

		Date	Review Date
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Legal Status

This is a statutory policy written with reference to:

- Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, Part 1: Quality of Education
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026)
- Teachers' Standards (Assessment)

Related Documents

- Curriculum Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Behaviour for Success Policy
- PHSE & RSE Policy
- Statement of Equality
- Teaching and Learning Guidance

Policy Applies to

- All staff (teaching and non-teaching) and volunteers working within TILT Education

Availability

This Policy is made available to staff, parents and pupils via the TILT Education website or on request, a paper copy may be obtained from the TILT Education Office.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Proprietors who are both the Head of Centre and Headteacher.

Our Ethos

Assessment, marking and feedback at TILT Education sit at the heart of our provision and reflect our deeply relational, therapeutic and inclusive ethos. We recognise that many of our pupils arrive having experienced disrupted education, repeated academic failure, unmet SEND needs and heightened anxiety around assessment. As a result, our approach is intentionally compassionate whilst remaining academically ambitious.

Assessment is not used as a mechanism for comparison, but as a tool to understand each learner's journey, identify strengths and barriers, celebrate progress and inform next steps. We believe assessment should strengthen identity as a learner, nurture resilience and support pupils to re-engage with education in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Assessment outcomes are never viewed in isolation. We recognise that many of our pupils present with SEMH needs, autism, ADHD, literacy difficulties, communication differences and gaps in prior learning which may either suppress or inflate performance in formal assessments. Consequently, assessment information is always considered alongside professional knowledge of the learner and wider evidence of achievement.

Assessment Principles

Teachers at TILT Education maintain high expectations for all pupils. Assessment is used thoughtfully to set ambitious targets, inform adaptive teaching and ensure pupils are challenged appropriately regardless of starting point. This includes more able learners, those with low prior attainment, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and pupils with English as an additional language.

Assessment is never used in isolation but sits alongside strong relationships, staff knowledge of learners and ongoing dialogue with pupils and families. This ensures that assessment reflects the whole child rather than solely academic performance.

Professional judgement forms an important part of our assessment practice. Whilst standardised assessments provide valuable information, final judgements regarding attainment, progress and placement are based upon a triangulation of evidence including assessment outcomes, classroom performance, independence, work scrutiny, observation and individual need.

Where discrepancies occur between assessment outcomes and classroom performance, professional judgement takes precedence.

Baseline and Diagnostic Assessment

Upon entry, pupils complete reading and spelling assessments using Toe by Toe and Schonell. These provide an understanding of literacy starting points and inform intervention planning. Where pupils present with reading or spelling ages below KS1, they receive targeted phonics support through That Reading Thing, an intervention specifically designed for older learners to preserve dignity, engagement and motivation.

English and Maths are assessed termly through Pass Functional Skills Initial Assessments and Subject Knowledge Assessments. These adaptive assessments provide valuable information regarding potential working levels, strengths, gaps in knowledge and areas requiring intervention. They also familiarise pupils with assessment formats, helping to reduce anxiety and build confidence over time.

Pass Functional Skills Initial Assessment scores are used as a baseline indicator only and are not treated as definitive learner levels. Final learner placement is determined through triangulation of:

- Pass Functional Skills Initial Assessment outcomes
- Pass Functional Skills Subject Knowledge Assessment outcomes

- Reading and spelling age data
- Classroom evidence and work scrutiny
- Teacher assessment and observation
- Independence demonstrated during learning
- Intervention data and progress over time
- Individual SEND, SEMH and communication needs

The following score ranges are used as indicative guidance:

Initial Assessment Score	Indicative Level
0.10 – 0.30	Entry Level 1
0.30 – 0.60	Entry Level 2
0.60 – 0.90	Entry Level 3
0.90 – 1.50	Level 1
1.50 – 2.50	Level 2

These ranges provide a useful starting point for curriculum planning but must always be considered alongside wider assessment evidence and professional judgement.

In some cases, particularly where pupils have strong reading comprehension, verbal reasoning skills, test familiarity or have received assessment support, Initial Assessment scores may overestimate a pupil's independent working level. Equally, anxiety, disengagement or literacy barriers may suppress performance. Therefore, Initial Assessment outcomes are never used as the sole determinant of learner placement.

Supporting Assessment Anxiety

We recognise that anxiety can act as a significant barrier to demonstrating learning. For some pupils, formal assessment environments may trigger disengagement, avoidance, dysregulation or refusal. In these instances, staff adopt a flexible and supportive approach which prioritises emotional safety whilst maintaining assessment integrity.

Where appropriate, staff may provide support during assessments in order to obtain a more accurate picture of a pupil's underlying knowledge and skills. Any support provided must be transparently recorded using the Functional Skills Teacher Support Record.

Support is categorised into four levels:

Level 1 – Emotional & Access Support • Reassurance and encouragement • Emotional regulation support • Breaks and movement opportunities • Time reminders • Technical support • Navigation support	Level 2 – Clarification Support • Re-reading instructions • Clarifying task requirements • Breaking down lengthy instructions • Refocusing attention
Level 3 – Learning Support • Rewording questions • Prompting strategies • Guiding pupils through multi-step processes • Frequent task breakdown	Level 4 – Direct Academic Support • Modelling answers • Leading pupils towards answers • Providing methods or strategies • Scribing beyond simple transcription • Significant teacher intervention required for completion

Level 1 and Level 2 support do not normally affect assessment validity. However, where Level 3 or Level 4 support is required, staff must consider the extent to which support has influenced performance.

Where Level 3 or Level 4 support is required for more than five assessment questions, staff should formally review whether the assessment outcome accurately reflects the pupil's independent level of attainment. In these circumstances, teacher judgement, classroom evidence, work scrutiny, reading and spelling assessments, intervention data and wider assessment information may be used to determine a more representative working level.

Following any supported assessment, staff must record:

- The type and level of support provided
- The number of questions affected by support
- Whether support influenced performance
- The learner's apparent independent working level
- Whether the assessment result is considered representative of classroom performance

Any adjustment to a learner's working level must be clearly evidenced through the Teacher Support Record and supported by wider assessment evidence.

This approach ensures assessment remains both compassionate and academically robust, allowing staff to identify a pupil's true learning needs whilst reducing barriers created by anxiety and previous negative experiences of education.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is embedded continuously through questioning, observation, dialogue, mini quizzes, plenaries and feedback conversations. Low-stakes assessment is prioritised as it encourages risk taking, supports retrieval and provides regular success experiences.

These frequent informal checkpoints allow teachers to respond immediately to misconceptions and adapt teaching accordingly, ensuring learning remains personalised and responsive.

Marking and Feedback

Feedback at TILT Education is rooted in relationships and dialogue. Staff prioritise feedback that is clear, kind and actionable, enabling pupils to understand what they have achieved and what their next steps are.

We use the SWANS framework (Strengths, Weaknesses and Next Steps) to ensure feedback remains balanced and constructive. Green pen is used as a reflective learning tool enabling pupils to respond to feedback, edit work, demonstrate improvement and recognise new learning. This approach supports metacognitive development by encouraging pupils to think about their learning, identify progress and take ownership of next steps.

For many of our learners, green pen reflection reframes mistakes as part of the learning process rather than evidence of failure. It provides achievable opportunities for success, builds confidence and makes progress visible to pupils, staff and parents. The use of a contrasting colour ensures that original responses, feedback and improvements can be clearly seen, supporting moderation and evidencing learning development over time.

Staff also use consistent annotation codes to provide transparency around independence levels, support provided and resources used. This ensures accurate interpretation of progress and supports moderation across the provision.

To support consistency and high-quality practice, staff receive ongoing professional development in assessment, marking and feedback approaches, including the effective use of SWANS feedback and green pen reflection. This shared understanding strengthens consistency across the provision, enhances staff confidence and ensures pupils experience a coherent and supportive feedback culture.

Spelling Correction

At TILT Education, we recognise that many of our pupils have experienced repeated difficulties with spelling, literacy and written communication. Whilst we believe that accurate spelling is an important life skill, we also recognise that excessive correction can undermine confidence, reduce motivation and discourage pupils from taking risks in their writing.

Our approach to spelling correction is therefore purposeful, proportionate and personalised. The primary purpose of marking is to improve learning rather than identify every error.

Within English lessons, spelling correction is closely aligned to each learner's current Functional Skills working level (Entry Level 1 to Level 2). Teachers explicitly teach and reinforce the statutory spelling expectations appropriate to the learner's stage, ensuring that pupils develop secure spelling knowledge progressively over time. High-frequency words, subject-specific vocabulary and spellings identified through assessment are revisited regularly through teaching, practice and feedback.

Across the wider curriculum, staff focus on correcting spellings that are:

- linked to the learner's current Functional Skills spelling objectives;
- high-frequency words that pupils are expected to use independently;
- key curriculum vocabulary or technical subject terminology; or
- words that have been previously taught but continue to require reinforcement.

Staff do not routinely correct every spelling error. Instead, they use professional judgement to select a manageable number of spellings for pupils to improve, helping learners experience success whilst avoiding cognitive overload. Where appropriate, pupils may be encouraged to self-correct using dictionaries, displays, word banks, electronic spell checkers or teacher prompts, promoting independence and resilience.

Repeated spelling errors are used diagnostically to inform future teaching, intervention and personalised targets rather than as a measure of failure. This approach supports pupils in becoming increasingly accurate writers whilst maintaining confidence, motivation and a willingness to write independently.

Where spelling is not the focus of the lesson or assessment, staff ensure that feedback prioritises the intended learning objective so that literacy support complements, rather than detracts from, subject learning.

Conversation / Verbal Feedback Contribution Grid

At TILT Education, we recognise that for many pupils, particularly those with SEND, SEMH needs, speech and language difficulties or previous negative educational experiences, verbal contribution can be as significant as written output. Staff therefore acknowledge and assess pupils' participation in discussion, verbal reasoning and reflective conversation as part of the wider assessment picture.

The Conversation / Verbal Feedback Contribution Grid supports pupils in understanding what effective communication, listening and participation look like in practice. It provides clear and consistent language for staff feedback whilst promoting confidence, self-expression, oracy skills and respectful discussion.

The grid also supports pupils who may initially struggle to contribute verbally by valuing small steps in participation and making progress visible over time. This aligns with our relational and trauma-informed approach by recognising effort, encouraging safe risk-taking and reducing anxiety around “getting things wrong” publicly.

Level	Code	Descriptor	What it looks like in practice	Feedback Phrase Example
High Contribution	C3	Insightful and active contributor	Shares ideas confidently and regularly; builds on others' points; asks thoughtful questions; justifies opinions with clear reasoning or evidence	“C3 – You contributed thoughtful ideas and developed the discussion well.”
Secure Contribution	C2	Relevant and consistent contributor	Participates appropriately; responds to questions; offers relevant ideas; listens and sometimes builds on others' contributions	“C2 – You contributed relevant points and engaged well in discussion.”
Developing Contribution	C1	Limited or emerging contributor	Contributes occasionally or only when prompted; ideas may be brief or unclear; limited engagement with others' ideas	“C1 – Try to contribute more regularly and expand on your ideas.”

Staff may use these codes within books, verbal feedback records, discussion-based activities, intervention sessions and practical lessons where verbal communication forms a significant part of the learning process.

Progress Monitoring

Progress is monitored through a triangulation of formative assessment, coursework evidence, half-termly teacher assessment RUBRIC grids, intervention outcomes and termly diagnostic testing. Data is analysed alongside qualitative information such as engagement, confidence and independence, reflecting our holistic understanding of progress.

The high staff-to-pupil ratio at TILT Education enables teachers to know learners exceptionally well, ensuring assessment information is meaningful and used effectively to inform planning.

Implementation

Assessment, marking and feedback are implemented consistently across the provision through shared expectations, moderation activities and ongoing professional dialogue. Teachers use diagnostic information to adapt curriculum pathways, plan interventions and ensure lessons remain appropriately challenging and accessible.

Green pen routines, SWANS feedback and consistent recording practices provide coherence whilst allowing flexibility to meet individual needs.

At TILT Education:

 Pupil original work – usual black or blue pen/pencil

- Staff feedback – purple pen
- Pupil reflection and improvement – green pen

Feedback Recording Codes

- VF – Verbal feedback
- I – Independent
- WS – Worked with support
- Scribed (initials) – Adult recorded work
- Resources used recorded (e.g. number blocks, visuals, manipulatives)

Verbal Feedback

C3 Insightful and active contributor

C2 Relevant and consistent contributor

C1 Limited or emerging contributor

Impact

The impact of our approach is visible not only in academic progress but also in improved confidence, engagement and willingness to participate in learning. Pupils develop a more positive relationship with assessment and begin to view mistakes as part of growth rather than evidence of failure.

Teaching is responsive and targeted, barriers are identified earlier and interventions are more effective. Importantly, pupils report feeling safer to take risks and more able to recognise their own progress, supporting long-term re-engagement with education.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

Ensures:

- statutory assessment requirements met
- robust assessment framework
- policy implementation
- monitoring and evaluation
- Training implementation

Teaching Staff

Responsible for:

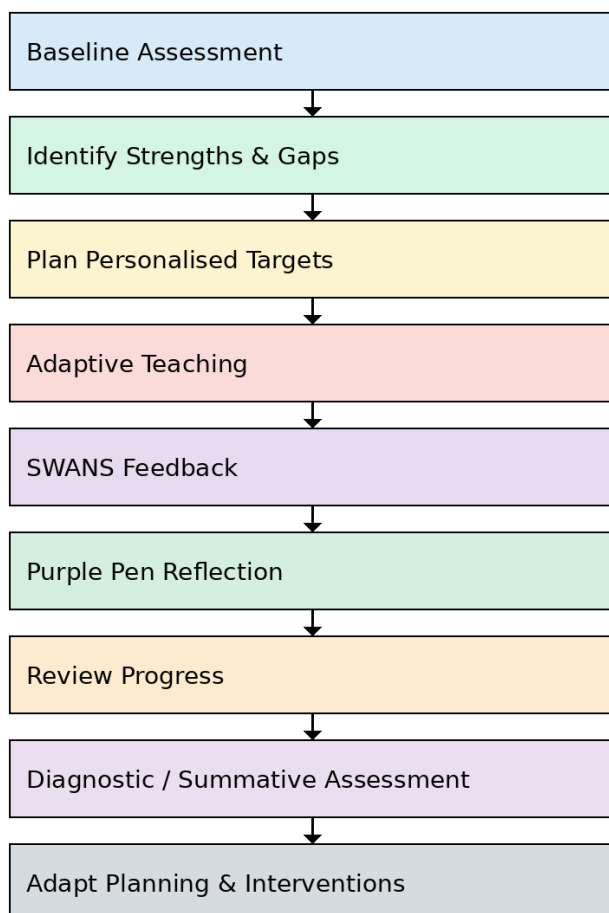
- effective assessment practice
 - adaptive teaching
 - providing SWANS feedback
 - accurate tracking
 - reasonable adjustments
 - maintaining marking consistency by following this policy
-

Communicating with Parents/Carers

We support parents by:

- target setting meetings
- termly progress reports
- communication regarding intervention and support
- collaborative review of progress

TILT Assessment Cycle



Book Scrutiny Record

 Teacher: _____

Date:

 Subject: _____

Scrutinised by:

Class / Group: _____

1. Presentation and Organisation

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Work is dated and clearly organised				
Learning objectives/outcomes are evident where appropriate				
Work shows pride and appropriate presentation for learner ability				
Evidence of curriculum coverage and progression				

2. Marking and Feedback

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Staff feedback completed in purple pen				
Feedback follows SWANS principles (Strengths, Weaknesses, Next Steps)				
Feedback is clear, constructive and developmental				
Feedback identifies next learning steps				
Feedback is proportionate and appropriate to learner need				

3. Green Pen Reflection

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Evidence of pupil response to feedback				
Green pen used appropriately				
Corrections, improvements or reflection evident				
Reflection demonstrates learning from feedback				

4. Assessment for Learning

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Evidence of formative assessment throughout work	☐	☐	☐	
Misconceptions identified and addressed	☐	☐	☐	
Work demonstrates progression over time	☐	☐	☐	
Assessment appears to inform subsequent learning	☐	☐	☐	
Evidence of retrieval, questioning or checking understanding	☐	☐	☐	

5. Independence and Support Recording

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Independence recorded appropriately (I)				
Support recorded appropriately (WS)				
Scribing identified where applicable				
Resources/support strategies recorded where appropriate				
Level of support is transparent				

6. Verbal Feedback and Oracy

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Verbal feedback (VF) evident where appropriate				
Conversation contribution codes used (C1/C2/C3) where relevant				
Evidence that verbal contribution forms part of assessment picture				

7. Adaptive Teaching and SEND Practice

Criteria	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
Work appropriately matched to learner starting point				
Appropriate scaffolds/support evident				
High expectations maintained				
Learner challenge evident				
Provision reflects individual SEND/SEMH needs				

8. Evidence of Progress

What progress can be seen within the work?

What assessment evidence supports this judgement?

Strengths Identified

1.

2.

3.

Areas for Development

1.

2.

3.

Agreed Actions