

# James Calvert Spence College

## Secondary Assessment Policy

Date policy last reviewed: 15/10/24

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____

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## **Statement of intent**

James Calvert Spence College recognises the importance of offering a broad and balanced curriculum which is underpinned by our shared school vision.

Our curriculum consists of activities designed to promote the intellectual, personal, social, physical and cultural development of pupils.

We believe that to facilitate teaching and learning, a comprehensive assessment strategy is central to helping pupils progress and fulfil their potential.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring early and accurate identification of individual needs.
- Involving all staff, pupils and parents in the assessment process.
- Ensuring pupils have individual targets.
- Regularly monitoring progress.
- Acknowledging achievement.
- Working with other agencies as needed.
- Providing equal opportunities for all.

Adoption of this policy will ensure that assessment is integrated methodically into teaching strategies, so that progress can be monitored and barriers to learning identified at pupil, group, class, and whole-school level.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2004
- DfE (2020) Headteachers' Standards
- DfE (2021) Teachers' Standards
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2024) 'Secondary accountability measures'
- DfE and STA (2024) 'School reports on pupil performance: guide for headteachers'
- DfE (2014) 'The national curriculum in England'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Access to Fair Assessment Statement
- Accessibility Policy
- Assessment and Examination Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the success of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, in accordance with the school's Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis, in conjunction with relevant members of staff.
- Ensuring reports are provided by the headteacher and heads of department on a termly basis.
- Taking action where areas for improvement have been identified.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Knowing, understanding, and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Establishing and sustaining high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn.
- Ensuring teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.

- Ensuring a broad, structured, and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills, and values that will be taught.
- Establishing effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities.
- Ensuring valid, reliable, and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.
- Ensuring effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Ensuring the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils, including those with additional needs.
- Ensuring staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities.
- Establishing and overseeing systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently.
- Ensuring this policy is adhered to consistently across the school.
- Ensuring staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake assessment activities.

Heads of department will be responsible for:

- Working with colleagues to review and develop curriculum policies and schemes of work.
- Being accountable for the progress of pupils in their department.
- Reporting on curriculum effectiveness to the SLT and the governing board.
- Keeping up to date with changes in their subject area and curriculum requirements.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of subject teaching.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Setting high expectations which inspire, motivate, and challenge pupils.
- Promoting good progress and outcomes by pupils.
- Demonstrating good subject and curriculum knowledge.
- Planning and teaching well-structured lessons.
- Making accurate and productive use of assessment.
- Knowing and understanding how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements.
- Making use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress.
- Using relevant data to monitor progress and plan subsequent lessons.
- Giving pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.
- Taking responsibility and accountability for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
- Taking responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Taking day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the school's SEND policy.
- Coordinating specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues.
- Working closely with staff, parents, and other agencies.
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing support to pupils with SEND.

### 3. Equal opportunities

When planning and implementing assessment activities, the school will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure that the chosen assessment frameworks are free from bias, stereotyping, generalisation and discrimination.

Care will be taken within all schemes of work to ensure that all pupils have access to the required curriculum content, alongside appropriate assessment strategies and activities that comply with the requirements of the school's Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the Access to Fair Assessment Statement.

### 4. Assessment aims and principles

The process of assessment is central to helping pupils progress and fulfil their potential. It provides a framework for the setting of learning objectives to inform lesson planning, resources, and support.

Whilst all forms of assessment are formative, sometimes assessment has summative benefits also. The school will collect summative grades from its rigorous internal processes three times a year – or twice for a year group with external examinations.

The school will use the following definitions for the purposes of this policy.

**Assessment:** Activities undertaken by pupils to assess their skills and knowledge, which:

- Provides information to use as feedback.
- Enables modification of teaching and learning activities to improve achievement.
- Leads to formative or summative feedback regarding a pupil's academic progress.

**Diagnostic assessment:** Any activity which aims to quantify what pupils already know about a topic and gives teachers initial data to measure progress from.

**Formative assessment:** Any activity which assesses progress throughout the school term and guides teachers in how to modify their teaching to help their pupils achieve.

**Summative assessment:** Activities and examinations which formally assess final achievement at chosen points throughout the year dictated by the assessment schedule.

**Feedback:** A strategy whereby information is given to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals or outcomes. It should aim to, and be capable of producing, improvement in pupils' learning.

#### Statutory summative assessment

The main purpose of statutory summative assessment is to:

- Ascertain what pupils have achieved in relation to the areas of the national curriculum.
- Hold schools accountable for the attainment and progress made by their pupils.
- Inform parents and secondary schools about the performance of individual pupils.
- Enable benchmarking between schools, as well as monitoring performance locally and nationally.

The school is aware of its duty to ensure that **all** eligible pupils undertake national curriculum and other statutory summative assessments, in line with any published assessment and reporting arrangements.

The school is aware that there is no statutory duty on parents to ensure that their children participate in tests and assessments; however, the school will, where necessary and appropriate, exercise its legal powers to ensure children attend school regularly, in accordance with its Attendance Policy.

## **5. Assessment practices**

Assessment will be integrated methodically into teaching strategies, so that progress can be monitored and barriers to learning are identified at a pupil, group, class and whole-school level.

Regular reviews will take place and plans will be communicated and actioned at all levels to ensure a successful assessment process.

The school's assessment procedures will take account of pupils' additional needs and SEND, and the progress of different cohorts of pupils will be analysed to ensure that the needs of individuals and specific groups are met.

Assessment at the school will take place in a range of different ways for different subjects; however, all assessments will embrace the principles outlined in this policy.

### **Formative assessment**

Formative assessment, also often referred to as Assessment for Learning (AfL), refers to any assessment activities undertaken by teachers and students that provides feedback that can subsequently be used to adapt teaching methods to meet pupil needs and improve learning outcomes.

It creates a positive learning environment where pupils can see the steps necessary for their own success and is a powerful way of raising pupils' achievement, based on the principle that pupils will improve most if they understand the aims of their learning, and their progress towards it.

Formative assessments will be used to:

- Identify pupils' strengths and gaps in their skills and knowledge.
- Identify the next steps for learning.
- Provide information on the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies.
- Inform future teaching and learning plans, strategies, and programmes.
- Facilitate the setting of appropriate targets for the class, group and individual.
- Track pupils' rate of progress.

- Identify individuals and groups for specific intervention support.

Formative assessment is not intended to be punitive; it will be used to guide teaching and learning, and help pupils progress. It will not be used to judge a teacher's performance.

Teachers will provide regular opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning and the output of their peers. This supports pupils to be actively involved in their learning and to be able to identify their own targets for improvement. Self-assessments and peer assessments may include the following:

- Peer marking
- Question and answer sessions
- Hot seating
- Quizzes
- Self-assessment

Teachers will use a range of assessment tools and materials, such as:

- Analysis of pupils' work in books.
- Reading records.
- The results of class tests and published tests.
- On-going marking.
- Making notes on pupil observations.

### **Summative assessment**

The use of summative assessment is important for schools to be able to gain accurate information about a pupil's attainment and performance and inform parents and teachers about pupil progress.

Summative assessments will be used to:

- Identify attainment through one-off tests at any given point in time.
- Record performance in a specific area on a specific date.
- Provide end of key stage test data against which the school will be judged.
- Provide information about cohort areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future.
- Determine a pupil's final grade.
- Inform teachers' performance management outcomes.
- Monitor the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.

Methods of summative assessment will include:

- Scheduled internal assessments.
- Projects which contribute to a final grade.
- External examinations, such as the national curriculum tests and statutory examinations.

The results of published tests will be used to contribute to overall teacher assessments.

### **Marking and feedback**



Pupils' learning will be marked in line with the Marking and Feedback Policy. Marking and feedback will directly relate to subject-specific assessment criteria and individual learning targets. Teachers will use findings from their marking to address knowledge gaps.

Dedicated time will be allotted during lessons for pupils to review and respond to feedback and make improvements and corrections to work. Feedback will take a variety of forms depending on the age of the pupil, the activity undertaken, and the teacher's judgement. Marking and feedback strategies are varied throughout the school, but the principle is based on informing students and parents about current attainment in order to help students to progress.

Achievement and progress are both celebrated and rewarded at James Calvert Spence College.

### **Schemes of assessment**

Summative assessment is blind to both staff and students. Where appropriate, pillar marking is employed to reduce the workload on moderation and provide consistency.

## **6. Assessment in KS3**

As there are no statutory summative assessments during KS3, nor any DfE-prescribed models for in-school assessment, the school has the freedom to choose their own approach to formative and in-school summative assessment, according to what best suits their pupils, curriculum, and staff.

For pupils in KS3, the school will follow the principles and practices of assessment as laid out within this policy.

The school will ensure that curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy are inextricably linked, and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress will be directly linked to the curriculum followed by the school.

### **Baseline assessment**

Pupils joining the school will receive a baseline assessment when they start.

### **Curriculum content**

In line with national guidance, the school will always have due regard to the national curriculum and will ensure that every pupil has access to the following core subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- RE
- RSHE

The school will also ensure pupils also have access to the following foundation subjects:

- Art and design
- Citizenship
- Computing
- Design and technology
- Languages
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE

Pupils will choose their subjects for their GCSEs at KS4 in Year 9.

In order to measure progress, the school will assess pupils against the programmes of study and attainment targets set out within the statutory curriculum framework for KS3 and KS4.

## **7. Assessment in KS4**

### **Qualifications**

Although pupils can choose the GCSE courses they study, there are some compulsory GCSE subjects that **all** pupils must take:

- English – English literature and English language or a single English GCSE.
- Maths.
- Science – combined science or individual sciences.

Optional subjects available to pupils vary, however, in line with national guidance the school will offer pupils the opportunity to obtain an approved qualification in one, or all, of the following four groups of subjects, known as 'KS4 entitlement areas':

- The arts – comprising art and design, music, dance, drama, and media arts
- D&T
- The humanities – comprising geography and history
- MFL

GCSEs will be the main qualifications undertaken by pupils in KS4 - Year 10 and Year 11.

Where appropriate, the school will offer vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) alongside GCSEs - the most commonly available being BTEC qualifications and OCR Cambridge Nationals at levels 1 and 2.

Pupils in Year 9 will be provided with adequate guidance when choosing their GCSE and VTQ options in preparation for KS4 and will be encouraged to choose subjects that challenge and interest them.

Beyond the requirements outlined above, schools have the freedom to offer a range of GCSE subjects. When selecting qualifications, the school will consult and examine the subject content documents published by the DfE for all accredited GCSEs, as well as the course specifications outlined by the various examining boards offering these courses.

The selection and assessment of GCSE and VTQ subjects will be undertaken in line with the school's relevant policies on curriculum and assessment.

The school is aware that approval by an exam board for the school to deliver a qualification signals the start of a contractual relationship. The school will conduct examinations and assessments in accordance with the JCQ's 'General Regulations for Approved Centres' and the related JCQ publications.

## **8. Supporting pupils with SEND**

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils who attend the school.

Where required, pupils with SEND will receive the additional support they require, academically and personally, in line with the school's SEND Policy. This may include:

- Working with TAs in smaller groups to work on topics covered in lessons to ensure they do not fall behind their peers.
- Taking measures to ensure pupils with SEND are not discriminated against in any way.
- Teachers monitoring the progress of pupils with SEND and reporting this to the SENCO.
- Adopting a close working relationship between the SENCO and teachers to help them break down any barriers pupils with SEND have to education.

## **9. Staff training and development**

Teachers and classroom support staff will be provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction and will be informed in the event of any changes.

All teaching staff will have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities as part of their continuing professional development.

## **10. Tracking and reviewing progress**

Pupil progress meetings for each year group will be scheduled termly and focus on:

- Reviewing the progress of all pupils.
- Identifying and monitoring cohorts of pupils that are underperforming.
- Identifying barriers to learning that occur across classes, e.g. attendance, punctuality, behaviour, EAL and SEND factors.
- Selecting intervention strategies to implement as a team to tackle barriers to learning.
- Keeping an up-to-date record of all strategies and reviews that have been implemented.
- Creating an action plan where necessary– including factors affecting underachieving pupils and the steps that will be taken to combat this.

## **11. Moderation and quality assurance**

The process of moderation is an essential part of the assessment system and teachers will meet periodically with department colleagues to analyse pupils' work against curriculum requirements.

Moderation of levelling will take place on a termly basis to ensure consistency.

Teachers will be involved in the moderation process to ensure agreement on criteria for progress in the following ways:

- Collaboration with colleagues
- Partnership with colleagues from other schools within the local area
- Attendance at exam board standardisation meetings
- Attendance at LA sessions to ensure judgements are in line with other schools

Portfolios of moderated work will be kept securely by subject leaders.

## **12. Reporting**

Assessment data for each pupil will be updated for parents on a termly basis. This is to ensure

- Positive home-school relationships.
- Information for parents.
- Opportunities for discussion with parents/carers.

Parents will be invited to attend parents' evenings to discuss the progress of their child.

The headteacher will report progress to the governing board on a termly basis, in the form of a headteacher's report.

Where appropriate and agreed, assessment information will be shared with partnership agencies.

## **13. Records and record keeping**

Summative assessment records, such as GCSE examination results, will be kept electronically and held for six years after the year of the examination.

Formative assessment records, such as pupils' work, will be held for one year.

## **14. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board, headteacher and examinations officer on an annual basis.

The scheduled review for this policy is October 2025

