

INTELLIGENCE-LED ASSESSMENT

Changing the face of progress tracking for pupils with SEN.



**Belle Vue
School**



**Cornfields
School**



A CULTURE OF HIGH STANDARDS

We have a culture of high standards and we are unapologetic about having the highest expectations. We provide qualifications, experiences and tasks that build pupils' self-esteem, increase their confidence and improve academic performance.

Our mission is to improve the life chances of all the pupils we work with and our curriculum does just that. We have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all, no matter their circumstance and prior experience. As a result, our pupils are inspired, engaged and motivated to make significant progress. They are also keen to contribute – and the data speaks for itself. Our pupils have gained hundreds of AQA Unit awards and each one supports further education progression or work placements. All of our pupils work to achieve a Level 1 certificate in Food & Hygiene – a standard recognised by the catering and hospitality industry. They all gain St John's Ambulance first aid training and certificates. Our pupils work hard to achieve their best and are able to secure qualifications ranging from Entry Level to GCSEs with an additional option of achieving vocational qualifications.

Using proven methods adopted for in-depth scrutiny in policing, our data analyst has established key groups, themes and trends. Much like the intelligence-led policing model, our own model of tracking and assessment focuses on working with reliable information, which is acted upon intelligently to ensure positive outcomes are achieved and progress is made.

The compassionate approach in our school is underpinned by staff training in topics such as teaching for learning, SEN(D), Autism, ADHD, Trauma, Attachment, SEMH and additional needs particular to our cohort. Staff engage in Video Interaction Guidance (VIG). VIG is a relationship-based approach that allows participants to reflect on their communication and draws attention to successful practices, supporting them to make changes if desired.

We know that by being informed, reflective and aware of our strengths, we can become more robust in our planning, teaching and the evaluating of our pupils' progress. We believe that looking inwards, developing innovative practices and having the highest expectations of our pupils – aligned with their individual needs – will result in outstanding progress being made by every pupil.



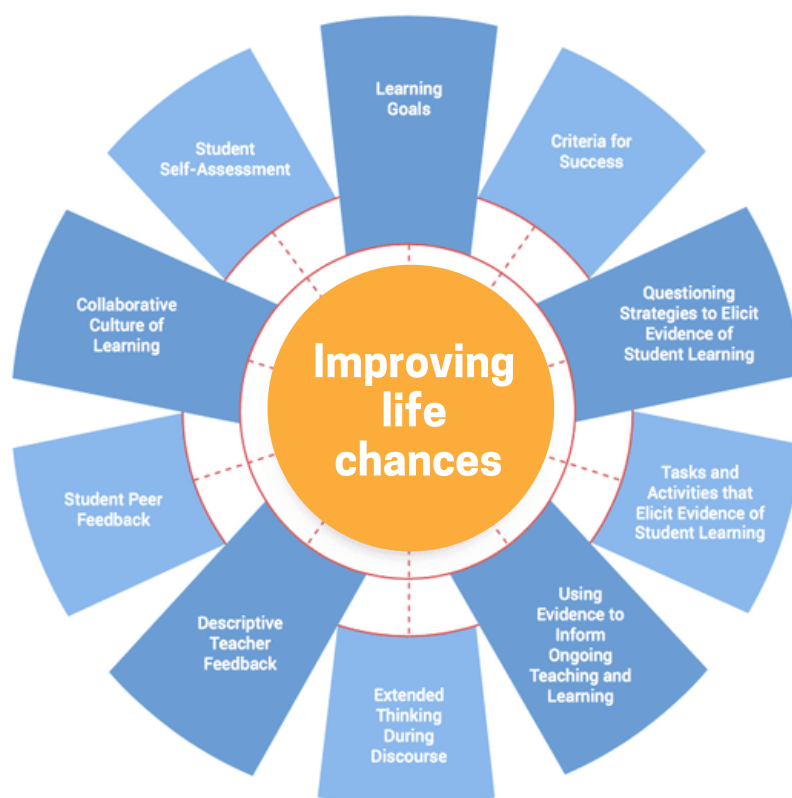
DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE

We focus on building knowledge, skills and understanding securely, rather than simply focusing on progressing as quickly as possible through a series of levels that pupils would struggle to keep up with or understand. Our system of tracking and assessing is matched to EHCP outcomes and is both outcome and curriculum-led. In December 2019, the Department for Education published a document entitled 'Assessment Without Levels: Qualitative Research.' In this report, it outlined that "Only a minority of interviewees felt that their school's assessment approach worked well for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). "Others said that their school's approach did not adequately recognise the small steps of progress made by pupils with SEN. The research also endorsed the need to address the issue of how best to recognise pupils' progress, especially for pupils with SEN. We are determined to develop a best-practice model to track the progress of pupils with SEN.

EMBRACING AUTONOMY

In 2014, the Department for Education removed the requirement for schools to track progress via National Curriculum levels. This decision was designed to complement the introduction of a revised, more challenging National Curriculum. It was hoped that the removal of levels would provide an impetus for pedagogical change, increasing pupil motivation and engagement, and making better use of formative assessment in the classroom. By removing levels, the intention was to reduce the time spent by teachers in recording and tracking progress towards numerical targets – and release time for more in-depth teaching and formative assessment approaches that would support progress across the attainment spectrum.

There are four main components to our assessment approaches – *formative assessment, summative assessment, moderation and tracking and reporting systems*. Our system has a focus on formative assessments. Our approach enables teachers to differentiate activities, refine their planning and provide support more effectively. The below diagram outlines some of the components we use as part of our formative assessments.



A FLUID EHCP IS A PASSPORT TO SUCCESS

A successful, efficient assessment framework comes from combining first-hand observation with data, assessments (both formal and informal) and knowing pupils well. We spend quality time with every pupil in order to grasp and identify a full representation of their potential and progress.

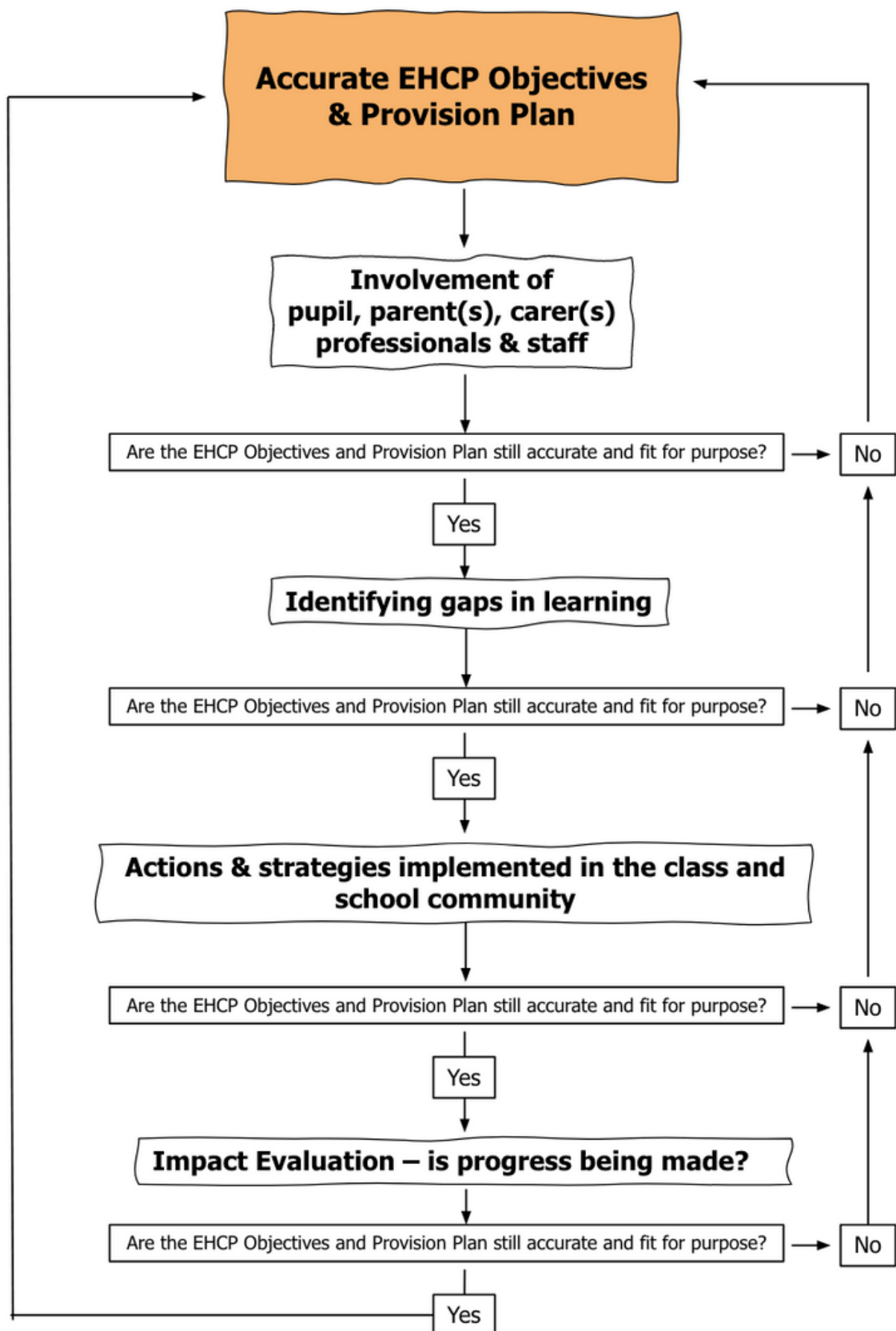
We believe that every EHCP has to be relevant and accurately reflect the pupil, because this details their statutory entitlements. We always put the pupil first and will always include them in those early discussions. The EHCP has to be child-centered and we encourage them to take ownership of their plan. As a result, our pupils come to trust us and understand that we are here to help make a difference. An EHCP is a fluid and ongoing plan that underpins targets and objectives. We ensure EHCPs are fit for purpose and support progress being made.

We reassess every EHCP twice a year – once formally to comply with the legal demands and then secondly as a staff group (more than the recommended frequency) – to ensure that we are constantly meeting the changing and evolving needs of the pupil. We ensure that baselines are accurate and that strategies are appropriate, to ensure we can facilitate every pupil's potential.

The EHCP objectives are a golden thread weaved throughout all activities and teaching. These objectives are unique to each pupil and we ensure that we support every one to achieve tangible results through the delivery of their bespoke programme.



The below diagram shows how we use the EHCP to track progress. This process enables tracking to be ongoing and fluid, while allowing for robust actions to be taken in real time if it is identified that progress is not being made, or that our actions and strategies are not proving effective.



SOLUTION FOCUSED

When a pupil joins the school, in addition to formal amendments, we informally assess their skills through every aspect of their day. This includes arriving in school, responding to our routines, watching their social interactions and sensory responses to the environment, and of course, their academic skills. Over time, we will screen their welfare needs and individual priorities in order to be able to support the pupil holistically. Without this form of assessment, we cannot expect a pupil experiencing emotional and social problems to be available for learning and therefore to make progress.

Initially, given tasks may be low-demand to enable us to develop relationships and trust with the pupils. They may be non-directive and experiential, as many of our pupils have not been in a school setting for some time. We have high expectations and use the detailed daily data we gather for our pupils through observation, individual work and interactions as their baseline. We use our information to determine strategies in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our pupils.

We have a creative, solution-focused approach to challenges and for some pupils we need to re-think programmes and interventions daily.

EHCP - A MULTI AGENCY APPROACH

Is this plan fit for purpose and robust enough to move forward? This is the key question we ask ourselves upon every pupil's enrolment at our schools. We truly believe that the EHC plan has to be written from the pupil's perspective and that it remains a partnership between the SENCo, parents/carers, teachers, pupils - and the range of multi-agency professionals who are supporting the pupil.

We believe that no SENCo should work in isolation and that every EHCP should be a fluid document, which is accurate, relevant and achievable. We are incredibly passionate about this - the plan should accurately reflect the pupil at that point in time and should develop and change as they do.

The voice of the child must always come through in the process. We assess and record with formal testing, class observation and photographic evidence. The pupil is always involved in decision-making, so they are empowered and have a say in their future.



TRACKING

The table below outlines our schedule of formal recording progress reporting. We ordinarily hold termly 'progress days' where parents/carers are invited into school to see their child's books and work. They also have the opportunity to meet staff and take part in lessons.

Parents/carers are discouraged from waiting for a progress report, EHCP review or 'progress day' to raise any issues and to instead talk to staff whenever any concerns are identified.

In addition to reporting to parents/carers, the schools track and report internally on a weekly basis via the operations meeting, which is attended by the senior leadership team and is chaired by the Headteacher. Other data such as attendance, behaviour, admissions, exams, qualifications and staff data is robustly tracked through this meeting.

What	When	Who
Statutory EHCP review	Annually	SENCo led
School-led EHCP review	6-monthly	SENCo led
Provision plan update	Ongoing but formally each term	Class teacher
School report (full)	Annual	Class teacher
School report (short)	6-monthly	Class teacher



INTELLIGENCE-LED ASSESSMENT

We adopt ongoing continual assessments, both formal and informal. Much of our progress tracking comes from listening and observing, or from staff sharing learning and best practices. We are constantly revisiting every pupil's EHCP and delivering graduated and stepped interventions.

Our ability to learn lessons and to develop our practices has been taken a step further with the mirroring of the analytical intelligence-led policing model. Intelligence-led policing was itself developed from military experience. This model critically analyses the information available and serves to develop actions and strategies to resolve any issues that are present or can be reasonably expected to occur.

Our intelligence-led assessment is based on the police intelligence model. Our methodology therefore also follows this model. Our Headteacher and founder Mary McKeeman comes from a multi-agency background with many years as a police officer, where she worked within intelligence units developing and delivering intelligence-led policing.

To put it simply, we use data intelligently. Our principles of using data are as follows:

1. Data is secured with the purpose of improving pupils' life chances.
2. We ensure the quality of our data is of a high standard, it must be reliable and accurate.
3. We ensure that the data and systems used to collect the data are simple and make the process achievable.
4. Teachers and staff working frontline with pupils should not be engaged routinely on data activities. Formative data/tracking processes should be simple and should not contribute to teacher/staff workload.

This intelligence-led approach means that information and data is considered and results in actions and plans being developed and driven forward based on accurate and reliable information. Due to the fact we focus on information that is accurate, we are more likely to have success and ensure progress is made. It is an approach that generates significant results, as demonstrated by our high attendance record, significant engagement rates and qualification awards.



CASE STUDIES

The below case studies illustrate examples of successful outcomes where we have performed accurate and efficient assessments.



Pupil A joined the school with less than four weeks until GCSE examinations and a prediction of 7 GCSE passes. The coronavirus pandemic meant that teacher-assessed grades were being awarded this year and so the pupil arrived with a list of outstanding evidence to be produced to support these grades. Accurate scrutiny of the pupil's work and clear baselining provided the evidence to show that the GCSE levels were not achievable. Through accurate assessment we determined that this pupil was in fact working at Entry Level and not GCSE level. Working with key stakeholders, this was resolved and avoided the potential of the pupil moving to post-16 education with an offer based on levels that were not being reached. Being able to move forward with transparency and integrity not only improved the life chances for this pupil, but also reduced the likelihood of harm by virtue of a disparity in post-16 placement levels.



Pupil B had come on to us as a school refuser with a complex history of poor self-esteem, self-destructive behaviours and a complete refusal to engage with education or any other professionals. Intensive supervision and assessments were undertaken to understand the core issues, to build professional relationships and to support the pupil and family. Initial assessments were undertaken in the home or later in school on a 1:1 basis as the pupil could not tolerate being in the same room as other pupils. Assessments and observations were evidenced, documented and tracked to ensure a strategic intelligence-led plan was formulated. This has resulted in the pupil's re-integration into the classroom and the achievement of a good maths GCSE while still in Year 10.



Pupil C's EHCP documented a primary need of SEMH and that a series of SEMH specialist schools had successively ended school placements as they were unable to meet the pupil's needs. Documentation showed a history of violence, aggression and a refusal to engage in school. A change of environment with a calm, nurture-based approach resulted in these behaviours being significantly reduced, to the point that the primary need assessment was able to be queried with evidence-based examples. A further Educational Psychologist report was commissioned, which supported this query, and as a result the EHCP was changed to reflect the primary need as ASC. This pupil has gone on to achieve qualifications and there has been a complete turnaround in their self-esteem and confidence.



A FOCUS ON THE BASICS

Of course, we have high expectations, with clear and consistent boundaries. We explicitly teach social skills and prosocial behaviour. All pupils have a voice and opportunities to contribute to the school community. We recognise that academia is a priority, but that social and life skills are hugely important for every pupil to function in adulthood.

We place significant emphasis on the basics of reading, English, 'spelling, punctuation, and grammar' (SPAG) and teaching functional numeracy. A strategy on many EHC plans is one of pupils requiring 'over teaching', with multiple opportunities to practice key skills. We fully embed this into the curriculum.

In addition to maths and English being taught, we also have reading time-tabled, maths through practical application (MAPA) 'writing for a purpose' and 'Basics' – which focuses on mastering elements of Maths and English such as handwriting, times tables and high-frequency words for spellings. All of these are core skills that are required for future employment.

We aim for all our pupils, regardless of their difficulties/barriers to learning, to achieve a functional reading level – but most of our pupils exceed this. Our intent is for all pupils to read at an age-appropriate level through rigorous and sequential assessments so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and retained.

We recognise that having a 'functional reading age' is pivotal in enabling our pupils to access a broader and richer curriculum. We address social disadvantage by ensuring our pupils have every opportunity to achieve this, thus improving their life chances as an adult.



A ROBUST & UNIQUE APPROACH

We know that every individual is unique and that our approach to learning must reflect this. The same approach must also apply to our assessment and progress tracking.

Assessment and tracking have to be accurate and reliable to successfully inform planning and have impact. We secure accurate and sharp data that enables us to precisely plan next steps and secure outcomes.

We have captured theories and learnings from other agencies and sectors. We seek to utilise approaches that have been shown to have had an impact in other sectors. The intelligence led policing model has many elements that are transferable into school settings.

THEORY MEETS REALITY - DOES IT REALLY WORK?

We adapt these practices within our schools for the benefit of our pupils. So, does this approach work? Our pupil, parent/carers and staff feedback, plus our attendance, behaviour and outcomes data strongly suggests that it does. In fact, we would go further and state that our outcomes show compelling evidence of a strategy that produces exceptional outcomes, offering a truly viable and practical approach to tracking and securing progress for SEN pupils.



TRAILBLAZERS

We are bold and determined to improve the life chances of our pupils. We will not maintain the status quo, because to do so would be deploying the same approaches and strategies that have already failed our pupils.

We are passionate about how we define and track our pupils' progress. We only work with reliable data that is simply obtained, tracked through the statutory process of the EHCP and supplemented by our additional systems. It is this very clarity that provides us with the tools to improve the outcomes and life chances of our pupils.

We are resolute in our determination to improve the life chances of our pupils, employing bold and innovative strategies in order to achieve this. Strategies are constantly assessed to ensure they are the most effective available and are achieving the desired outcomes.

Pupils' progress is key and our ability to achieve accurate and reliable data ensures we are able to utilise the best resources at the right time to ensure progression is achieved. Individual Education, Health and Care Plans reflect our evidenced observations to allow smart outcomes to be set which enrich pupils and improve their outcomes and thus improve their life chances.

