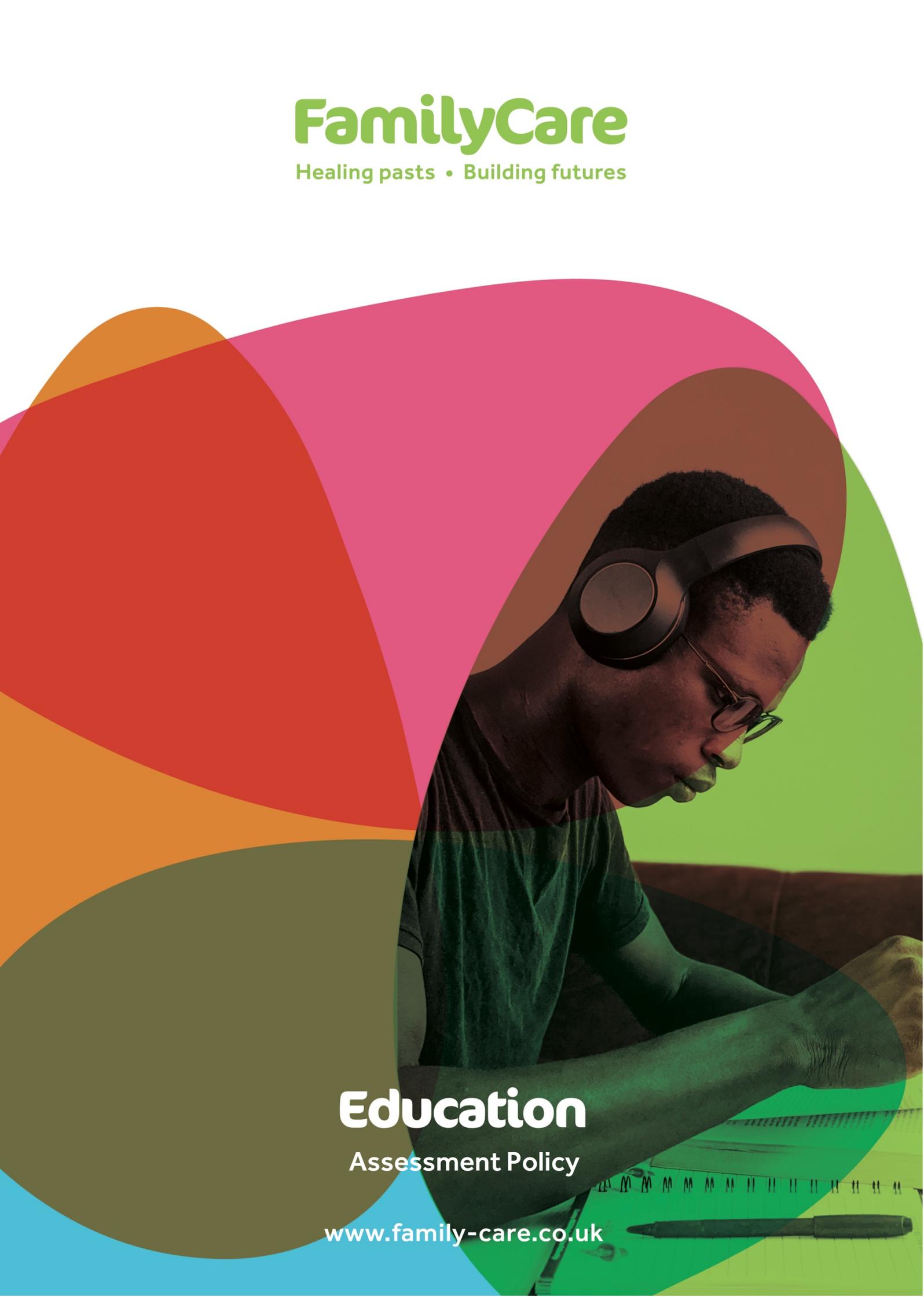# FamilyCare

Healing pasts • Building futures

Education

Assessment Policy

www.family-care.co.uk

Assessment Policy

Implemented/Reviewed: September 2020
Date of Next Review: September 2021

At Access School we recognise the importance of the following as the central characteristics of Good Practice with regards to student assessment and have endeavoured to create a system that puts these characteristics at the heart of our assessment policy.

Assessments should:

- Promote & Support Learning
- Identifies what pupils know, understand and can do.
- Enables consistent monitoring of all pupil progress.
- Identifies individual learning styles.
- Identifies individual learning strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourages progression in learning.

Informs Teaching

- Assists lesson planning.
- Informs review of contents and skills.
- Promotes a variety of teaching strategies.
- Enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress.
- Encourages self-reflection.

Is both Formative & Summative

- Promotes a shared learning culture.
- Provides clear and regular feedback.
- Diagnoses learning difficulties.
- Measures pupil performance.
- Identifies clear and shared targets for pupil progress.
- Promotes differentiation by outcome.
- Informs subject choice and career making decisions.
- Provides effective and progressive pupil records.
- Informs regular reporting to parents.

Uses Appropriate & Diverse Strategies

- Is both formal and informal.
- Accommodates a variety of learning styles.
- Tests a range of skills.
- Encourages effective and standardised marking procedures.
- Is both quantitative and qualitative.
- Is carried out in a range of contexts.

Recognises All Pupil Progress & Achievement

- Rewards progress, effort and achievement.
- Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning.
- Creates opportunities for self-direction.
- Fosters self-esteem and social/emotional development.

Develops the Capacity for Self Assessment

- Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Gives sensitive and constructive feedback.
- Supports pupils in self-esteem and peer assessment activities.
- Engages pupils in realistic setting.

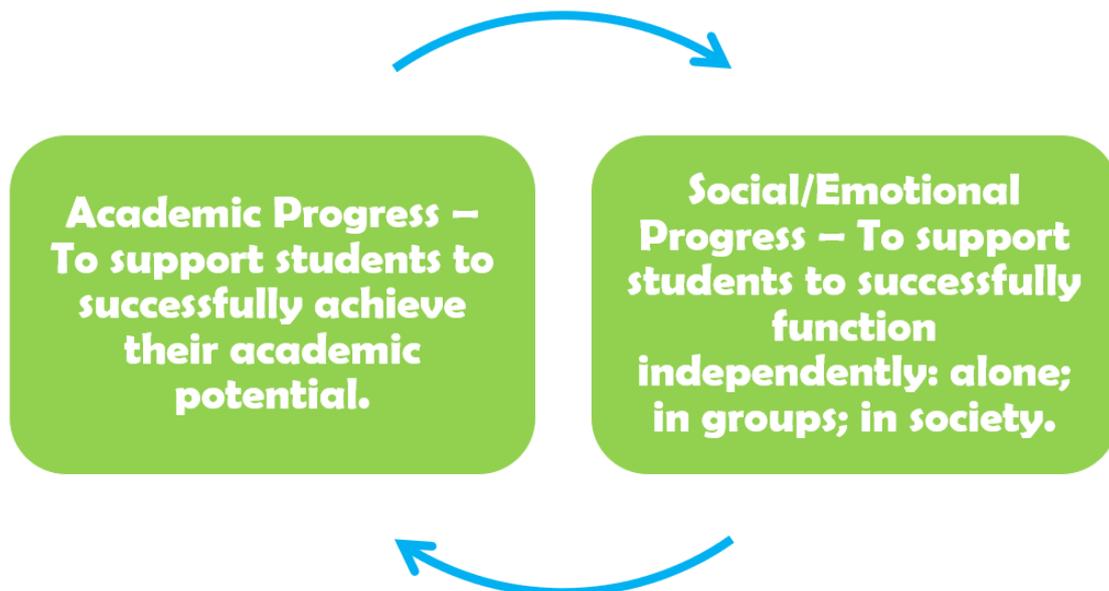Fosters a Shared Involvement & Responsibility Between School & Home

- By keeping parents and carers fully informed of and involved (wherever possible) in all of the above.

The Assessment Process at Access School

Assessment plays a key role at Access to help our children be the best they can be! Assessment helps us to understand our children by helping to answer a wide range of questions, what does their best look like? How can we improve? What should we develop next? What can we as staff do to assist in a child's development?
To answer these questions and many more we use our assessment process.

What are we assessing and why?

Academic Progress – To support students to successfully achieve their academic potential.

Social/Emotional Progress – To support students to successfully function independently: alone; in groups; in society.

In order to successfully assess children in terms of their academic progress and SEMH development we use a range assessment methods:
Diagnostic: A form of pre-assessment that allows a teacher to determine students' individual strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to instruction.
Formative: Assessment for learning, it is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through identifying difficulties, providing feedback and diagnosing future learning priorities.
Summative: Assessment of learning, it is used mainly to measure performance and clearly identifies a standard of pupil attainment. It is carried out at the end of a period of learning.

Diagnostic
- CAT 4
- LASS
- Boxall Profile
- Star Reader
- Star Maths
- Connecting Steps

Formative
- Observation
- Discussion
- Quizzes
- Questioning
- Self and Peer Assessment
- Marking
- Log Sheets
- Connecting Steps

Summative
- End of unit / year test
- Unit Award Scheme
- Connecting Steps

National
- GCSEs
- Entry Levels
- KS2 SATs
- KS1 Phonics Screening

The Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP)

Assessment at Access begins from the moment a student enrols with us until they leave, be this with the end of formal examinations in year 11 or to transition to mainstream education or other more suitable provision.

Upon entry to school we begin a formal 6-week assessment process during which we use various diagnostic assessments to baseline new students, to identify where there maybe difficulties and gaps in learning and to put required interventions into place.

The SNAP contains the following:

- Analysis of the EHCP to determine areas of difficulties and any requirements that need to be put into place.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires – We ask parents and a teacher from the students previous school to complete our SDQs these can be extremely useful in quickly understanding difficulties we may encounter and how to respond them most effectively.
- CAT4 (Cognitive abilities test) provides a general report on cognitive ability and learning styles which help teachers plan work at an appropriate level and to have certain activities in mind which maybe most beneficial to the student. CAT4 also provides us with predicted outcomes for the current key stage, the tests are not linked to curriculum knowledge and therefore provides us with an idea of the kind of a child's potential providing they have had the opportunity to learn all of the curriculum content.
- Star Reader and Star Maths provide us with a baseline for Literacy and Numeracy. These assessments also help to identify where interventions are required and help monitor the effectiveness of that intervention going forward.

- LASS – The LASS assessment provides a reading age for a child and helps identify any potential cases of Dyslexia or difficulties with visual or phonological processing which may need referring for an SpLD assessment.
- The Boxall Profile is a tool that we use to identify social and emotional difficulties and then to monitor progress over the longer term. An initial assessment is completed during the initial 6 week period and difficulties are identified and appropriate interventions put into place.
- Connecting steps is completed at the first half term after a student joins, there are 3 data inputs per year, at each half term. Connecting steps is a levelled list of outcomes for each subject, generated from the expectations detailed in the national curriculum. Connecting steps is excellent for recording achieved outcomes from lessons and identifying gaps in learning. Once the initial connecting steps data is entered teachers can use it in their forward planning to ensure gaps are covered at the earliest opportunity.

Day to Day Assessment

Assessment in the classroom is done by constant formative assessment by our team of qualified teachers. Formative assessment allows us to understand what has been learned at the time and what hasn't and therefore informs our short term planning during the course of a topic or series of lessons. Formative assessment in class takes many forms from observation and discussion to short quizzes and self and peer assessment. Most importantly formative assessment allows for a dialogue to occur between teacher and pupil during a lesson, to identify difficulties or misconceptions, to work through solutions and to improve the final outcome within that lesson. Due to our small class sizes the assessment-feedback loop is extremely rapid as problems are detected quickly and dialogue towards a solution and improvement occurs quickly. Day to Day achievement of learning outcomes is recorded on connecting steps and over time provides a record of learning and a rate of progress through the outcomes with which we can monitor progress over time.
Written Marking
As detailed above, due to our small class sizes, assessment and feedback happen constantly throughout a lesson, learning occurs through dialogue between the student and teacher or learning support assistant. For this reason, written marking is only expected in the following instances:

- Homework
- Independent work, that is work that has been produced without feedback during its production and is not discussed specifically following completion during a lesson
- Students who have completed work away from the class teacher should always have their work marked and discussed with them at the earliest opportunity.
- Summative assessments

Assessment over the longer term

Connecting steps is updated 3 times a year and allows us to track and monitor progress through the national curriculum and towards qualifications in key stage 4.
Similarly, the Boxall profile is updated with the same frequency and we are able to measure the effectiveness of interventions.
CAT4 can be positively impacted by improvements in SEMH development and because we use CAT4 to help identify a students potential in each key stage we complete a new test at the end of each key stage that a student is with us for ready for the key stage ahead.
Star Reader and Star Maths are completed 2-3 times a year and provide a further means to monitor progress in these areas alongside Connecting Steps.
These assessments help to inform the annual review of the students EHCP and to inform teachers and parents of progress over time. They also provide evidence for SMART targets on IEPs, IBPs and PEPs.

Links to resources for further information
CAT4:Cognitive abilities test: https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/cognitive-abilities-test-cat4
ConnectingSteps -

https://www.bsquared.co.uk/#:~:text=Connecting%20Steps%20simplifies%20tracking%2C%20assessing%20and%20reporting%20progress.,easy%20to%20use%2C%20Connecting%20Steps%20saves%20teachers%E2%80%99%20time.
Accelerated Reader - http://www.renlearn.co.uk/reading/
Accelerated Maths - http://www.renlearn.co.uk/accelerated-maths/
The Boxall Profile -
https://www.nurtureuk.org/sites/default/files/boxall_profile_leaflet_online.pdf#:~:text=The%20Boxall%20Profile%20is%20the%20most%20popular%20tool,The%20Boxall%20Profile%20is%20the%20unique%20psycho%20