



# Assessment Policy

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**Policy Details**

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## Contents

<b>1. Aims</b> .....	3
<b>2. Legislation and guidance</b> .....	3
<b>3. Principles of assessment</b> .....	3
<b>4. Assessment approaches</b> .....	4
<b>5. Collecting and using data</b> .....	6
<b>6. Artificial intelligence (AI)</b> .....	7
<b>7. Reporting to parents/carers and mainstream schools</b> .....	7
<b>8. Inclusion</b> .....	8
<b>9. Training</b> .....	8
<b>10. Links with other policies</b> .....	9

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents/carers
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated

## 2. Legislation and guidance

Schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment since the National Curriculum levels were removed in 2014.

This policy refers to:

- The recommendations in the [final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels](#)
- Statutory reporting requirements set out in the [Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005: schedule 1](#)
- [2024 assessment and reporting arrangements \(phonics screening check\)](#)
- [2024 key stage 2 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Principles of assessment

At Raedwald Trust, our approach to assessment is guided by a commitment to foster equitable and meaningful learning experiences across all of our academies. Our principles of assessment are designed to address the unique needs of our pupils within an Alternative Provision (AP) setting, promoting academic growth, personal development, and preparation for future success.

### 3.1. Purpose-Driven Assessment

Our assessment processes are purpose-driven, emphasising both academic and personal development goals. We recognise that effective assessment in an AP setting should support a wide range of outcomes, including cognitive skills, social-emotional competencies, and readiness for reintegration into mainstream education or transition into further education and employment.

### 3.2. Personalised and Adaptive Approaches

Our pupils often present diverse and complex needs, requiring assessment practices that are flexible, adaptive, and personalised. Following evidence-based approaches, our assessments are designed to capture individual progress against personalised targets rather than solely standardised measures. This ensures that all students have equitable opportunities to demonstrate their growth, recognising varied starting points and trajectories.

### 3.3. Formative Assessment for Continuous Improvement

At Raedwald Trust, we prioritise formative assessment to inform teaching and learning. We use assessment as an ongoing process to adjust instructional strategies in response to pupils' progress. Formative assessments provide critical insights into students' learning paths, enabling teachers to scaffold support effectively, fostering self-regulation and engagement.

### 3.4. Clear and Transparent Assessment Practices

Transparency in assessment is key to fostering trust and motivation among pupils and staff. We ensure that our assessment criteria are clear, accessible, and shared with pupils to empower them to take ownership of their learning. Through regular communication, pupils, families and schools are informed about assessment goals, progress, and next steps, which promotes a collaborative approach to achieving positive outcomes.

### 3.5. Balanced and Holistic Approaches

Recognising the need for a balanced approach, we integrate both academic and social-emotional assessment tools to gain a comprehensive view of each pupil's progress. This holistic approach is aligned with the Department for

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Education's focus on mental health and well-being within educational settings (DfE, 2021), ensuring we capture critical aspects of pupils' development that influence their overall success.

### **3.6. Data-Informed Decision-Making**

Our assessments are systematically documented and analysed to inform data-driven decisions at both classroom and Trust levels. This enables us to monitor trends, identify areas of need, and ensure accountability, while respecting the nuances of working in an AP environment. Following best practice, we emphasise the importance of triangulating data from multiple sources to provide a robust picture of student progress.

### **3.7. Inclusive and Equitable Assessment Practices**

In line with our mission to provide inclusive education, our assessment policy is grounded in principles of equity. We strive to reduce bias, recognising that our pupils' backgrounds and experiences may impact traditional assessment measures.

## **4. Assessment approaches**

Within Raedwald Trust, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum. Our assessment approaches are designed to meet the diverse needs of pupils across primary and secondary phases within an Alternative Provision (AP) context. We align our practices with both pedagogical research and statutory requirements, ensuring a balanced approach that supports continuous improvement, recognises achievement, and prepares pupils for future learning.

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment.

### **4.1 In-school formative assessment**

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- **Teachers** to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- **Pupils** to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- **Parents/carers** to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Our formative assessment practices aim to inform ongoing teaching and learning by providing immediate feedback that guides instructional adjustments and supports pupil engagement in their learning journey. Formative assessments are integral to our daily pedagogy, where teachers use questioning, observational assessments, quizzes, and low-stakes testing to gauge pupils' understanding and readiness for further instruction.

#### **4.1.1. Primary Phase**

In the primary phase, formative assessment is embedded within classroom activities, where teachers employ a range of age-appropriate methods to support assessment. Feedback in the primary classroom is most effective when it is immediate and specific, fostering a growth mindset. This approach is tailored to our young learners' developmental stages, supporting early identification of needs and targeted intervention.

#### **4.1.2 Secondary Phase**

In the secondary phase, formative assessments continue to play a crucial role but with adaptations to fit more complex subject-specific learning. Teachers utilise diagnostic assessments, structured peer and self-assessment, and responsive adjustments to lesson plans, helping pupils build metacognitive skills and reflect on their progress. Formative practices here aim to prepare students for increasingly autonomous learning, essential for transitions beyond AP and into Post-16.

### **4.2. In-School Summative Assessment**

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

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- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
  - **Teachers** to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period, and the impact of their own teaching
  - **Pupils** to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve
  - **Parents/carers** to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period

Summative assessment at Raedwald Trust may occur at key points throughout the academic year, providing structured opportunities to evaluate pupils' learning in relation to curriculum milestones and individual learning plans. Summative assessments are adapted to reflect both academic progress and personal development goals, aligning with our commitment to holistic education.

#### 4.2.1. Primary Phase

For primary pupils, summative assessments may be conducted through end-of-unit reviews, termly skills checklists, and phonics screening. These assessments offer insights into foundational skills, literacy, and numeracy, building a base for more advanced learning. Results from these assessments are used to inform personalised support strategies, recognising each pupil's unique learning journey.

#### 4.2.2. Secondary Phase

In the secondary phase, summative assessment may include end-of-term or end-of-topic tests, project-based evaluations, and formalised written work. Subjects such as English, mathematics, and science use these summative assessments to measure attainment against national curriculum standards, while vocational subjects may include performance-based assessments. This approach enables us to track progression towards qualifications and build pathways that reflect pupils' individual strengths and future aspirations.

### 4.3. Nationally Standardised Summative Assessment

Raedwald Trust integrates nationally standardised assessments to the extent appropriate for our pupils' needs and in line with Dual Placement Agreements (DPA) and/or Service Level Agreements (SLA). These assessments provide a benchmark against national standards and are used to inform broader academic planning, identify gaps, and, when suitable, support transitions into mainstream settings.

Nationally standardised summative assessment enables:

- **School leaders** to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment
- **Teachers** to understand national expectations and assess their own performance in the broader national context
- **Pupils and parents/carers** to understand how pupils are performing in comparison with pupils nationally

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) in year 4
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6)
- Nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4

#### 4.3.1. Primary Phase

In primary settings, we are able to implement standardised assessments such as the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs, recognising that these assessments offer insights into pupils' performance relative to national expectations. However, per our DPA and/or SLA, we would expect pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 to access these assessments through their on-roll mainstream school. Working with mainstream schools we can adapt preparatory practices to ensure that testing aligns with pupils' readiness and well-being, minimising anxiety while maximising validity of outcomes.

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### 4.3.2. Secondary Phase

For secondary pupils, we incorporate standardised assessments such as GCSEs and, where applicable, vocational qualifications. These assessments are introduced with preparatory scaffolding and, where necessary, reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility. Nationally standardised summative assessments in secondary aim to validate our pupils' learning against broader educational standards and offer valuable data for future planning and support. Secondary academies, per DPA and/or SLA will work with mainstream schools to ensure entries into appropriate assessments (via the mainstream school) are made on an individual pupil basis.

## 5. Collecting and using data

At Raedwald Trust, data collection and usage are essential components of our educational framework, supporting personalised learning, enhancing accountability, and informing continuous improvement. Our data practices prioritise transparency, efficiency, and the well-being of both pupils and staff. Please refer to our [Data Protection Policy](#) and [Privacy Notice for Pupils](#) for full details about data handling.

### 5.1. When and Why Data is Recorded

We record assessment data at regular intervals throughout the academic year, aligned with key curriculum milestones and individualised learning plans. Data collection is essential to:

- Track individual pupil progress and attainment across academic and social-emotional domains, identifying areas where additional support may be needed.
- Provide a comprehensive view of each pupil's journey, allowing us to celebrate successes and address challenges in real-time.
- Meet statutory requirements for reporting and accountability while respecting the diverse needs and trajectories of our pupils.

### 5.2. Data Collection, Storage, and Use

Data is collected systematically through formative assessments, summative evaluations, and standardised testing, as outlined in our assessment approaches. This data is stored securely in our management information system (MIS), ensuring compliance with GDPR and safeguarding requirements. Collected data is used to:

- Inform teaching strategies and targeted interventions to meet the needs of each learner.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum delivery and resource allocation across the Trust, guiding strategic decision-making.

### 5.3. Communication of Data to Ensure Purposeful Use

We believe in the importance of clear and purposeful communication of data to maximise its impact. Data insights are regularly shared with:

- Teaching and Learning and Progress Staff: Data reports are disseminated to staff through regular briefings and professional development sessions, ensuring that data-driven strategies can be implemented effectively in the classroom.
- Pupils and Parents/Carers: Summaries of pupil progress are shared with families during review meetings and through written reports, ensuring they are informed and engaged in the pupil's learning journey.
- Mainstream schools: Summaries of pupil progress are shared with mainstream schools during review meetings and through written reports, ensuring schools are informed and engaged in the pupil's learning journey.
- Leadership and Governance: Senior leaders and Trustees receive aggregated data reports that provide an overview of performance across the Trust, supporting accountability and oversight.

### 5.4. Reducing Workload through Efficient Data Collection Practices

To support our staff, we employ streamlined and sustainable data collection methods. Recognising the importance of workload management, we:

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- **Limit Data Entry:** Data collection focuses on essential metrics, avoiding unnecessary duplication and ensuring that staff time is directed towards impactful teaching and learning.
  - **Automate Data Analysis:** Our MIS is equipped with tools for automating data analysis and reporting, reducing manual input and enabling staff to focus on interpreting and applying data insights.
  - **Provide Data Training:** Regular training sessions are held to build staff capacity in data literacy, ensuring that data collection and usage are efficient and purposeful.

## 6. Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini. Raedwald Trust recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work
- Pupils **may** use AI tools:
- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

## 7. Reporting to parents/carers and mainstream schools

At Raedwald Trust, we are committed to transparent and regular communication with parents and carers to ensure they are fully informed of their child's progress, achievements, and areas for development. Reporting is structured to provide a holistic view of each pupil's journey, fostering a partnership that supports both academic and personal growth.

### 7.1. Reporting Structure

Our assessment data is communicated to parents and carers through mainstream schools, but additionally:

- **Placement review meetings:** Reports are compiled, summarising pupils' achievements across subjects and activities. These reports highlight strengths, areas for development, and progress towards personalised learning targets.
- **Learning Together Sessions:** These scheduled events offer an opportunity for direct discussion of each pupil's progress, tailored support strategies, and goals through the placement.

#### 7.1.1. Examination and Qualification Results

Where applicable, and in collaboration with the on-roll mainstream school or other relevant stakeholder, we may report on the outcomes of public examinations and vocational qualifications:

- **Secondary Phase:** Results of GCSEs or other qualifications are detailed by subject and grade, along with any additional credits gained toward vocational pathways.
- **Primary Phase:** At the end of Key Stage 2, statutory National Curriculum assessments in core subjects (English, writing, maths and science) are reported by the on-roll mainstream school.

#### 7.1.3. Commitment to Transparency

Raedwald Trust is dedicated to ensuring that all communications with parents/carers and mainstream schools is clear, accessible, and supportive of each pupil's individual needs. Our reporting practices are part of a wider commitment to fostering a strong, collaborative relationship with families and schools, enhancing the quality of our provision and empowering parents and carers as active participants in their child's education.



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## 8. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in, as well as the outcomes achieved.

For pupils working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

## 9. Training

We are committed to ensuring that our teaching staff maintain a high level of expertise in assessment practices. Regular training and professional development are vital to keep teachers informed of the latest developments in assessment and enable them to refine their practice continuously, enhancing the educational experience of all pupils.

### 9.1. Ensuring a Strong Understanding of Assessment Practices

Our training program is designed to foster a thorough understanding of both formative and summative assessment practices across primary and secondary phases. Through structured CPD sessions, staff receive guidance on effective assessment techniques, data interpretation, and strategies for using assessment data to inform instruction.

Training includes:

- Induction Training: New staff members receive foundational training on Raedwald Trust's assessment approaches, including our focus on formative assessment, personalised feedback, and data-informed decision-making.
- Ongoing CPD: Throughout the year, teachers participate in workshops, collaborative planning sessions, and peer observation opportunities that reinforce effective assessment methods, adapted to the Alternative Provision context.

### 9.2. Responsibility for Providing CPD Opportunities

The Director of Curriculum and Learning oversees the planning and delivery of CPD related to assessment. Working closely with senior leaders within each school, the Director ensures that staff have access to relevant professional development. Key responsibilities include:

- Identifying Training Needs: Using feedback from staff appraisals and pupil performance data, the Director and school leaders identify areas where additional support or training is needed.
- Organising Professional Development: The Director coordinates workshops, invites external experts when needed, and encourages staff participation in relevant external training opportunities, such as those offered by specialist education bodies.

### 9.3. Staying Abreast of Good Practice and Sharing Knowledge

To ensure our assessment practices reflect the latest research and standards, Raedwald Trust maintains an active engagement with educational research and best practices in the field. Key mechanisms to stay updated include:

- Research and Networking: The Trust encourages leaders to attend conferences, engage with national assessment networks, and participate in professional forums, keeping our practices aligned with current educational trends.

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- Knowledge Sharing Mechanisms: Regular CPD sessions, termly newsletters, and team meetings provide platforms for disseminating updated practices across the Trust. Staff are encouraged to share insights from any external training or research they have engaged with, fostering a collaborative learning culture.
  - Reflective Practice and Feedback: Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their assessment practices, share experiences with colleagues, and provide feedback on training sessions to inform future CPD planning.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This assessment policy is linked to our:

- Curriculum Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
- Non-examination Assessment Policy
- Examination Contingency Plan
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management and Retention Schedule
- IT and Communications Systems Policy (found in the RT Staff Handbook)