Assessment Policy

Policy Owner	Group Education Quality & Outcomes Lead
Applies to	This policy applies to all services
Associated Documents	This policy links to:- • Curriculum Policy • Quality of Education Policy • Relational Support Policy • Exams Policy
Review Frequency	This Policy is to be reviewed, updated or amended annually
Date of Implementation	December 2022
Review Date	January 2026
Next Review date	January 2027
Approved by Chief Executive Officer	*Dan Alipaz* Dan Alipaz (Jan 21, 2026, 8:27am)
Approved by the Chair of the Board	*Stephen Bradshaw* Stephen Bradshaw (Jan 21, 2026, 10:11am)

Assessment Policy

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1. Introduction

Purpose

This policy supports the school's aims to provide a caring, structured learning environment in which all students can have the experiences that will enable them to develop academically, socially, behaviourally and emotionally, thus reaching their potential and in which students and staff feel safe, secure and valued.

Accurate assessment ensures that our curriculum is pitched to the appropriate level and that all students are provided with a programme that enables them to make ambitious progress towards their outcomes and aspirations.

At our school, we believe that assessment is first and foremost in identifying students' needs in order to aid development and progression and that this process begins at the admissions stage of the student's journey.   Assessment is used to evaluate students' progress and enable staff to plan effectively and to effectively scaffold and differentiate the learning programme for each student. The process offers all students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, understanding and what is required to develop further.

We believe that these procedures should not only meet the statutory requirements but should be manageable and useful so that they can inform future teaching and learning. We recognise that assessment is about more than simply academic outcomes, but instead should incorporate the intentions behind the wider curriculum, including personal, social, emotional, and spiritual development.

Assessment also facilitates communication and understanding around the intention of a student's curriculum and the progress that they are making within it, including why this learning is meaningful, with the wider community around the student and the student themself. This allows all members of this community to contribute their views in relation to the impact of the curriculum in terms of outcomes and how this curriculum should be designed and implemented in order to achieve ambitious progress in all areas in relation to each student's needs, outcomes, and aspirations.

Assessment also means student self-assessment and reflection, so that assessment is something "done with" and not "done to" students and that students can become the leaders of their own learning.

We believe that the Assessment, Recording and Reporting process should provide us with the information that will enable us to evaluate our own work and help raise the standards of academic and relational achievements for all our students.

Assessment plays a key role in the school self-assessment and development process as well as in that of governance.

An Approach to Assessment Based on Difference, not Deficit
Many if not most students at Spaghetti Bridge schools have had a difficult experience of education and have often internalised feelings of inadequacy or lack of confidence in their ability to learn. We believe that this is often due to an education system that emphasises, following medical models, an idea of deficit in relation to age-related achievement. At Spaghetti Bridge, we follow a difference model, that proposes that we all have different and unique needs, abilities, passions, and aspirations, and that every person can make ambitious progress as long as their curriculum is aligned to who they are as a person and who they want to become.

This does not mean that we are not ambitious; conversely, we believe that each individual should have the opportunity to become themselves and change the world through becoming lifelong students, connecting to their community, and learning to be healthy and well. Instead, we believe that what this means and what this looks like is different for each unique individual and that all have the right to be supported in their own way as a part of this journey.

All assessment tools that we use, therefore, are meant to assess the progress of each individual in achieving their potential in becoming themselves on the way to changing the world.

Legal Framework
This policy refers to the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.
It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Student Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

2. Scope
This policy will impact all student facing staff.

3. Policy Statement
Our Schools' policy on assessment will guide practice in several areas:

- It will lead to successful personalisation, in that it will enable the school to build up a unique picture of each student's strengths and areas for development, as well as accounting for the context of each particular learning, thus enabling the school to offer the right curriculum and the student to make well-informed choices.
- It will enrich school practice by ensuring that sessions, and the staff / student interaction, are underpinned by a shared understanding of achievement.
- It will support curriculum planning, in that awareness of what students have achieved and are finding difficult should be the starting point for short and medium term plans; a broader sense of how students are responding to what they are being taught should inform the way in which subject and curriculum leaders modify their longer-term plans.
- It will lead to sound student tracking, through which staff can form a view of both the general progress of individual students, of their progress in relation to particular targets, and of their response to particular interventions. This can in turn inform future planning for the individual, as well as reporting to parents, carers, other professionals and Local Authorities.
- It will provide an evidence base for school improvement, in that student progress in its widest sense should confirm the effectiveness of the curriculum, the impact of school improvement priorities.

Assessment approaches

Our school will use its approach to assessment to:

- Enable staff to know their students well as individuals, and to monitor progress and forward plan for both individual students and groups.
- Give staff the language they need to describe achievement and progress, and thus engage in a constructive dialogue with each other, with students, and with parents and carers and the wider community around the child or young person.
- Give school leaders and teachers a framework within which they can monitor and evaluate the impact of their curriculum maps and schemes of work, the effectiveness of individual teachers that they line manage and the progress made by their base groups.
- Give school leaders a comprehensive and accurate picture of achievement and progress across the school, which can inform curriculum planning, self-evaluation and performance management.
- Enable students to understand their strengths and weaknesses, their achievements and their targets, and thus to be actively engaged in their own learning, aware of their progress, and proud of their achievement.
- Allow students to better understand how they learnt and developed the skills to become lifelong learners

Our school will also and particularly want its approach to assessment to:

- Provide a transparent and evidence based picture of student progress in relation to behaviour and personal development which is often if not always the starting point for wider progress. The school collects data in this area on a frequent basis; this is used to identify progress and inform review processes. This clearly identifies specific types of behaviour relating to express need, learning, conduct and emotional development. This data allows the school to set effective targets for individual students to work towards.
- Describe comprehensively the "baseline" at which students who join a school start, and based on this, chart and report to parents, carers and Local Authority, the progress made by each student.
- Gather together and triangulate the diverse evidence available of student development, ranging from external examinations to in-class observations.
- Show progress in relation to the outcomes outlined in their EHCP.
- Create coherence by drawing together the threads of student progress across the whole curriculum, and by enabling all staff to see academic and personal progress in relation to each other. Data on attendance, incidents, learning support, safety support and engagement.
- Enable all staff who engage with students to contribute to the learning and assessment process, recognising the influential role of education support staff and relational support leads alongside teachers.

- The type of assessment we use depends very much on what we want to assess. Assessment will be most accurate where we use a range of approaches that allow us to "triangulate". The range includes:

  - ❖ Observation of students engaged in a task as well as their interaction with their peers.
  - ❖ Student self-assessment.
  - ❖ Verbal feedback.
  - ❖ Diagnostic assessment activities
  - ❖ Ongoing formative assessment
  - ❖ Summative assessment activities
  - ❖ Review of learning with a base or group
  - ❖ Termly reports and annual EHCP reviews.
  - ❖ The completion of "beautiful work" and the reflection on and the evaluation of the learning that took place in the creation of this work, including social-emotional development and personal development.

For assessment as outlined above to be successful and worthwhile certain other features need to be in play:

- Effective tracking of progress through subjects and personal development, taking account of starting points and expectations
- Monitoring of attendance, incidents, learning support, safety support and engagement.
- Planned opportunities for moderation within and across subjects and with partner schools, based on systematically collected evidence.
- Long term planning for the subject or aspect of learning to be clear about what we are assessing against, what strands of progression or assessment focuses are there, and what are the steps of progression in relation to those strands of focus.
- Short and medium term planning identifying what aspects of learning are to be assessed in a particular session or group of sessions.
- Emotional, social and behavioural development with a shared understanding of what this means.

At our school we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

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

Pre-Admissions

All students who enter our school are assessed using our six stage admissions process. This is in order to accurately assess the students' suitability to the service from all perspectives, to establish their context and relationship with learning, and ensure that provision to meet need, such as staff training, is in place before they arrive at school. In so doing, the admissions assessment ensures that the service can meet the students needs in terms of their safety as well as the safety of others alongside meeting their education needs. The stages in our admissions assessment can be found in the Spaghetti Bridge Admissions Policy.

What we assess before a student arrives

As part of our admissions process, we seek to understand the context of a student, including their history, family background, levels of support needed, prior attainment, views and experience of education, and what provision needs to be put in place to meet their needs, amongst other areas. This information allows us to create a transition timetable and the initial documentation that will keep them safe and engaged in education.

Initial Assessment

Baseline Assessment

After the student joins Spaghetti, they take part in a Connect and Relate timetable that better allows us to assess their needs, outcomes, and aspirations. Part of this process involves a 'Baseline Assessment'. This allows us time to get to know each other and to ensure that each student's learning programme is unique and tailored towards their individual needs. It gives everyone a clear direction and clear outcomes that we aspire to achieve. We ensure that the child's Education Health Care Plan outcomes are seamlessly integrated into their Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Areas of Ongoing Assessment

The Three Phase Curriculum

All students begin their journey in the initial phase of the Spaghetti Bridge Three Phase Curriculum, called Overcoming Barriers to Learning. This assessment indicates the nature of their learning programme, the three phase areas they are working towards and, as they progress the three stages, demonstrates progress towards becoming ready to transition to their post-school destination.

Overall Progress Assessment

On a termly basis, staff and, where appropriate, students, assess the overall progress of a particular student in line with the particular needs and outcomes. This assessment is in line with the expectations set as part of the ILP at the start of term, ranging from less than expected progress through to exceptional progress.

EHCP Outcomes, Targets, and Milestones

All students at Spaghetti Bridge schools have an EHCP and it is this document that links their specific needs to their individualised outcomes. Our schools use ILPs to link outcomes to milestones that are assessed through a term as learning takes place.

Pillars: English and Maths

All students have English and maths targets and milestones as part of their ILPs that are drawn from the sequenced pillar target cache, against which they progress as they grow more proficient in these areas. In addition to learning knowledge in these areas, each of these pillars include skills and understandings linked to the application and meaningfulness of these subjects, allowing knowledge to be utilised and assessed in relation to real-world applications. In addition to ILP progress, all students are assessed (if their profile allows for this) using tools such as the GL Assessment Tool in English and maths, phonics assessment and their reading level is additionally assessed using tools including Accelerated Reader to ensure that reading material provided is in line with their reading ability.

Pillars: Science, Human and Social, Digital media, Creative and Aesthetic, Preparation for Adulthood, and Physical Education

For these areas of learning, each student has a bespoke programme assessed according to targets selected from the pillar target cache with incremental and personalised milestones written in relation to their needs, abilities, and aspirations.

Pillars: PSHE

Spaghetti Bridge uses PSHE association to support a sequenced curriculum. The students are set termly targets and milestones in relation to the wider PSHE curriculum and to the needs of a particular student during a specific stage of their developmental journey.

Attendance

Many of our students find it difficult to attend education regularly, and their increased ability to do so as they engage more with learning is a key indicator of progress, as well as a metric for deciding when additional support is needed in this area.

Relational Approach

Due to their individual needs, students can be vulnerable to abuse, engage in disruptive behaviour, or act in such a way that they put themselves or others at risk. Spaghetti Bridge records the level of need in this area on a daily basis, which shows progress in our students' ability to keep themselves safe, make responsible choices, and communicate their needs

effectively. This also enables us to see what interventions and strategies are working and which need to be adjusted.

Beyond disruption and risk, recording logs allows us to track and evaluate how our students are developing their ability to build responsible and meaningful relationships with others, staff and peers alike, on their way to becoming connected to their community.

Engagement with Learning

We track the level of engagement with education of our students from no engagement through disengaged, withdrawing, participating, investing to driving. In addition, we assess the average level of support required to keep our students engaged with learning and to keep themselves and others safe. Progress in this area shows their travel towards becoming lifelong students, who are connected to community, and healthy and well and independent contributors to their communities.

External Assessment Tools

Spaghetti Bridge uses a range of externally produced assessment tools, such as GL Progress Tests, BKSB Functional Skills assessment, AR and phonics assessments, in order to ensure that our teacher-based assessments are accurate and that learning is pitched and differentiated to the appropriate level. We continually review the tools we are using to ensure suitability.

Exams and Accredited Learning

Spaghetti Bridge schools offer a range of qualifications and accredited learning opportunities (see our Exams Policy) for students for whom this area is relevant, both in relation to their outcomes and aspirations and their age. These include GCSEs, Functional Skills exams, and vocational qualifications.

Beautiful Work

Following the inspiration of the teacher and educationalist Ron Berger, we believe that the creation and presentation of "beautiful work" is a key tool in making learning manifest in the world. This means that the completion of a piece of work is itself a form of assessment and the outcome created is evidence of learning and progress, which, where appropriate, is presented to others as a celebration of and reflection on achievement.

The progress seen in a student's beautiful work is recorded in their individual portfolio, in which they keep work samples for reflection on their learning and demonstrate progress throughout their journey.

Ongoing Assessment

Personalised ILPs are produced by the education staff on a half termly basis and are revised and adjusted as learning takes place and the curriculum evolves throughout the term, with input from learning mentors, teachers, curriculum coordinators, school leaders, the relational support team, and the student themselves. Evidence is attached to targets and milestones. Milestones are assessed as achieved or not achieved and target progress is tracked through defined stages of knowledge/skill acquisition; developing, securing and mastered.

- **Developing** - Developing means that the skill or knowledge is emerging but not yet consistent.
- **Secure** - Securing means that the skill or knowledge has moved beyond the developing stage and is now demonstrated consistently and reliably.
- **Mastered** - Mastering means that the skill or knowledge is demonstrated confidently, accurately, and independently across a wide range of situations.

All progress, including academic, EHCP, pillar, relational, and accredited learning, is reviewed on an ongoing basis, with termly and annual review summative assessments.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Implementation

Governance Team

The governance team are responsible for:
- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all students.
- Holding school leaders to account for improving student and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:
- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to.
- Monitoring standards across all pillars.
- Analysing student progress and attainment, including individual students and specific groups.
- Prioritising key actions to address provision for students who are making less than expected progress.
- Reporting to governance on all key aspects of student progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years.

Curriculum Coordinators

Curriculum Coordinators are responsible for:
- Ensuring that this policy is adhered to.
- Working with teachers to assess student progress and design appropriate curriculum in relation to this assessment.
- Present assessment of achievement to external stakeholders, including through reports and as part of the review cycle.
- Quality assuring assessment to ensure its accuracy and effectiveness.

Teachers
Teachers are responsible fo:
- Following the assessment policy and procedure.

5. Support, Advice and Communication
For initial support or advice please refer to our headteacher.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

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Issuer	Spaghetti Bridge Ltd
Document generated	Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:11 GMT
Document fingerprint	8dcdd024d1348e0d7454a4b722840acf

Parties involved with this document

Document processed	Party + Fingerprint
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw - Signer (df2c19515f9fa6efe24b617ccafb6987)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:27:18 GMT	Dan Alipaz - Signer (acb3431809709e9e03363968c1ebff58)

Audit history log

Date	Action
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:11 GMT	Envelope generated by Amy Fielding (141.195.151.154)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:11 GMT	Document generated with fingerprint 8dcdd024d1348e0d7454a4b722840acf (141.195.151.154)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:50 GMT	Sent the envelope to Stephen Bradshaw (stephen.bradshaw@spbridge.co.uk) for signing (141.195.151.154)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:50 GMT	Sent the envelope to Dan Alipaz (dan.alipaz@spbridge.co.uk) for signing (141.195.151.154)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:52 GMT	Document emailed to dan.alipaz@spbridge.co.uk
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:52 GMT	Document emailed to stephen.bradshaw@spbridge.co.uk
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:52:55 GMT	Dan Alipaz opened the document email. (74.125.150.37)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 8:58:12 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw opened the document email. (66.249.93.70)
Tue, 20th Jan 2026 21:08:02 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw opened the document email. (185.66.206.162)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:25:07 GMT	Dan Alipaz opened the document email. (66.249.93.72)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:27:11 GMT	Dan Alipaz viewed the envelope (95.144.233.194)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:27:18 GMT	Dan Alipaz signed the envelope (95.144.233.194)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:29:18 GMT	Sent Stephen Bradshaw a reminder to sign the document. (141.195.151.154)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:29:19 GMT	Document emailed to stephen.bradshaw@spbridge.co.uk
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:29:21 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw opened the document email. (74.125.150.36)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 8:40:36 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw opened the document email. (66.249.93.70)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:08:24 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw opened the document email. (66.249.93.71)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:34 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw viewed the envelope (185.66.206.162)

Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:41 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw viewed the envelope (62.253.3.73)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	Stephen Bradshaw signed the envelope (185.66.206.162)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	This envelope has been signed by all parties (185.66.206.162)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	Signed document confirmation emailed to stephen.bradshaw@spbridge.co.uk (185.66.206.162)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	Signed document confirmation emailed to dan.alipaz@spbridge.co.uk (185.66.206.162)
Wed, 21st Jan 2026 10:11:47 GMT	Signed document confirmation emails have been sent to all parties. Document URL: https://api.signable.app/shareable/envelope?t=99be2bc2-99ad-4c80-8e90-1cff9f9824c1 (185.66.206.162)