

## Barley Lane School

*Hard work, humility, kindness*

### Learning, teaching and assessment 2017-18

1	Context: what do we expect of specialist teachers in this specialist setting?
2	An habitual conversation about learning and teaching
3	School improvement and performance management
4	Professional characteristics of best SEMH practitioners:
5	What do we see and experience when we encounter outstanding practice
6	BLS specialist teacher job description
8	How do we make sure teaching is at least good and improving?
9	The curriculum
12	Assessment of and for learning

#### Context

What do we expect of specialist teachers in this specialist setting; the bottom line expectation of what the children and young people must get? Teachers have a particular responsibility in a SEMH setting to show leadership and initiative in managing behaviour with compassion, creativity and skill and the expectation is explicitly shared with them by the school and embedded in school improvement and their performance management it is reasonable to expect all teachers to understand and accept:

- they have chosen to work in a challenging SEMH setting therefore overcoming obstacles to learning, most obviously behaviour, is their responsibility and colleagues are a resource to help and assist not to take over duties and responsibilities;
- that maintaining good order and discipline in class is their responsibility in all but the most complex cases;
- that quality of teaching should be at least good always and expectations are quite reasonably higher commensurate with experience and pay and so support should be proportionate also;
- the dignity and credibility of our specialist work is built on **all teachers** being “leaders” in their classrooms and subjects and being resourceful, problem solving and creative not excuse making and at upper pay levels it is proportionate to expect sustained high performance.

#### An habitual conversation about learning and teaching

Improving practice and moving over time from “Special Measures” to “good” has been rooted in identifying good teachers and teaching and collectively as a small if diverse team coalescing what is most effective both through coaching and a collegiate approach to best practice.

The team habitually talks about and shares the challenges in our setting (twice weekly problem solving meetings and every day in morning briefing and afternoon debriefing) because as is set out below this is a rowing against the stream activity; stop rowing and you go backwards immediately and at pace...

Improvement then and consolidation has been rooted in embedding strong and consistent expectations in the classroom including a common structure, rituals and routines in all lessons (the exception is more personalised learning at KS4) that protect and promote a positive climate for learning because as our 2016-2017 **school improvement plan** sets out

## School improvement 2017-18

### Learning, teaching and assessment

1. Across the team and in every individual there is robust and reliable high expectation of the children and self and an urgent and habitual transparency about the inevitable challenges and setbacks and clear and tangible steps are taken to meet those challenges and address those setbacks by making **personal positive changes** in one's practice through a commitment to:
  - i. The humility to recognise where practice has frailties and standards are slipping and behaviour and learning are at risk and the humility too to speak up and seek help to improve;
  - ii. Continuously seeking to understand the children better in all their diversity and complexity, spark and challenge and being a "present" and active listener and contributor to and sometimes leader of the shifting and dynamic conversation formal and informal about best-practice;
  - iii. Consistently demonstrating the graft and energy to make real both emerging and the established best practice we have learned and shared and set out over time through bloody hard work and being alive and open to new ideas and ways of working.

### Performance management 2017-18

School improvement has identified a few core and key priorities that should impact all of us every day across our roles and disciplines:

- Throughout the team each individual across disciplines will relentlessly ask themselves how they are going to develop their understanding and practice to promote and embed positive behaviours and learning in the children and young people;
- Continuously seeking to understand the children better in all their diversity and complexity, spark and challenge and being a "present" and active listener and contributor to and sometimes leader of the shifting and dynamic conversation formal and informal about best-practice;
- The humility to recognise where their practice has frailties and standards are slipping and behaviour and learning are at risk and the humility too to speak up and seek help to improve;
- Consistently demonstrating the graft and energy to make real both emerging and the established best practice we have learned and shared and set out over time through bloody hard work and being alive and open to new ideas and ways of working.

This can be distilled or simplified further: personal responsibility and accountability; high expectation of the children and self; the humility and self-awareness to face up to things not going well; the curiosity to understand more and the drive and energy to make necessary changes and improvements that is what is being demanded of you all in the context of your roles and experience and current skill set.

## Professional characteristics of best SEMH practitioners:

*Can you demonstrate and evidence them?*

1. Are safe and transparent and have integrity and humility; they admit their errors and recognise their frailties and seek support and guidance. *When did you last admit a meaningful professional error or seek and apply advice? When did your professional ethics and values influence your decision-making and actions? When did you last do a difficult thing because it was the right thing?*
2. Believe we must change to change the students: we own the behaviour and must seek to change it positively. They look **in** for solutions not **out** for blame. *What have you done recently to improve your practice? What was its impact?*
3. Reflect usefully on successes and challenges and seek solutions together to those difficulties they face: they are always optimistic never gloomy; the glass is always half full for them and challenges are opportunities, they make the clichés meaningful again. *What challenges are you currently facing and more significantly what are you doing about it?*
4. Are prepared to graft and be generous in their discretionary effort to achieve those solutions: they go the extra mile. *When did you last do something in your own time professionally?*
5. Dislike the behaviour but always like the child and are quick to forgive the children, their colleagues and themselves and move on positively. *Can you give a recent example of showing this generosity of spirit?*
6. Are wise to the worst outcome but expect the best at all times: they have “withitness”, they pay attention to the detail. *When did you last prevent a difficulty through anticipatory, proactive and “withit” behaviour; give an example?*
7. Are on-time, visible, rigorous, energetic and proactive throughout their work. Have you been late recently? When were you last early? *When did you last lead or were you in charge of something; an activity, a trip, a team? What have you done to be proud of and celebrate?*
8. They make policy and guidance real by living it. *Quote some even loosely and evidence its significant application in your work recently*
9. They are diligent and meticulous in their recording and administering: they value it and do it even though it’s often irksome. *When did you last make an entry in the school record keeping book? Do you record serious incidents promptly and fully? Do you read the school recording/communication documents frequently? What was the last entry you made or read? Quote it?*
10. Believe reward changes and consequence discourages and use both imaginatively the latter powerfully but in moderation and with restraint the former with sincerity and often. *When did you last reward or sanction a student? Describe its nature; was it imaginative, impactful?*

## What do we see and experience when we encounter...

<b>The outstanding SEMH teacher in the school community</b>	<b>Outstanding teaching in the SEMH classroom</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is ever present and has an outstanding attendance record: however good you are you are no good if you are not there.</li> <li>2. They care about how they look and make an appropriate effort to be dressed appropriately and in context to show respect to the pupils: the PE teacher’s trainers are clean; the DT teacher’s apron too...</li> <li>3. In all things they are the “extra-milers “who give discretionary effort freely because they have a strong pride in their vocation, in their profession, they are proud to be teachers because they authentically like and respect the children and young people and the students tell us so when asked.</li> <li>4. However tough life may be personally and professionally they are “troopers” and present to the children always as committed and caring and enthused; their warmth and energy are contagious and adults and children feel better around them.</li> <li>5. They go where the children are: they sit on the liveliest table at lunch; they ref the most fractious football game; they look to be useful; they offer themselves to colleagues; they never hide; they are true team players 😊</li> <li>6. They engage with parents and carers and professionals with care and sometimes necessary caution but they are accessible and seek to build a positive network of grown-ups around the child.</li> <li>7. They contribute intelligently to the diverse conversation formal and informal about best practice and they have a platform to do so and are seen as authentic and credible by their peers because they are reliably successful in their teaching</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The classroom environment hits visitors immediately the very best draw instant praise with its warmth and good order and care with attractive cared for displays and a tidiness and attention to detail.  Resources and equipment are diverse, pertinent, attractive and well cared for</li> <li>2. You feel their energy and warmth and presence as you enter a lesson and as a result you feel the security and calm in the children and young people.</li> <li>3. Praise and affirmation and celebration are ever present but also credible and supported by constructive criticism and a warm polite assertiveness about behaviour</li> <li>4. It is clear the children and young people feel they belong and have an affiliation to their teacher and their classroom and their school.</li> <li>5. Strong and familiar expectations, routines, rhythms are all embedded creating a climate in which...</li> <li>6. ...the children are engaged and enthused and there is an element of risk and fun in learning and subject knowledge robust supporting and extending with confidence and skill.</li> <li>7. Assessment for learning can happen freely and deep down and children and young people know where they are and what to do next in their learning and can tell you.</li> <li>8. Progress is good and increasingly outstanding and can be seen happening...</li> <li>9. Support staff are embedded and confident in this context and an extension of the teacher and able to operate independently and under direction.</li> </ol>

## What do we see and experience when we encounter...

...the outstanding learning support in the school community	...outstanding learning support in the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is ever present and has an outstanding attendance record: however good you are you are no good if you are not there.</li> <li>• In all things they are the “extra-milers” who give discretionary effort freely because they have a strong pride in their work, they are proud of their role because they authentically like and respect the children and young people and the students tell us so when asked.</li> <li>• However tough life may be personally and professionally they are “troopers” and model for the children always commitment and care and positivity; their warmth and energy are contagious and adults and children feel better around them.</li> <li>• They like their best teacher colleagues go where the children are: they sit on the liveliest table at lunch; they play football with energy and humour; they look to be useful; they offer themselves to colleagues; they never hide; they are true team players ☺</li> <li>• They listen hard and with compassion and are always alert to the children’s safety and wellbeing.</li> <li>• They ceaselessly seek to build their understanding of and respect for and rapport with the children and young people but also as they are so often the “glue” that holds the community together they do so with colleagues and as their confidence grows beyond to sharing with and challenging...</li> </ul> <p>Parents and carers and professionals of all kinds and they are humble but confident in their insights and sharing and folk listen because they are clearly good at the work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They contribute intelligently to the diverse conversation formal and informal about best practice and they have a platform to do so and are seen as authentic and credible by their peers because they are reliably successful in their work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The best LSAs relentlessly and skilfully build trust and rapport in the classroom with teachers and pupils as a result...</li> <li>• ...they have status, influence and are a “presence” in the classroom.</li> <li>• They are fluent in the expectations and rhythms, rituals and routines of the classroom and can assert them.</li> <li>• They have clarity about the learning objectives and goals and support them.</li> <li>• They are intelligently proactive and have sound judgment knowing when to intervene and when to hold, when to support when to assert and encourage greater independence in the child and they are always vigilant about the risks of dependency.</li> <li>• They are equally comfortable working under the direction of the teacher or using their growing insight and confidence to work autonomously and take the initiative and they move intelligently between the two.</li> <li>• <b><u>They are never passive</u></b> and if uncertain will speedily seek instruction if they need it.</li> <li>• As their confidence grows they not only work as a partner with the teacher but can challenge them and...</li> <li>• ...when necessary increasingly initiate and lead work in the classroom both in behaviour and learning.</li> <li>• In time they can lead small groups and purposefully cover classes as they develop and learn...</li> </ul>

## **BLS specialist teacher job description**

### **1. Create and maintain a classroom environment that is:**

- a. well appointed, comfortable, practicable and orderly;
- b. suitably and well-resourced to drive learning progress;
- c. characterised by calm, hard-work, courtesy and respect.

### **2. Ensure assessment of learning and target setting are:**

- a. robustly challenging and rigorously moderated and the latter can be strongly evidenced;
- b. and that learning progress and achievement can be evidenced powerfully and convincingly through a portfolio of student work.

### **3. Plan and produce schemes of work that are:**

- a. in place for the long, medium and short term (lesson planning);
- b. reflect the need for accessibility and pertinence for a challenging BESD student group alongside statutory curriculum prescription;

### **4. Plan and prepare and deliver lessons that are:**

- a. structured, engaging and practical and with a brisk pace with clear, confident and asserted control over the rhythm and fluency of the lesson;
- b. explicit in their purpose and objective(s) and those are revisited and reinforced often;
- c. and make sense in the context of the students longer term learning goals and they are fluent in this;
- d. persistent and deliberate in revisiting and reinforcing learning goals both short and longer term to achieve the above;
- e. practical, engaging and pertinent to the lives and aspirations of the young people that seek to embed the “enjoyment of learning” and that are....;
- f. ....also challenging and stretching and move the young people beyond and outside their immediate lives and experiences and raise and broaden their awareness of a “bigger world and heighten and sharpen their aspirations;
- g. thoughtfully and tangibly differentiated to both support and challenge the diversity of ability and ameliorate the obstacles to learning (typically disengagement and disaffection and literacy difficulties) in a BESD classroom.

### **5. Assessment for learning that is:**

- a. alive to each and every opportunity to revisit, reinforce, clarify and move-on for every student in every lesson;
- b. “deep-down” (both written and spoken), AFL that genuinely does just that and moves the student towards their learning goals and seeks also to revisit and make certain consolidation and progress of learning has or is happening.

### **5i. Reporting that is:**

- a. accessible and easily understood by all and diverse stakeholders and suitably modified to achieve this;
- b. accurate and focussed on accurate starting points and progress against challenging learning targets
- c. both written and verbal and both formal and informal, planned and reactive to stakeholder needs for example both formal parent’s evenings and parental requests for additional face to face meetings.

## **6. Behaviour management that is:**

- a. proactive and evidences the teacher understands her responsibility to intelligently and imaginatively overcome the core obstacle to learning in a BESD setting....behaviour;
- b. preventative and evidenced by the high quality, environment, resources and engaging teaching that are the most powerful ameliorators of disaffection in class and facilitators and driver of good learning progress;
- c. committed to those supportive and assertive relationships with BESD students where praise and celebration of learning come freely and frequently but equally respect and courtesy are protected and applied with necessary consequence;
- d. includes both formal and informal pastoral working that develops the character and competence of the young people and engages with parents, carers, colleagues and other professionals to achieve positive personal growth and learning;
- e. skilled and reflective and seeks to build positive and trusting relationships with young people by improving practice and developing skills and insights;
- f. committed to the reasonable and proportionate discretionary and extra effort and time to apply both reward and consequence beyond the conventional school day essential in a BESD setting.

## **7. Reflection, consultation and action that means:**

- a. teachers identify obstacles to learning and look inwards for imaginative solutions that are rooted in improving their practice not seeking to explain underachievement but energetically and wholly committed to challenging and overcoming it by improving teaching to drive learning;
- b. teachers work supportively together and look to the wider and diverse educational community and beyond to develop and improve and overcome obstacles to learning and focussed always on the overriding responsibility to deliver learning success;
- c. every pertinent and credible opportunity for training and development both formal and informal, planned for and encountered is exploited to improve teaching to improve learning.

## **8. Subject leadership that:**

- a. embraces and reflects the reality of teaching in a small specialist setting where subject leadership is a privilege and a responsibility;
- b. ensures subject knowledge and content are continuously and appropriately developed and improved as are teaching styles and methodology;
- c. learning targets are challenging and outcomes are analysed and understood and responded to and can be lucidly explained to colleagues, governors, inspectors and other stakeholders;
- d. an improvement cycle of reflection and action that dovetails with wider school aspirations and improvement.

## **9. A contribution to school improvement that:**

- a. dovetails personal professional development and improvement with the school's corporate aspirations and improvement;
- b. is reflected in performance management that is pertinent, challenging and measurably beneficial to student learning and welfare.

## How do we make sure teaching is at least good and improving?

There are a number of repeating and key and core activities to monitor the quality of teaching and these happen in the context described both above most pertinently the reasoned and reasonable assumption that

- they have chosen to work in a challenging SEMH setting therefore overcoming obstacles to learning, most obviously behaviour, is their responsibility and colleagues are a resource to help and assist not to take over duties and responsibilities;
- that maintaining good order and discipline in class is their responsibility in all but the most complex cases;
- that quality of teaching should be at least good always and expectations are quite reasonably higher commensurate with experience and pay and so support should be proportionate also;
- the dignity and credibility of our specialist work is built on **all teachers** being “leaders” in their classrooms and subjects and being resourceful, problem solving and creative not excuse making and at upper pay levels it is proportionate to expect sustained high performance.

Equally pertinent too and set out below they, *“ must then deliver the prescribed curriculum and subject specialisms but do so in a specialist setting where we mediate and innovate so learning is engaging and practical and relevant to the young people »*

The teaching team’s job description is explicit about teachers’ duty to, *“identify obstacles to learning and look inwards for imaginative solutions that are rooted in improving their practice not seeking to explain underachievement but energetically and wholly committed to challenging and overcoming it by improving teaching to drive learning.”*

Most powerful in all our efforts to make sure teaching is at least good, striving to be outstanding and address emerging weaknesses is the “habitual” conversation about learning and teaching and *“Improving practice and moving over time from “Special Measures” to “good” has been rooted in identifying good teachers and teaching and collectively as a small if diverse team coalescing what is most effective both through coaching and a collegiate approach to best practice.”*

The framework to ensure teachers are reliably self-evaluative and self-improving is set out below.

- The governing body ensures learning and teaching and the critical matter of protecting and promoting a positive climate for learning are always prominent in school improvement and performance management.
- There is a dedicated lead in quality of teaching and learning progress.
- There is a pragmatic and collegiate approach to and ownership of the teaching team’s priorities because shared challenges and goals are more powerful and we actively avoid fractured, esoteric targets.
- Formal observation seeks out those identified priorities to both consolidate and improve.
- Formal observations are moderated by credible others for example currently the school’s psychological service and in recent years colleague special school head-teachers and Ofsted inspectors.
- Identified weaknesses can and do lead to agreed additional observations that seek evidence of progress supplemented and supported by informal observation through habitual visible support and learning walk activity that augments formal observation.
- Self-evaluation against our own “best practice” model moderated by peer and student evaluation
- The extent of good or better learning progress and end of final key stage outcomes.
- The twice weekly and daily opportunities in best practice and briefing sessions respectively that privilege the habitual conversation about best and safest practice



## The curriculum 2016-17

### Three priorities inform what we offer the children:

- Firstly the notion of equality of entitlement to as challenging and credible and diverse a curriculum as any student in mainstream including GCSE and equivalent accreditation consistent with our core belief that *“The children and young people in our care are innately good, bursting with learning potential and as bright and capable as any student anywhere.”*
- Secondly the need for each teacher to be flexible and innovative and make learning meaningful and accessible for young people often disconnected and disaffected from and by school and learning.
- Thirdly as a result of priorities one and two intelligent differentiation and dynamic and pragmatic personalisation that meets the diverse and shifting needs of an equally dynamic and eclectic student body as they mature and move through the school and key stages and with our support their future aspirations and plans start to coalesce so next steps beyond school become naturally clear and achievable.

### The spirit of the curriculum offer

We must then deliver the prescribed curriculum and subject specialisms but do so in a specialist setting where we must mediate and innovate so learning is engaging and practical and relevant to the young people...and fun !

We must constantly reflect on augment and innovate and provide enrichment opportunities so students experience a diversity of learning in a variety of settings including sporting, cultural, social and vocational ; on the playing-field, in a canoe, up a rope, on the trail, in the theatre and the museum, in restaurants and shops, in the workplace and the workshop and through fun and play in school and beyond in their communities and in any and every other way we can explore and innovate for them.

What is taught should drive and embed a love of learning in all the variety and diversity that brings both economic well-being and personal happiness.

- School improvement describes, *“we must continue to focus our energy on the “conversation” about best teaching practice in all its nuances: how can we do things consistently well, differently and or better? It will require a relentlessly proactive pragmatic/creative response... and teacher performance management sets out “Differentiate intelligently and tangibly: engaged children behave well.”*

### Different routes for different children the actual offer

One common and apparently contradictory characteristic of the children and young people in our care is their diversity and difference and like all children as they mature their strengths and interests develop and shift. Throughout there is often the powerful residual hurt and uncertainty about the whole business of learning that must be supported and softened and having the right opportunities and blend of learning key in this.

<b>Strand or route</b>	1. Critical core subjects	2. Options to tackle a range of other academic subjects	3. Vocational and work based learning*	4. Access to enriching sporting, social and cultural activities	5. Access to mentoring, counselling and therapeutic support
------------------------	---------------------------	---	--	---	---

**Education with character is imbued throughout as is the pursuit of recurrent EHCP goals of :greater self-awareness and self-control; building positive relationships with peers and adults and accepting adult direction.**

<b>Rationale</b>	To be literate, numerate and IT literate critical to future economic wellbeing and personal worth and dignity.  Access to next step learning and career opportunities	It has been too easy in the past to narrow the opportunities for SEMH students and studying arrange of subjects to GCSE is both an entitlement and fun.  Evidencing you are a rounded learner and person improves access to future learning and career opportunities.	To ensure academic opportunities are promoted is not to diminish the value and pertinence and powerful draw of vocational learning Shakespeare and brick laying both things of beauty ;-)  The balance and variety of setting and subject and activity has proven beyond question critical to keeping our young people engage and motivated.	It is a healthy legacy of the residential model for SEMH the notion of having fun and developing esteem and insight and character by experiencing a range of physical, social and cultural experiences from abseiling to opera; rounded happy people have enthusiasms and interests.  Many of our young people have limited opportunities outside school.	SEMH is something we make clear we all experience and it is an impediment to our learning, happiness and wellbeing. For many students the “good relationships” with staff and flexible curriculum ameliorate and support them but for a significant minority there is a need for more specialist support.
<b>Content</b>	English, Maths, Science, IT	Art, PE, Humanities, English literature, Media Studies, DT, Home Cooking Skills, Improving Health and Nutrition, Exercise Studies	Catering, Construction, Automotive engineering, Mechanics, Agricultural studies, work placements	A range of outdoor education opportunities for example climbing and abseiling.  A range of social and cultural activities from football matches to the English Touring Opera.	In-house mentoring and qualified specialist counselling. THRIVE and emotional literacy.  Access to mentoring at SWIS and 1-1  Close working with social care and family support services and other supporting professionals for example EPS and EWS
<b>Accreditation</b>	GCSE, AQA functional skills L1 L2, NCFE L1 L2, BTEC L2	GCSE, NCFE L1 L2, WJEC L2 L3	BTEC L1, ABC L1, IMIAL EL3,	John Muir Award, DoE, NICAS L1 L2 L3, BCU 1&2 star, MIAS L1 L2	
	Each student builds a route across strands so for example an academic child would be loaded to the left an able student in vocational learning to the right that said all must access 1. Core subjects. *access from KS3 Y9			Every student has access to a range of activities	The more complex and vulnerable the child the greater the access.

## The offer as children and young people move through key stages

All children will be profiled and their personal “offer” reviewed annually and a balance and blend sought from the above menu in step with their needs, age and key stage.

For some ongoing monitoring and tweaking and developing of their personalised “offer” will be needed others will move more predictably and securely through a conventional route.

Sometimes in crisis radical change is needed for example a period of off-site mentoring and tutoring and a supported reintegration to school.

Predictable and embedded routines and expectations characterise the learning environment at KS2/3 but this shifts and in KS4 what is taught is incrementally and increasingly highly personalised and GCSEs are taken early in this specialist and very particular setting to allow young people to stay motivated and engaged and pursue the vocational learning that many will continue beyond school in college and the workplace.

**At KS2** a thematic model is still used and the children have a class teacher but as the unit is attached to a secondary school and occupies a discrete space but the same site the children and young people can access specialist classrooms and teachers in PE, Science and IT for example and this also prepares them for the transition to KS3.

Some children can remain in the primary school for longer if there needs best met by that stability and in a small pragmatic flexible special school we have created “bridge” or transition classes where children remain with their primary teacher but access the secondary school for breakfast, lunch school meetings and break times.

Access to 4 “enriching sporting, social and cultural activities” and 5 “mentoring, counselling and therapeutic support” supplements and supports the core curriculum.

**At KS3** (and KS4) a secondary specialist teaching model is used and children move in groups organised by ability and social mix and compatibility between subject specialist secondary teachers.

There is a primary class embedded in the secondary school for children and young people who need the consistency, stability and support a familiar and ever present teacher provides.

In year 9 vocational learning opportunities open up alongside 4 and 5 broadening the opportunity to personalise further.

**At KS4** as described above the curriculum offer is *“incrementally and increasingly highly personalised”* and in the grid above *“Each student builds a route across strands so for example an academic child would be loaded to the left an able student in vocational learning to the right that said all must access 1. Core subjects.”*

## Assessment 2016-17

In the recent “world without levels” staff and governors agreed a cautious and pragmatic approach to assessment of learning and we continued to use national curriculum descriptors moving to the new age related expectations allowing us to reliably track children over time.

We now describe where a child is by using the national expectations - the aim would be a grade C at the end of year 11 and we work to that benchmark.

This approach is recommended and used by the “Virtual School” a significant partner for our community given the relatively high proportion of children in care add the necessary rigour around monitoring their progress it was and is then pragmatic and helpful to use their model.

- A child at the end of the first term is said to be "emerging".
- At the end of the second term "developing"
- .At the end of the year "secure".

The number is the year that the learning would happen for the "average" or "on target" child.

So for example 6D is where a year 6 child who is meeting national expectations would be at Easter. Good progress would be a child goes from (for example) 7D to 8D in a year.

Class and subject teachers in the primary and secondary school will moderate their benchmarking using mainstream and special school partners.

Levelled work will be submitted to senior teacher twice a year who then records starting and finish points and monitors and reports on the extent of good progress by child, cohorts, teacher and subject now and over time so we know the extent of good progress.

Class and subject teachers in the primary and secondary school will describe and share their methods for summative (and formative assessment) with the leading teacher and in an annual audit and they will be scrutinised and shared developed and modified as necessary.

We nationally benchmark at the end of KS2 and KS4 by national testing and GCSE respectively. FFT data is accessed as a reliable external measure of potential and a specific finishing point to check GCSE outcomes against.

These external benchmarks provide stability and reliability and in a “world without levels”: that has made making comparisons problematic when both measures and notions of what is “good” progress are being explored and uncertain and diverse?

We can and do use DfE measures to compare however our small and eclectic cohorts of children make conventional tracking and comparisons of data problematic and as a result our governing body reasonably expects to scrutinise detailed anonymised personal journeys for each child and this will not just include learning progress and outcomes but their development and achievements and destinations as young people.

Overarching then is the governing body’s determination in such a relatively small school to know the personal journey of each student and their achievements and destinations beyond school and to track that for as long is practicable.

**Assessment for learning** presents a range of significant challenges and opportunities across phases and subjects but a common challenge is the resistance and inability to access written feedback rooted both in widespread literacy difficulties and the wider disconnection from and disaffection with school and learning that characterises many students.

In practice in our classrooms most assessment for learning happens through speaking and listening and the conversation about learning between teacher and student.

This can only happen when the teacher can securely “boss” the room and there is an embedded positive climate for learning and this an ongoing challenge and that positive climate at risk in our setting; without it the conversation about learning, the clarity about learning objectives and how to achieve them and the scaffolding and supporting of students’ learning can’t happen.

For that reason our ongoing improvement and best practice conversation as a team (see below) maintains a focus on protecting and promoting a positive classroom climate where behaviour is good and assessment for learning can therefore happen and this true of the diverse and various assessment methods used by teachers for example videoing practical demonstration in PE or photographing products in DT.

- “There is a strong and embedded three part lesson and the children observe explicit and known behaviour expectations **most notably speaking and listening** because this impacts most powerfully on both behaviour and learning; these are powerfully positively reinforced across every classroom by every teacher and in every lesson”
- Both at the opening of the lesson and its close it will be clear the teacher has tested and knows what has been learned securely and what needs to be supported and revisited and **what is next (clarity of objective)** and so, critically, do the children.
- The teacher employs pragmatic, practicable and innovative ways to make sure students engage with and understand how to progress and take next steps in both their learning and their behaviour (**assessment for learning**).

So what should assessment look like? What should we see in our lessons? What will formal observation and informal learning walks look for?

There will be a clear three part lesson that begins with clarity of objective rooted in reliable ongoing assessment for learning,

- *“Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupils’ interest and challenges their thinking... Pupils focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for conduct and set clear tasks that challenge pupils.”* Ofsted

Our children and young people will be supported and pushed on according to their needs, strengths and frailties and as Ofsted describe teachers will

- *“Develop, consolidate and deepen pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills...Teachers identify and support effectively those pupils who start to fall behind and intervene quickly to help them to improve their learning.”* Ofsted

Throughout and at the lesson’s end it will be evident teachers...

- *“Use questioning skilfully to probe pupils’ responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts. Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils’ strengths...Pupils use this feedback well and they know what they need to do to improve.” Ofsted*

Whatever the method if the children and young people know where they are, where they are headed and how to get there and learning progress is at least good that is the best evidence of at least competent and likely good assessment for learning.