Assessment Policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

'We Love, Live, Learn and Grow.'

Approved by:	Mr. L. Green	**Date:** 19/09/2025
Last reviewed on:	09/2025	
Next review due by:	09/2026	

<u>School Mission Statement</u>

'Inspired by the example of St. Vincent we strive to create a safe and caring teaching and learning environment where all love, live, learn and grow in community so as to serve God and the Common Good'.

Our aims are that each individual in the community of St. Vincent's;

- Can love and respect God and each other and be loved and respected.

- Can live their life to the full.

- Can learn from each other and from opportunities and experiences, according to their needs and abilities.

- Can grow in faith, confidence, wisdom and understanding and so reach their potential.

Contents

1. Introduction

At St Vincent's School, assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. As a specialist school for sensory impairment and other needs, we recognise that assessment must be accessible, meaningful, and tailored to the individual needs of our pupils.

Assessment informs future lesson planning and allows pupils to receive feedback which they act on to make progress over time. This policy sets out our approach to assessment, ensuring it supports pupil progress whilst being manageable and sustainable for staff.

Assessment at St Vincent's is not a standalone activity but is embedded within our Teaching and Learning Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy, creating a coherent approach to supporting pupil achievement.

2. Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Provide accurate information about pupil progress and attainment to inform teaching and learning

- Enable pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do

- Support pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points

- Identify pupils' strengths and areas for development

- Inform target setting for individual pupils and whole-school improvement

- Provide meaningful information to parents, carers, and external agencies

- Ensure assessment is accessible and appropriate for pupils with sensory impairments and other needs

- Track progress against Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes

- Celebrate achievement and raise aspirations

- Identify pupils who need additional support or intervention

- Inform curriculum planning and resource allocation

- Comply with statutory requirements whilst maintaining a manageable workload for staff

3. Our Guiding Principles

Assessment at St Vincent's School is underpinned by the following principles:

3.1 Assessment is Integral to Teaching and Learning

Assessment is part of the school's wider assessment processes, which aims to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress. It informs you about what is taught, how it is taught, and the support pupils receive.

3.2 Assessment is Accessible

All assessment methods must be accessible to pupils with sensory impairments and other needs. We will adapt assessment approaches, materials, and environments to ensure every pupil can demonstrate their learning effectively.

3.3 Assessment is Purposeful

Every assessment activity has a clear purpose. We will not assess for the sake of assessment. All assessments should either inform teaching, support pupil progress, or provide necessary information to stakeholders.

3.4 Assessment is Accurate and Reliable

We will use a range of assessment methods to build an accurate picture of pupil progress. We will moderate assessments internally and externally to ensure consistency and reliability.

3.5 Assessment Celebrates Progress

Assessment recognises the progress pupils make from their individual starting points, not just their attainment against age-related expectations. We celebrate small steps and significant achievements equally.

3.6 Assessment is Manageable

Eliminating unnecessary workload will be at the forefront of any decisions related to marking and feedback. Assessment systems will be efficient, avoiding duplication and unnecessary data collection.

3.7 Assessment Involves Pupils

Where appropriate, pupils should be encouraged to assess their own work against the learning objectives and success criteria. Pupils will be involved in understanding their progress and setting their own targets where developmentally appropriate.

4. Types of Assessment

We use three main types of assessment at St Vincent's School:

4.1 Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning - AfL)

Day-to-day assessment that informs teaching and learning in real-time. This is ongoing and embedded in lessons.

Purpose:

- To check understanding during lessons
- To identify and address misconceptions immediately
- To adapt teaching in response to pupil needs
- To provide immediate feedback to pupils

Examples:

- Questioning and discussion
- Observation of pupil work and participation
- Self and peer assessment
- Verbal feedback during lessons

4.2 Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

Periodic assessment that measures what pupils have learned over a period of time.

Purpose:

- To evaluate pupil attainment at a specific point

- To track progress over time

- To inform reporting to parents and external agencies

- To identify pupils needing intervention

- To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching

Examples:

- End of unit assessments

- Termly assessments

- Standardised tests (where appropriate and accessible)

- Practical assessments and performances

- Portfolio assessments

- Formal examinations (Entry Level, GCSE, BTEC)

4.3 Baseline Assessment

Assessment conducted when a pupil joins the school or at the start of a key stage to establish their starting point.

Purpose:

- To understand pupils' prior learning and current attainment

- To inform curriculum planning and differentiation

- To set appropriate targets

- To provide a baseline against which to measure progress

Examples:

- Initial assessments on entry to school

- Transition assessments between key stages

- Specialist assessments (e.g., vision assessments, hearing assessments, literacy and numeracy screening)

5. Assessment Methods and Accessibility

As a specialist school for sensory impairment, we ensure all assessment methods are accessible and allow pupils to demonstrate their learning effectively.

5.1 For Pupils with Visual Impairments

Adaptations include:

- Providing assessment materials in appropriate formats (large print, braille, audio, digital)

- Using tactile resources and diagrams

- Allowing additional time for reading and processing information

- Providing assistive technology (screen readers, magnification software, electronic note-takers)

- Ensuring appropriate lighting, contrast, and positioning

- Using verbal descriptions for visual content

- Allowing alternative methods of recording (typing, audio recording, scribe)

- Adapting practical assessments to be accessible (e.g., tactile science experiments)

5.2 For Pupils with Hearing Impairments

Adaptations include:

- Providing written instructions alongside verbal instructions

- Using visual supports, BSL, or SSE where appropriate

- Ensuring good acoustic conditions and minimal background noise

- Using assistive listening devices

- Allowing additional processing time

- Positioning pupils to optimise access to visual and auditory information

- Providing transcripts or captions for audio/video content

- Using visual timers and cues

5.3 For Pupils with Additional Needs

Adaptations include:

- Breaking assessments into smaller, manageable chunks

- Providing additional time and rest breaks

- Using simplified language and clear instructions

- Providing scaffolding (word banks, sentence starters, visual supports)

- Allowing alternative methods of demonstrating knowledge (oral presentation, video, practical demonstration)

- Using concrete resources and real-life contexts

- Adapting assessment criteria to focus on individual progress

5.4 Access Arrangements for Formal Examinations

For pupils taking formal qualifications (Entry Level, GCSE, BTEC), we will:

- Apply for appropriate access arrangements with exam boards (e.g., braille papers, modified papers, extra time, readers, scribes)

- Ensure pupils are familiar with access arrangements through practice and mock exams

- Work with external agencies to ensure assessments are fair and accessible

- Maintain detailed records of access arrangements and their rationale

6. Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

Formative assessment is embedded in everyday teaching and learning at St Vincent's School.

6.1 Key Strategies

Effective Questioning Teachers will ask questions to make sure they've understood expectations for learning and to identify and address misconceptions.

Teachers will use:

- Open-ended questions to encourage thinking

- Targeted questions to check understanding

- Wait time to allow pupils to process and formulate responses

- Follow-up questions to probe deeper understanding

- Questions adapted for pupils' communication needs

Observation Teachers and support staff will observe pupils during lessons to:

- Assess engagement and understanding

- Identify pupils who need additional support

- Inform in-the-moment adjustments to teaching

- Celebrate effort and achievement

Learning Objectives and Success Criteria Pupils should be encouraged to assess their own work against the learning objectives and success criteria.

- Learning objectives will be shared with pupils in an accessible format at the start of each lesson

- Success criteria will be clear, specific, and differentiated where appropriate

- Pupils will be supported to understand what success looks like

- Pupils will self-assess against criteria where developmentally appropriate

Feedback should be timely and respond to the needs of the individual pupil so that they can actively engage with the feedback.

Formative feedback includes:

- Immediate verbal feedback during lessons

- Written feedback on key pieces of work (maximum three detailed pieces per term)

- Peer and self-assessment

- Whole-class feedback addressing common misconceptions

For full details, see our Marking and Feedback Policy.

Misconception Identification Teachers will actively look for and address misconceptions by:

- Analysing pupil responses and work

- Using diagnostic questions

- Providing immediate correction and re-teaching where needed

- Planning future lessons to address common errors

6.2 Pupil Involvement in Formative Assessment

Pupils will take responsibility for their own learning and know their targets and how to improve.

We encourage pupils to:

- Understand their learning objectives and success criteria

- Self-assess their work against criteria

- Identify their own strengths and areas for development

- Set personal learning goals

- Reflect on their progress

- Ask questions when they don't understand

The level of pupil involvement will be adapted to suit developmental stage and individual needs.

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment through ongoing formative assessment, and formal summative assessment at the end of each Key Stage.

7. Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

7.1 Assessment Schedule

Termly Assessments

- Conducted at the end of each term (Autumn, Spring, Summer)

- May include formal tests, practical assessments, portfolio reviews, or teacher assessments

- Results recorded on our tracking system and used to inform termly pupil progress meetings

End of Key Stage Assessments

- Formal assessments at the end of Key Stages 1, 2, 3, and 4 (where appropriate)

- May include statutory assessments where applicable (adapted as needed)

- Used to inform transition planning and target setting for the next key stage

- Shared with parents/carers and receiving schools/settings

Formal Qualifications (Key Stages 4 and 5) All pupils at KS4 and 5 study a range of qualifications from Entry Levels to GCSEs and BTECs.

- Pupils work towards appropriate qualifications based on their abilities and aspirations

- Internal assessments and mock exams prepare pupils for final assessments

- Results are recorded and celebrated, and inform post-16.

7.2 Curriculum for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment (CFVI)

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum that includes full access to the National Curriculum from Key Stages 1 through to 5 and all areas of the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment (CFVI). Teaching and Learning Policy - 2025-26

Assessment includes:

- Progress against CFVI areas (e.g., independence skills, orientation and mobility, sensory development, assistive technology)

- Specialist assessments conducted by Qualified Teachers of Visual Impairment (QTVIs) and other specialists

- Progress recorded and reported alongside National Curriculum subjects

7.3 Standardised Assessments

Where appropriate and accessible, we may use standardised assessments to:

- Provide objective measures of attainment

- Compare pupil progress against national norms (with caution, recognising our pupils' unique needs)

- Identify specific areas of strength or difficulty

- Inform intervention planning

All standardised assessments will be adapted or alternative assessments used where standard tests are not accessible or appropriate.

8. Recording and Tracking Progress

8.1 Recording Systems

We use the following systems to record pupil progress:

Electronic Tracking System

- Termly assessment data entered for all pupils

- Tracks progress against individual targets and EHCP outcomes

- Generates reports for analysis and monitoring

- Accessible to teachers, subject leaders, and SLT

Pupil Portfolios

- Evidence of pupil work across subjects

- Includes photographs, videos, and work samples

- Demonstrates progress over time

- Used for moderation and celebration

EHCP Outcomes Tracking

- Progress against EHCP outcomes recorded termly

- Informs Annual Reviews

- Involves input from teachers, therapists, and support staff

8.2 What We Track

We track:

- Attainment in National Curriculum subjects (where applicable)

- Progress towards EHCP outcomes

- Progress in CFVI areas (independence, mobility, sensory development, assistive technology)

- Functional skills and life skills

- Social, emotional, and behavioural development

- Engagement and participation in learning

- Attendance and punctuality

8.3 Progress Measures

Progress is measured by:

- **Distance travelled:** The progress made from individual starting points, regardless of final attainment

- **Small steps:** Recognising incremental progress, particularly for pupils with complex needs

- **Breadth of progress:** Progress across academic, functional, social, and independence skills

- **Consistency:** Progress demonstrated across different contexts and over time

We do not compare our pupils' progress against national age-related expectations as our primary measure, as this is often inappropriate for pupils with sensory impairments and complex needs. Instead, we focus on individual progress and achievement.

9. Reporting to Parents and Carers

We will provide regular targets for pupils and provide verbal reports. Pupils will receive a written report twice per year, once at Annual Review and once at Monitoring Evening.

9.1 Monitoring Evenings

Frequency: Annually (Summer)

Content:

- Discussion of pupil's progress towards individual targets

- Celebration of achievements and strengths

- Areas for development and next steps

- Pupil's engagement, behaviour, and social development

- Opportunity for parents to ask questions and share information

- Targets set for the next term

Format:

- Face-to-face meetings (or virtual if needed)

- Interpreters or communication support provided where needed

- Accessible formats for any written materials

9.2 Written Reports

Annual Review Report

- Comprehensive report on progress towards EHCP outcomes

- Covers all areas of learning, including CFVI areas

- Includes input from all professionals working with the pupil

- Shared at the Annual Review meeting

- Informs EHCP updates and future planning

Monitoring Evening Report

- Shorter report focusing on academic progress and attainment

- Covers all subjects studied

- Celebrates achievements and identifies areas for development

- Accessible format (large print, braille, electronic, or audio as requested)

9.3 Ongoing Communication

In addition to formal reporting, we maintain ongoing communication with parents through:

- Weekly home-school journals

- Phone calls and emails as needed

- Newsletters, website updates, open days

10. Target Setting

10.1 Principles of Target Setting

Targets at St Vincent's School are:

- Individual: Based on each pupil's starting point, abilities, and needs

- Aspirational yet achievable: Challenging but realistic

- Specific and measurable: Clear criteria for success

- Time-bound: With a clear timeframe for achievement

- Meaningful: Relevant to the pupil's learning and development

- Accessible: Written in language the pupil can understand (where appropriate)

- Collaborative: Involving pupils, parents, and relevant professionals

10.2 Types of Targets

EHCP Outcomes

- Long-term targets set annually and reviewed at Annual Reviews

- Cover education, health, social care, and independence

- Inform all other target setting

- Progress tracked termly

Academic Targets

- Subject-specific targets set termly

- Based on assessment data and teacher knowledge

- Linked to curriculum objectives and EHCP outcomes

- Shared with pupils and parents

Personal Development Targets

- Focus on independence, social skills, behaviour, or emotional development

- May be linked to CFVI areas (e.g., mobility, sensory development)

- Involve input from therapists and support staff

- Reviewed regularly and adjusted as needed

Short-term Lesson Targets

- Immediate next steps identified through formative assessment

- Shared with pupils during lessons

- Inform planning for subsequent lessons

11. Moderation and Standardisation

To ensure assessment is accurate, consistent, and reliable, we engage in regular moderation and standardisation activities.

11.1 Moderation

Within Departments/Key Stages

- Teachers meet termly to moderate assessments

- Sample pupil work reviewed against agreed criteria

- Discussion ensures consistent application of standards

- Identifies areas where additional support or training is needed

Moderation Schedule

- Autumn term: Baseline assessments and initial target setting

- Spring term: Mid-year progress checks and intervention planning

- Summer term: End-of-year assessments and transition planning

Exam Board Moderation

- For GCSE, BTEC, and Entry Level qualifications

- Follow exam board requirements for internal standardisation

- Submit work for external moderation as required

11.3 Moderation Records

We maintain records of:

- Moderation meetings and outcomes

- Exemplar work at different levels

- Agreed assessment criteria and standards

- Actions taken to improve consistency

These records inform future assessment practice and support new staff in understanding our assessment standards.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

12.1 All Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning and delivering accessible, high-quality teaching that enables pupils to make progress

- Using formative assessment strategies to inform teaching and learning

- Conducting summative assessments as per the assessment schedule

- Recording assessment data accurately and on time

- Providing timely, accessible feedback to pupils (see Marking and Feedback Policy)

- Setting and reviewing individual pupil targets

- Communicating progress to parents at parents' evenings and through reports

- Participating in moderation activities

- Using assessment information to plan interventions and adapt teaching

- Maintaining assessment records and pupil portfolios

- Managing the assessment calendar and ensuring assessments are conducted on time

12.2 Support Staff

Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils to access assessments

- Observing and recording pupil progress during lessons

- Providing feedback to teachers on pupil understanding and progress

- Supporting pupils to understand and work towards their targets

- Contributing to assessment records and reports

- Implementing interventions as directed by teachers

12.4 Specialist Teachers and Therapists

Qualified Teachers of Visual Impairment (QTVIs), Teachers of the Deaf, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists are responsible for:

- Conducting specialist assessments in their areas of expertise

- Advising on appropriate assessment methods and adaptations

- Contributing to EHCP outcome setting and review

- Providing assessment information for Annual Reviews

- Supporting teachers to make assessments accessible

- Monitoring progress in specialist areas

12.5 Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

The SENCo is responsible for:

- Overseeing assessment of pupils with SEND

- Coordinating EHCP Annual Reviews

- Ensuring assessment information informs EHCP outcomes

- Supporting teachers to adapt assessments for individual needs

- Liaising with external agencies regarding assessments

- Monitoring progress of vulnerable groups

- Leading on intervention planning

12.6 Assessment Coordinator

The Assessment Coordinator is responsible for:

- Maintaining the electronic tracking system

- Providing training and support to staff on assessment procedures

- Preparing assessment data for SLT, governors, and external agencies

- Coordinating moderation activities

- Ensuring compliance with statutory assessment requirements

12.7 Senior Leadership Team

The SLT is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction for assessment

- Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the assessment policy

- Conducting pupil progress meetings with teachers

- Analysing whole-school data and identifying trends

- Ensuring assessment informs school improvement planning

- Providing CPD and support for staff

- Analysing whole-school assessment data

- Reviewing and updating the assessment policy

- Ensuring assessment is manageable and does not create unnecessary workload

- Reporting on pupil progress to governors

- Ensuring statutory assessment requirements are met

12.8 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall leadership of assessment across the school

- Ensuring the assessment policy is implemented effectively

- Reporting to governors on pupil progress and outcomes

- Ensuring assessment supports school improvement

- Ensuring resources are available for effective assessment

- Ensuring the policy complies with statutory requirements

12.9 Governing Body

Governors are responsible for:

- Approving the assessment policy

- Monitoring the effectiveness of assessment through data reports and school visits

- Challenging and supporting the school to improve pupil outcomes

- Ensuring assessment is manageable for staff

- Ensuring the school meets statutory assessment requirements

- Reviewing the policy regularly

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

13.1 Quality Assurance Activities

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

Work Scrutiny

- Regular sampling of pupil work across subjects and key stages

- Checking that assessment is informing planning and feedback

- Ensuring work is appropriately differentiated and accessible

- Conducted by subject leaders and SLT

Learning Walks

- Observing formative assessment in action during lessons

- Checking that learning objectives and success criteria are shared

- Observing pupil engagement with self and peer assessment

- Noting effective questioning and feedback

Data Analysis

- Termly analysis of assessment data

- Tracking progress of individuals, groups, and cohorts

- Identifying pupils at risk of underachievement

- Evaluating the impact of interventions

- Comparing progress across subjects and key stages

Pupil Progress Meetings

- Termly meetings between teachers and SLT

- Discussion of individual pupil progress and barriers to learning

- Planning interventions and support

- Setting or reviewing targets

- Sharing good practice

Pupil Voice

- Regular discussions with pupils about assessment and feedback

- Pupil surveys on understanding of targets and how to improve

- Pupil participation in school council discussions about assessment

- Informal conversations during learning walks

Staff Voice

- Staff surveys on workload and effectiveness of assessment systems

- Discussion in staff meetings and department meetings

- Feedback through performance management processes

- Opportunities to contribute to policy review

Parent Voice

- Parent surveys on reporting and communication

- Feedback gathered at parents' evenings and Annual Reviews

- Opportunities to comment on reports

- Parent forum discussions

13.2 Key Performance Indicators

We will monitor:

- Percentage of pupils making expected or better progress from their starting points

- Percentage of pupils achieving their termly targets

- Progress towards EHCP outcomes

- Attainment in formal qualifications (Entry Level, GCSE, BTEC)

- Attendance at parents' evenings

- Timeliness and quality of reports

- Staff workload related to assessment

- Accuracy and consistency of assessment judgements (through moderation)

13.3 Reporting to Governors

The Headteacher and SLT will report to governors:

- Termly on pupil progress and outcomes

- Annually on assessment policy implementation and effectiveness

- On any changes to statutory assessment requirements

- On staff training needs and CPD related to assessment

Governors will receive data in an accessible format with clear analysis and recommendations.

14. Staff Development and Support

14.1 Induction

New staff will receive induction on assessment through:

- Discussion with their line manager or mentor

- Overview of the assessment policy and procedures

- Training on the electronic tracking system

- Guidance on adapting assessments for pupils with sensory impairments

- Observation of assessment practice

- Access to exemplar materials and assessment resources

- Support from subject leaders and the Assessment Coordinator

14.2 Ongoing CPD

CPD will be provided for all staff on:

- Effective formative assessment strategies (linked to Teaching and Learning Policy)

- Adapting assessments for accessibility

- Using assessment to inform planning and intervention

- Using data to track and improve pupil progress

- Specialist assessment approaches (e.g., CFVI assessments)

- New assessment requirements or qualifications

- Reducing workload through efficient assessment practices

CPD will be delivered through:

- Whole-school INSET days

- Department meetings

- Coaching and mentoring

- Observation of good practice

- External training courses

14.3 Support and Resources

Staff can access:

- Assessment guidance documents and templates on the shared drive

- Assessment resources adapted for accessibility

- Support from subject leaders, SENCo, and Assessment Coordinator

- Specialist advice from QTVIs, Teachers of the Deaf, and therapists

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, by the Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and governors.

The review will consider:

- Impact on pupil progress and outcomes

- Accuracy and consistency of assessments

- Manageability and staff workload

- Feedback from staff, pupils, parents, and governors

- Changes to statutory requirements or best practice

- The needs of our specialist pupil population

- Alignment with Teaching and Learning Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy

Following review, the policy will be updated as necessary and approved by the Governing Body.

16. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Teaching and Learning Policy - Assessment is embedded in high-quality teaching

- Marking and Feedback Policy - Feedback is a key part of formative assessment

- SEND Policy - Assessment for pupils with special educational needs

- Curriculum Policy - Assessment informs curriculum planning and delivery

- Accessibility Plan - Ensuring all assessments are accessible

- Data Protection Policy - Secure storage and handling of assessment data

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy - Assessment may identify safeguarding concerns

- School Improvement Plan - Assessment data informs school priorities