


School / Department	
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### Introduction

The NAS Academies Trust believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. To do this in our schools we undertake two different but complementary forms of assessment: assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning.

- Assessment *for* learning (formative assessment) involves the use of assessment in the classroom to raise student achievement. It is based on the idea that students will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim, and how they can achieve this aim (i.e. to close the gap in their knowledge).
- Assessment *of* learning (summative assessment) involves judging students' performance against national standards. Teachers may make these judgements at the end of a unit of work, specific intervention, of a term, of a year, or of a key stage. Test results, too, describe student performance, in terms of levels, ages or standardized scores.

We give our students regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to do to improve further. Research has shown that their involvement in the review process raises standards, and that it empowers students to take action towards improving their performance.

*MyProgress* is the NAS Academies Trust approach to autism specialist teaching, learning and assessment

### Purpose

Assessment is an integral part of high quality teaching and learning. It helps ensure that teaching is appropriately tailored to meet individual need and monitor that learners are making sound progress.

### Aims

- For students, to recognise their achievements, celebrate their success and recognise the next steps in their learning

- To enable our students to recognise the standards to aim for, and to understand what they need to do in order to achieve their potential;
- For teachers and professionals, to understand individual needs, to plan and inform learning and interventions and ultimately to facilitate student progress
- For parents, to receive regular accessible feedback on their child's progress and be involved in all decisions regarding their child's future
- For governors and managers, to monitor student progress over time and use data to enable whole school evaluation including identifying areas for development

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- The NAS Academies Trust Directors are responsible for this policy while Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) will monitor its implementation in each school (with support from the school improvement team).

#### **The NAS Academies Trust Directors responsibilities**

- Ratify and regularly review this policy to ensure it conforms to relevant law and guidance

#### **The Local Governing Body responsibilities**

- Ensure local procedures are in place to effectively implement this policy within the school
- To keep themselves informed through regular meetings with staff and visits to the school
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and advise of NAS Academies Trust board of any necessary amendments
- Monitoring the progress of the school against whole school targets
- To ensure that any issue that may be perceived as a potential reputational risk to the trading name of the NAS Academies Trust is referred to the board or NASAT.

#### **The Principal's responsibilities**

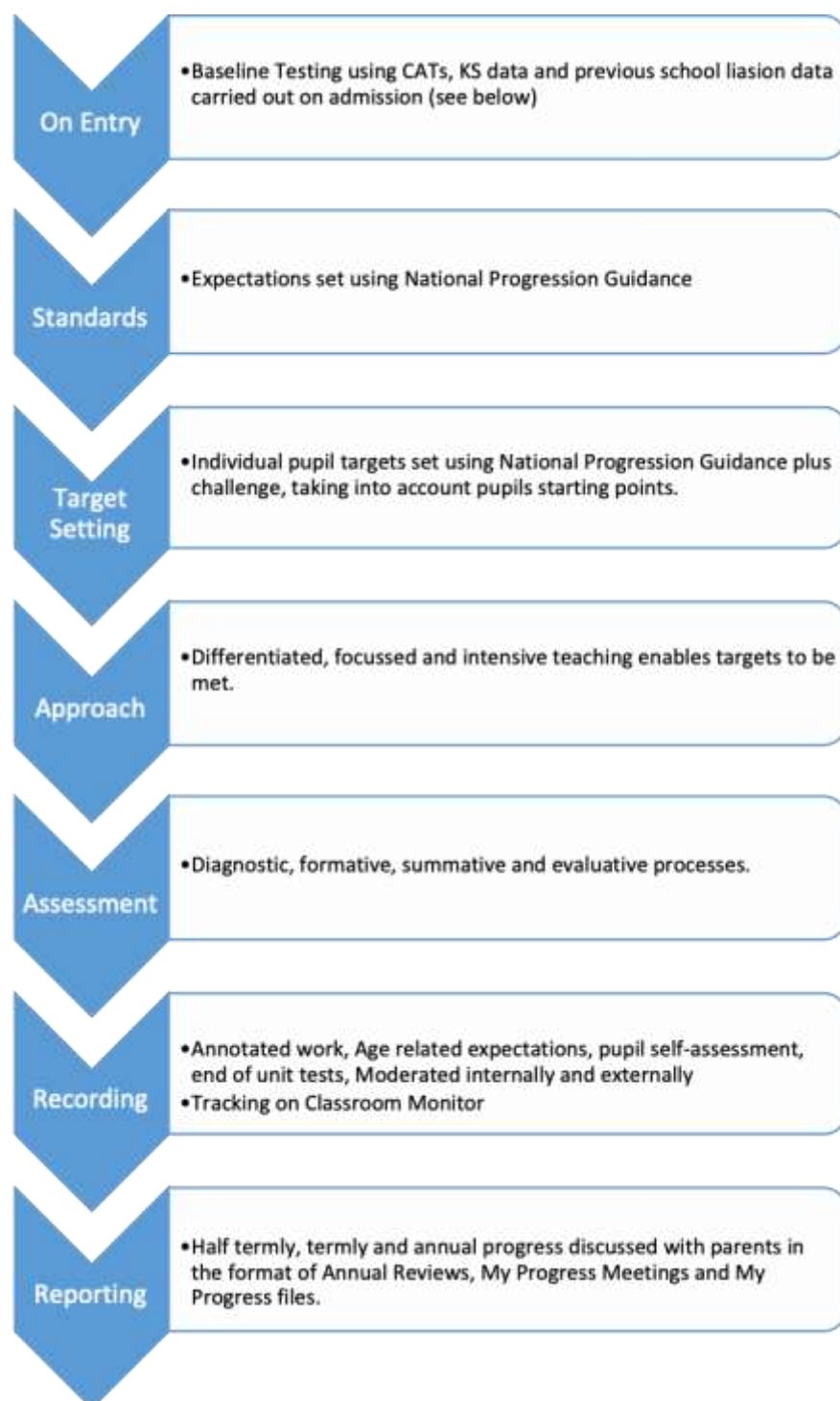
- Ensure all relevant staff are aware of this policy, receive appropriate training and local procedures are followed
- Ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluating of progress of all students to inform self assessment and school development
- Appoint a member of leadership team to take responsibility for ensuring effective liaison with external agencies and coordination of annual reviews and MyProgress meetings.
- Each school will have a member of the senior leadership team who is the designated assessment coordinator. Their responsibilities include
  - Lead on ensuring effective assessment, recording and reporting procedures
  - Ensure information from different agencies is summarised in accessible student progress plans

#### **Teacher's responsibilities**

- Teachers are responsible for ensuring good practice in assessment, recording and reporting in line with this policy
- Teachers should have high expectations and appropriately challenge all students in all lessons
- Teachers should make effective use of well-structured questions to monitor students understanding and challenge their thinking
- Form Tutors are the first point of contact for families and responsible for ensuring parents are involved in every stage of assessment and planning

## Assessment process

The diagram below summarises our assessment process



The new code of practice puts increased focus on the outcomes that young people and their families want to achieve. It therefore increases the involvement of parents in the assessment, planning and reviewing process. The Department for Education identifies the key elements of integrated working as including integrated assessment, information sharing (regular team around the child meetings), and lead professional (to ensure integrated working with families). This policy aims to ensure all schools within the NAS Academies Trust embrace this cultural change. At our schools we support all students to

recognise that developing their academic, social communication and independence skills are all part of 'MyProgress'.

### **Assessment and autism**

For specialist settings such as NAS Academies Trust Schools there are particular challenges for assessment. For example the progress of students with autism is not always linear and skills are rarely generalised spontaneously. Many assessments also rely on the cooperation and engagement of the young person that may be difficult with young people with Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA).

Good practice involves using multiple systems and tools for assessing students. The Autism Education Trust promote using a wide range of formal and informal methods of assessing student progress in all areas including social communication, emotional well-being and independent living skills. This is necessary because:

- assessment needs to take place across several different agencies monitoring different areas of functioning (eg physical, social, emotional and cognitive aspects of development)
- autism is a spectrum condition and therefore it is not a case of one size fits all even when assessing just one aspect of development

Therefore we are not prescriptive in terms of which assessment tools we use. The appropriate professional will select the appropriate assessment tool according to individual needs from a battery of assessments. The professional will clearly explain in any report why this assessment was used and what progress we might hope to see.

### **Defining and measuring success**

One of the key aims of NAS Academies Trust schools is to improve quality of life. It is recognised that Quality of Life involves many different domains including employment, relationships, inclusion and self-esteem. The National Institute of Health Research recognise that the multitude of assessment tools used in collecting evidence about children with autism may not always be found to be useful by parents and carers as they do not always match with their priorities for their children. Outcomes measurements have been constrained in specialist multi-agency settings due to the broader range of desired outcomes. Research from AET and feedback from parents informs us that success is related to a broad range of outcomes including; attendance & participation, vocational skills, independent living skills, self esteem & wellbeing, functional academic skills, emotional regulation, sensory and relationships.

NAS Academies Trust Schools often support people who have been excluded from several previous schools and have not attended school for many months. For these young people success will include improving attendance.

Other young people may have profound anxiety or display behaviour that restricts their opportunities such as being able to go to crowded places. Success for these young people will include supporting them to develop coping strategies to increase the range of activities they can participate in and opportunities available to them within their local community.

Success for many students will also relate to our aspiration to reintegrate as many students as possible into mainstreams schools for at least part of their timetable.

All young people we support will have social communication difficulties. Minimising these barriers and developing functional social communication skills will be an example of success.

Therefore success for young people we support is very much personalised to their individual needs and will not solely focus on academic achievement. The AET Outcomes Report highlighted the "difficulty of reporting on aspects of attainment that fall outside the national curriculum". NAS Academies Trust sponsored schools therefore use co-produced Goal Based Outcomes in addition to traditional measures to define and measure success.

### **NAS Academies Trust multi-disciplinary Approach**

NAS Academies Trust schools provide a holistic approach to meet all areas of need and feeds into student Education Health and Care (EHC) plans. Most students with autism benefit from input from a SaLT, OT and psychologist where a need is identified. Where a student requires input from additional professionals the school will work closely with both the LA's and NHS to ensure they receive all the specialist support required.

Specialists SaLT and psychologists carry out assessments and design the intervention programme (to develop social communication skills and promote well-being) which is then implemented by the class team. The specialist will model and monitor the implementation with this work being sustained by the class team to ensure most effective use of specialist's time. Students with more complex needs or who are new to the school may require additional specialist input.

### **Initial baseline assessment (My Ability Profile)**

NAS Academies Trust schools conduct a baseline assessment of each student by our team of multiagency professionals and aim to complete this during the first term of being placed at a NAS Academies Trust school. It is recognised however that for some students with increased anxiety it may not be practical to get the assessments completed in the first term as the students may need to build relationships and trust before the assessment can be successful and NAS Academies Trust schools would therefore seek to ensure that the assessment is completed as soon as is practically possible without causing distress to the student. This initial assessment period is not to assess suitability of placement as that is done during the admissions process (although local authorities may request an assessment place where they have identified the need for a formal multi-agency assessment to inform an education, health and care plan). The purpose is to provide a baseline to measure success against and to enable us to understand how autism impacts on the individual student in terms of identifying their profile of strengths and difficulties. Each student has a MyProgress *ability profile* which provides an integrated summary of the initial baseline assessment written in ordinary English and free of professional jargon. This is included in the first annual review report. Identifying each student's specific needs, it informs personalised intervention packages and identifies specific priorities for learning.

### **MyProgress Meeting**

Regular team around the child meetings are vital in ensuring seamless working across different agencies. Young people who are looked after (LAC) by the local authority have at least two statutory reviews each year (one of which is normally combined with the annual review of SEN). Best practice involves all students benefiting from more regular reviews. NAS Academies Trust schools therefore believe best practice is having a team around the child meeting called MyProgress Meeting for each student three times per year (which may be combined with a LAC or annual review). For those students for whom there are particular concerns about their progress the frequency of these meetings may be increased. A representative from each relevant agency is encouraged to attend these multiagency meetings. The student and his/her parents are also encouraged to attend the meeting. At the MyProgress meeting we celebrate achievements, evaluate progress, and co-produce targets (or an action plan) for any areas for development. The MyProgress Ability Profile may be used to inform the discussion about priorities for development. The integration of multi-agency working is crucial. Therefore, each school has an SEN and assessment coordinator (usually the deputy) who is responsible for the coordination of MyProgress meetings.

### **Personalised target setting process**

Following baseline assessment all students are set a range of individualised targets. These encompass both academic and autism specific areas. Targets are agreed at termly (three times per year) MyProgress meetings.

- Academic targets are set in consideration with prior attainment, current learning needs, National Progression Guidance and age of the student. Academic targets are set for the core subjects of Maths, English and Science. Our schools currently use Age Related Expectations and we aim for all students to make good progress (one whole level per year).
- Autism specific targets are set in relation to the core deficits related to the autism spectrum i.e. communication, social interaction, flexibility of thought and sensory needs. With consideration of our students' core autism difficulties we will also consider Personal & Social development. For example we may set a target for sex and relationship education as this can require a very individualised approach.
- My Progress plans measure progress towards what parents and professionals agree are priorities and desired outcomes for a service or intervention. Personalised goals are co-produced the young person, their parents, commissioners and the school through MyProgress meeting soon after the placement starts. My Progress plans are an effective means of ensuring a shared understanding (informed by assessment) of the priorities for development when working with children and their families. Collaboration between parents and professionals lies at the heart of My Progress Plans and they are an effective means of ensuring schools are accountable to the young people and parents they serve.
- Outcomes relating to all targets are RAG rated so parents can easily understand how well their child is progressing.

### **Collaboration with parents**

NAS Academies Trust Schools are committed to collaborative working with parents and value the key role of parents as the people that know their child best. Collaboration with parents and the young person is central to improving quality of services and outcomes for young people (Lamb Enquiry). Each school also uses a range of strategies, such as home school diaries, to provide parents with accurate and accessible information regarding their child's progress. MyProgress Meetings provide parents with a regular opportunity to understand how their child is progressing. Such meetings are also an opportunity to review individual MyProgress Plans. Where possible the school will provide information to parents in an accessible format that is that minimises the use of professional jargon. All schools within the NAS Academies Trust operate an open door policy so parents are welcome to arrange additional appointments to discuss how their child is progressing. The school also ensures good links with the local parent forum and NAS parent branch to ensure we are adapting in response to evolving local needs. All parents are welcome to see their child's MyProgress portfolio at any point upon request.

### **Involving students**

We are committed to celebrating the achievements of all students. Wherever possible the learning objective is made clear to students. MyProgress Plans are written in an accessible and child friendly format and where possible students are encouraged to be involved in recording progress. Students also receive regular feedback on how they are doing. The method of feedback will be differentiated according to the individual student's needs.

### **MyProgress Plan**

Each student has a personalised MyProgress Plan which builds upon the traditional IEP and is more akin to a Personalised Learning Plan. A student's MyProgress plan is the cornerstone of the educational programme designed to meet the specific needs of an individual student. The plan will identify the student's strengths / interests and targets to

build on these, as well as targets for development to minimise any areas of difficulty. The plan therefore focuses on those areas of functioning that with further assistance will most benefit MyProgress. The plan recognises a student individual learning style and therefore focuses not only on what should be taught but also on how it should be taught. For example the plan may include a target from each of the following areas of development:

- Intellectual development (usually delivered through modified National Curriculum)
- Personal development (including NASAT specialist curriculum)
- Social communication (including programmes developed by SaLT)
- Emotional development (including psychological wellbeing)
- Vocational development (including developing interests into employable skills)
- Development of independence (including developing functional independent living skills)

As well as identifying targets the plan also identifies a programme to achieve these targets including

- The balance between modified National Curriculum and NASAT specialist curricula
- How our blended approach to interventions will be implemented to address individual needs

Plans are reviewed termly (three times per year) at the student's MyProgress Meeting. Students and parents are therefore very much involved in developing the plans. The plans are written in an accessible and child friendly format and where possible students are encouraged to be involved in recording progress. Ideally at least one target will be transferable to the home setting and the plan includes guidance for parents on work that can be done in the home to support the achievement and generalisation of specific targets.

### **Monitoring Understanding**

Assessment should be functional, part of everyday practice but should not be onerous for any of the schools team of multiagency professionals. Therefore not all assessment is recorded. For example assessment includes teachers asking questions to monitor students understanding during a lesson. This is not recorded.

### **MyProgress Files**

All students will have a main file (that includes statements, reviews, plans, standardised assessments etc) and a *My Progress File* (that includes annotated examples of work and photographic evidence of achievements). MyProgress files demonstrate student progress over time. The purpose of teaching is to promote learning. Therefore MyProgress files should be reviewed during any lesson observation.

### **Marking**

When marking work teachers specify the objective and provide clear feedback in terms of both What Went Well (WWW) to give appropriate praise and Even Better If (EBI) so students know the next steps in their learning. Marking should include feedback to students and from students. Marking will also highlight an Action Point (AP) which students will then be expected to address and respond to.

It is only considered appropriate for teachers to record a skill as mastered (as opposed to developing) where there is clear evidence to support this. Such evidence should be included in the student's MyProgress file.

### **Moderation**

Moderation takes place at least once per full term to ensure accuracy and may be

- Internal with other teachers
- With teachers from other NAS Academies Trust schools
- External with teachers from other local schools

### **MyProgress Report**

We have a range of strategies that will keep parents fully informed of their child's progress in school including the termly MyProgress Report ahead of the termly MyProgress meeting. We RAG rate our success criteria for each target within a student's MyProgress Plan. For example current ability (red), objective in plan (yellow) and next steps (green). RAG rating enables us to provide all stakeholders with information on progress against targets in the MyProgress Plan that can be clearly understood. In addition, parents will soon be able to log in through the school website to their child's MyProgress e-portfolio of recent work.

### **Software for measuring student performance and data tracking:**

Examples of software / tools we use to support measuring student performance:

- Scholar-pack or SIMS: as a school information system
- Classroom monitor as tool for formative assessment
- Blue-sky: as a performance management tool that uses teacher observations and competencies to inform school improvement plan and thus teacher development targets and plans

### **Whole School Annual Assessment Report**

The school leadership team use assessment to analyse the progress and attainment of different groups of students. All schools produce a report at the end of the academic year on actual student progress relative to expected student progress and national standards. The report is RAG rated with Amber being expected progress, green being above and red being below. The school will analyse and report on the following at least annually to inform self-evaluation and school improvement planning cycle:

- The overall standards they attain (targets achieved, end of key stage levels and achievement of qualifications)
- Proportion of students making expected progress (and above or below expected progress) in each subject of the curriculum
- The standards attained by different groups such as girls and boys, looked after children, those from different ethnic groups, student premium, different key-stages
- Standards attained by the top 10% and bottom 10% of students to ensure all students are appropriately stretched
- The progress made by different groups of learners over time - for example, how well they do between Key Stages 2 and 3, 2 and 4, and 3 and 4.
- Qualifications and awards gained at KS4 & 5
- Outcomes from learners' personal development and well-being
- The school will compare itself with similar schools nationally
- Student attendance, including individual reports for those whose attendance is below 90%
- Behavioural Incident data and removal of behaviours from support plans

### **Life Without Levels**

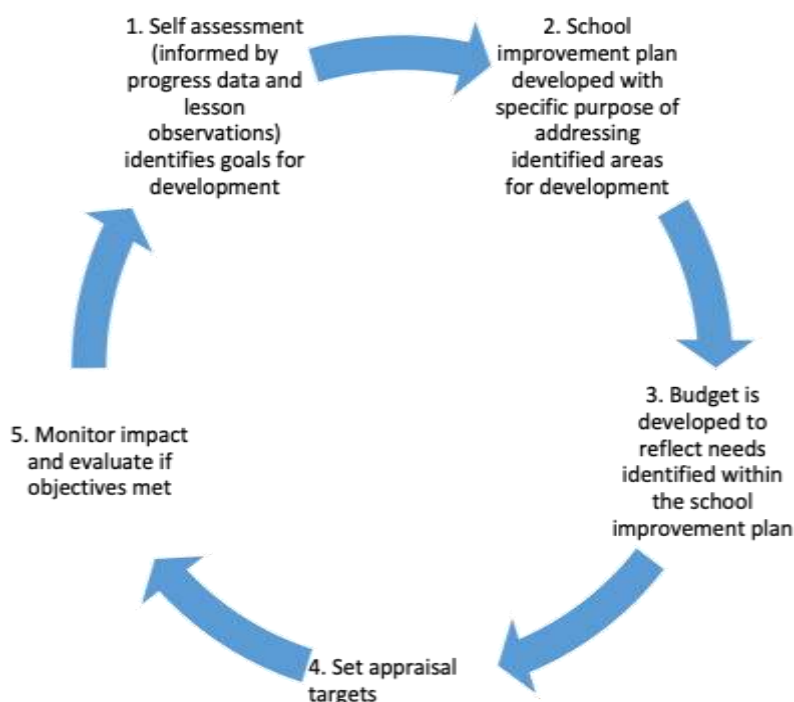
In the academic year 2015-2016 NAS Academies Trust schools will continue to use the National Curriculum levels to assess student academic attainment. During the year the NASAT schools will collaborate to develop the policy for life without levels ready for implantation from September 2016.

### **Self evaluation and School Development Planning Cycle**

All NAS Academies Trust Schools operate a continuous self evaluation and development programme. The Whole School Annual Assessment Report one of the schools key



monitoring systems. The Leadership team will use this RAG rated report to inform their self-evaluation and resulting School Improvement Plan and Future Whole School Targets. This cyclical process is summarised below.



### Techniques

The NAS Academies Trust uses a variety of methods to assess, review and monitor student progress over time across all areas of functioning and development.

These approaches vary in frequency:

- Day to day assessment (eg of learning objectives such as Provision Maps/Combined records and lessons)
- Periodic assessment (eg of speech and language or of a scheme of work)
- Transitional assessment (eg Classroom Monitor at the end of the school year)

Good practice involves using a range of different assessment techniques including:

- Observational assessment
- Dynamic assessment
- Oral and written feedback on work
- Questioning
- Medium and short term planning documents
- Formal assessment
- Functional assessment of behaviour
- Reviewing recent work to make judgements about progress in core subjects

### Success Criteria

- Students make at least good progress as a result of appropriate interventions
- Parents receive clear and regular feedback regarding how their child is progressing

### Appendices:

1. Assessment cycle
2. Assessment battery
3. Whole school targets
4. Evidence of achievement
5. NAS SPELL framework

## Appendix One: MyProgress assessment cycle

# MyProgress™

**MyProgress™** is The National Autistic Society's overall strategy for working with your child. With **MyProgress™**, your child will have the best start in life because every aspect of their care and education is tailor-made for them. **MyProgress™** guarantees that your child will use approaches that The National Autistic Society has tried and tested over many years: we know that they make a difference.



An important outcome of **MyProgress™** is ensuring that your child is ready to move on to the next stage in their life. We work closely with you and your child and our transition coordinator to create a **My Transitions Passport**. This documents describes your child's skills, interests and aspirations and other key information to provide a clear plan for his or her future and life long learning.

### Appendix Two: Example Battery of Assessments that may be used at baseline

- Academic performance (eg PIVATS) assessed by teacher
- Comparative attainment (eg CASPA) assessed by teacher
- Cognitive ability (eg WISC) assessed by psychologist
- Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) assessed by GL Assessments
- Academic ability (eg WIAT) assessed by psychologist and teacher
- Adaptive functioning (eg VABS) assessed by psychologist
- Pragmatic language (eg PLSI) assessed by speech and language therapist (S&LT)
- Non verbal communication (eg PVCS) assessed by S&LT
- Sensory profile (eg Dunn) assessed by OT
- Wellbeing (eg Nosing) assessed by psychologist and teacher
- Emotional Regulation (eg SCERTS) assessed by psychologist and/or teacher
- Executive Functioning (eg BRIEF) assessed by psychologist
- Anxiety (eg RCMAS) assessed by psychologist
- Functional Motivation (eg MAS) assessed by psychologist
- Independence (eg PTI or FIM) assessed by pastoral / social care team
- Social skills (eg SSRS) assessed by appropriately trained professional
- Autism symptoms (eg CARS) assessed by psychologist
- Risk Assessments (eg HCR20) assessed by psychologist

***The assessments used will be tailored to the needs of each individual***

### Appendix Three: Example whole school targets

We **RAG** rate our whole school targets so stakeholders to see how we are doing:

Category	Measure	Green (Good/desired)	Amber (some/average)	Red (unsatisfactory)	Previous term (RAG)	Current term (RAG)
Wellbeing	PASS / SDQ	Over 65% students improve in last year	50 – 65%	Less than 50% improve		
Attendance	SIMS	Over 95% overall attendance	85% to 95% overall attendance	Under 85% overall attendance		
Emotional regulation	SCERTS	Average improvement of over 35% within a partner stage across a key stage	20% - 35% within a partner stage across a key stage	Less than 20% improvement		

<b>Behaviour</b>	RPI	No RPIs used with over 95% students	No RPI used with over 85% students	RPI used with over 15% students in last year		
<b>Independent living skills</b>	Pathways to Indep / ASDAN Independence Programmes	Over 85% students improve	75 – 85%	Under 75%		
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Referrals that LADO decide should be investigated externally rather than by school	0 – 2 reports per year	3 - 4 reports per year	Over 4 reports per year		
<b>Complaints</b>	Formal last 12 mths	Two or less	Three to four	More than four		
<b>Lesson observations</b>	Ofsted framework	Over 85% good or outstanding	70% - 85% good or outstanding	Less than 70% good or outstanding		
<b>Academic progress in English (P level and NC level)</b>	B squared	Over 90% meet progression guidance across key stages (usually 2 levels per key-stage)	75 % – 90% meet progression guidance within key stages	Less than 75% meet progression guidance within key stages		
<b>Academic progress in Maths (P level and NC level)</b>	B squared	Over 90% meet progression guidance across key stages (usually 2 levels per key-stage)	75% – 90% meet progression guidance within key stages	Less than 75% meet progression guidance within key stages		
<b>Attainment in literacy and maths of students on free school meals, who looked after (LAC), EAL or from ethnic minorities (relative to their peers)</b>	CASPA	The same or above other students	Majority the same as other students	Majority performing below other students		
<b>Participation in enterprise, supported internships or mainstream FE in P16</b>	P16 students	Over 70%	60% - 70%	Under 60%		
<b>Achieve</b>	P16 Qualifications	Over 90%	80 – 90%	Under 80%		

<b>appropriate vocational qualifications at Post 16</b>						
<b>IEP success rate</b>	IEPs	Over 85% of IEP targets fully achieved	75% - 85% of IEP targets fully achieved	Under 75% of IEP targets fully achieved		
<b>Students accessing community based club or group</b>	Percentage of those students on extended day or residential provision who access such clubs	Over 70%	60% to 70%	Under 60%		
<b>Social communication</b>	NAS adapted SCERTS related assessment	Increase three or more points per term	Increase two points	Increase one or less points		
<b>Preparing for adulthood</b>	Students with up to date PCP and action plan at transition reviews	100%	Over 90%	Under 90%		
<b>Admissions and voids</b>	Av over year	Two or less voids	Three to four voids	More than four		
<b>Staff absence</b>	Av days per year per FTE	Less than 5	5 to 10	Over 10q		
<b>Monitoring visit from governor (or trustee)</b>	During last term	Over three visits	Two to three visits	One or less visits		
<b>Major accidents</b>	RIDDOR reports to HSE per year	None	One	Two or more		
<b>Ofsted education rating</b>	Most recent	Outstanding	Good	Notice to improve		
<b>CPD</b>	Average L&D days per head per year	More than 7	5-7	Less than 5		
<b>How often do senior leaders or governors attend student council meetings</b>	Student voice	At least every month	At least every half term	Less often than every term		
<b>Senior leadership</b>		1 or less in last year	2 in last year	3 or more in last year		

turnover						
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### Appendix Five: NAS SPELL framework:

Assessment is used to inform the development of an appropriate intervention programme tailored to meet individual needs. All interventions within NAS Schools are based around the well established and evidence based NAS SPELL framework (evaluated by Tizzard Centre at the University of Kent). SPELL stands for:

- **S**tructure
- **P**ositivity
- **E**mpathy
- **L**ow arousal
- **L**inks

All staff complete 2 days training in SPELL during their initial induction period.

The SPELL framework is inclusive of other interventions such as SCERTS, TEACCH, PECS and PBS which fit within the SPELL framework. All teaching staff are given the opportunity to attend 5 days autism specialist training every year including TEACCH, SCERTS, and PBS (on a three yearly cycle)

**TEACCH** aims to increase independence and reduce anxiety through

- Physical structure of the environment
- Personalised visual schedules
- Independent work-systems
- Visual instruction jigs

**SCERTS** facilitates the development of

- Functional Social Communication
- Emotional Regulation and coping strategies (including recognition of the role of behaviour in this)
- Through the use of transactional supports (complimented by TEACCH)

**PBS** is used to understand behaviour whilst respecting the individual through a five step process (which relates to the assessment cycle)

- Functional analysis
- Behaviour support plans that identify setting, triggers as well as proactive, preventative and reactive strategies
- Implantation through direct support
- Monitoring and collecting data
- Evidence based evaluation