

Never look down on anybody unless you are helping him up. Jesse Jackson

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

Revisiting the BLS SEMH job description

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Context

1. Our core values; underpinning learning and teaching

“Prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society...

Developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.

The curriculum and the provider’s wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy “

Ofsted Descriptors

These must imbue and flow through and are tangible every day in all of us and all our work:

- **Friendship:** respect-empathy-forgiveness-compassion–protection
- **Optimism:** self-aware- self-improving -problem solving –happy-affirming
- **Hardwork:** gritty-determined-resilient- makes a difference –things get done

We model and promote and seek to imbue and embed these qualities and they are incrementally more evident in the children and young people in our care:

- **Friendship:** kind-can cooperate-has fun with others-can recover and move on (resilient)
- **Optimism:** engages with work and play-can be happy-has hopes and dreams
- **Hardwork:** is increasingly able to do more and different and challenging things across school life.

The children are more and more fluent in these core ambitions for them as people:

- **Be a good friend** and have good friends
- **Yes you can** because you are brilliant and talented and do loads of things well
- There is dignity and success always in **trying your best**; we learn and grow from our mistakes...

For us it is helpful to pause and unpack our core values a little more for example if we consider matters of equality, diversity and inclusivity true “friendship” with its respect and compassion and empathy must by its nature offer them unconditionally and universally.

If we consider the crisis in wellbeing and mental health to have a “growth mind-set”; to be an optimist is a building block of good mental health as is to be valued and cared for with authenticity.

No one can succeed beyond school in college, in work, in life without a secure sense of their own worth and so the value of others.

The matter of wider societal values might be in a state of flux even crisis but notions of respect and kindness and hard work are timeless.

We have considered too the content of our children and young people’s EHCPs and how we must make them relevant and accessible to the children and their diverse families and us too so their goals are meaningful; it is rare not to find powerful pertinence in our core values as a community.

2. You can’t learn if you don’t feel secure and safe and cared for (wellbeing is everything)

Relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture. Learners feel safe and do not experience bullying or discrimination. “

The curriculum and the provider’s wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy “

Ofsted Descriptors

The SEMH student community is a complex and diverse one, mercurial and shifting and the school must bend and flex to meet pupil needs and achieving a secure positive and purposeful prevailing climate in every classroom and in the wider school community is a serious challenge every day.

It is a bit like the 100 metre runner whose critical work is done in around 10 seconds but underpinned and made possible by years of training...no teacher succeeds in our setting without a sustained and skilled investment in the happiness and sense of belonging and safety of our children and young people something most have not experienced in their schooling so far.

This is why we have to relentlessly protect and promote that precious climate of safety and positivity in every class and across the community and to do this each one of us must sustain an indestructible rigour and energy and optimism in our mentality and practice

The recruitment and retention and development of resilient self-managing and self-improving people of the kind described in what follows is then essential for learning and teaching to happen; **not everybody can do this work.**

Simpler but more powerful still is plentiful good food, comfortable and welcoming surroundings and a prevailing atmosphere of warmth and kindness and optimism; without these there can be no learning.

In recent years skilled teachers have demonstrated that a primary model with its stability and familiar expectations, rhythms and routines brings security and comfort that moving from class to class and teacher to teacher cannot replicate.

We have then moved as a whole school to a “primary model” because we have a team capable of meeting the challenges it brings most notably to create that ethos of belonging and calm that then allows learning to happen. We have also recognised that a minority of our student community are significantly more complex and whilst for the significant majority our core offer of skilled and flexible teaching in small nurturing classes is enough for this minority something even more bespoke is needed.

Finally a combination of the complexity of our youngsters and the inevitable limitations of sometimes generic and occasionally inaccurate EHCPs and an admissions process where time pressures mean built-in weaknesses in truly understanding children and the use of the SEMH label as a catch all for a diverse and sometimes incompatible group of children and young people means we sometimes pragmatically and supportively seek different provision for our children and young people for them to be happy and so learn.

3. What then do we expect of teachers in this specialist setting?

“The provider has high expectations for learners’ behaviour and conduct and applies these expectations consistently and fairly. This is reflected in learners’ behaviour and conduct.

“Learners’ attitudes to their education or training are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements”

“Teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning.”

Teachers have a particular and obvious responsibility in an SEMH setting to show leadership and initiative in managing the complexity and challenge that characterises our young people with compassion, creativity and skill and the following expectations are explicitly shared with them

- They have chosen to work in a challenging SEMH setting therefore overcoming complex and diverse and enigmatic and sometimes seemingly insurmountable obstacles to learning is their responsibility and colleagues are a resource to help and assist not to take over duties and responsibilities;
- That maintaining good order and discipline in class and the creation of a stable and secure positive climate for learning is their responsibility in all but the most complex cases;
- That the quality of teaching should always be at least good and expectations are quite reasonably higher commensurate with experience and pay and so support should be proportionate also;
- The dignity and credibility of our specialist work is built on all teachers being “leaders” in their classrooms and subjects and being resourceful, problem solving and creative not excuse making and at upper pay levels it is reasonable and proportionate to expect sustained high performance.
- This a “bottom-up” model led by teachers and support staff who are the critical and essential and most important people in our community after the children and we look to recruit and retain and develop independent, resourceful and problem solving professionals who want the dignity and autonomy and responsibility of owning their classrooms and their work and who embrace being accountable for the progress and happiness of their students and as learners and as people.

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4. SEMH job description: teachers and those supporting them.

The unity of values and purpose and esprit de corps we have worked hard to earn and that make us so powerful as a group and a team means any “job description” about teaching **doesn’t just mean teachers but all of us who contribute and support that effort.**

What kind of people must we be: what does best practice look like in encouraging and embedding good behaviour rooted in content and happy students?

It has always been striking how some teachers and support staff are able to soften and ameliorate the struggles and frustrations and hurt that characterise the experiences of so many of the children and young people in our care?

Striking too is how a whole array of “labels” and “needs” seem almost to disappear and become irrelevant when our children and young people are being taught and supported and “parented” by our best people?

So what do these best people look like? What do they do?

- They are warm and authentic, “present” and engaged but also securely and safely boundaried, ethical and transparent.
- They are by nature resilient, optimistic, driven, robustly self-aware and self-critical, self-reliant and self-improving.
- They are curious and problem solving; they find a way to better understand our complex and diverse student body and improve their practice
- They have a strong and authentic and emotional connection and commitment to their professional craft, the children and young people in their care and their colleagues.
- They bring clarity of expectation and embedded routines and rituals imbued with strong and safe relationships rooted in a warm assertiveness that brings both affirmation and challenge.
- They relentlessly live out and model the values and behaviours they want to inculcate in the children and young people.
- Those values are rooted in that “friendship” that unpicked means we model and we work hard to personify the respect-empathy-forgiveness-compassion-protection that encourages and nurtures these qualities in the children.
- Under stress and duress in a testing and risky and stressful context our best people are able to manage their emotions and remain self-aware and self-controlled and make informed and good decisions under pressure.
- They know the value of the figurative “pee break” and that pausing to reflect and share and explore with others is essential in all but the most pressing and immediate of risks and challenges but can be safely decisive too when necessary.

Practical and technical: what must we do or help to do?

1. Create and maintain a classroom environment that is:

- a. welcoming, well appointed, comfortable, practicable and attractive;
- b. suitably and well-resourced;
- c. characterised by calm, hard-work, courtesy and respect.

2. Ensure assessment of learning and target setting are:

- a. accurate, challenging and reliable;
- b. coherent across the school community and moderated both within and with comparable schools
- c. so that learning progress and achievement can be reliably evidenced through student outcomes.

3. Plan and produce schemes of work that are concise and do not:

- a. in place for the long, medium and short term (lesson planning);
- b. coherent and dovetail with colleagues' planning
- c. succinct and accessible and reliably describe what you do but do not "bureaucratize" staff
- d. enriched and fun and reflect the need for accessibility and engagement for a challenging SEMH student group alongside statutory curriculum prescription;

4. Plan and prepare and deliver lessons that:

- a. are structured, engaging and practical and with a brisk pace with clear, confident and asserted control over the rhythm and fluency of the lesson;
- b. explicit in their purpose and objective(s) and those are revisited and reinforced often;
- c. make sense in the context of the students' longer term learning goals and they are increasingly fluent in this;
- d. are persistent and deliberate in revisiting and reinforcing learning goals both short and longer term to achieve the above;
- e. are enriched and sometimes surprising even risky and practical, engaging; pertinent to the lives and aspirations of the young people that seek to embed the "enjoyment of learning" and that are;
- f. also challenging and stretching and move the young people beyond and outside their immediate lives and experiences and raise and broaden their awareness of a "bigger world and heighten and sharpen their aspirations;
- g. are thoughtfully and tangibly differentiated to both support and challenge the diversity of ability and ameliorate the obstacles to learning (typically disengagement and disaffection and literacy difficulties) in an SEMH classroom.

5. Assessment for learning that:

- a. revisits, reinforces, and clarifies;
- b. is coherent across our community and engages beyond it looking for best practice
- c. moves the student towards their learning goals and seeks also to revisit and make certain consolidation and progress of learning has or is happening.

5i. Reporting that is:

- a. accessible and easily understood by all and diverse stakeholders and suitably adapted to achieve this;

- b. has accurate and reliable starting and finishing points and describes progress against challenging but achievable targets and benchmarks for parents “what would this mean in mainstream?”
- c. both written and verbal and both formal and informal, planned and reactive to stakeholder needs for example through the annual review process and parental requests for additional face to face meetings.

6. Behaviour management that is:

- a. proactive and evidences the teacher understands their responsibility to intelligently and imaginatively overcome the diverse and complex obstacles to learning in an SEMH setting;
- b. preventative and evidenced by the high quality, environment, resources and engaging teaching that are the most powerful ameliorators of disaffection in class and facilitators and a driver of good learning progress;
- c. committed to and underpinned by those supportive and assertive relationships with SEMH students where praise and celebration of learning come freely and frequently but equally respect and courtesy are protected and applied with necessary consequence;
- d. includes both formal and informal pastoral working that develops the character and competence of the young people and engages with parents, carers, colleagues and other professionals to achieve positive personal growth and learning;
- e. skilled and reflective and seeks to build positive and trusting relationships with young people by improving practice and developing skills and insights;
- f. committed to the reasonable and proportionate discretionary and extra effort and time to apply both reward and consequence beyond the conventional school day essential in an SEMH setting.

7. Reflection, consultation and action that means:

- a. teachers identify obstacles to learning and look inwards for imaginative solutions that are rooted in improving their practice not seeking to explain underachievement but energetically and wholly committed to challenging and overcoming it by improving teaching to drive learning;
- b. teachers work supportively together and look to the wider and diverse educational community and beyond to develop and improve and overcome obstacles to learning and focussed always on the overriding responsibility to deliver learning success;
- c. every reasonable and practicable opportunity for training and development both formal and informal, planned for and encountered is exploited to improve teaching to improve learning.

8. Subject leadership that:

- a. embraces and reflects the reality of teaching in a small specialist setting where subject leadership is a both a privilege and a responsibility;
- b. ensures subject knowledge and content are continuously and appropriately developed and improved as are teaching styles and methodology across the team;
- c. learning targets are challenging and outcomes are analysed and understood and responded to and can be lucidly explained to colleagues, governors, inspectors and other stakeholders;
- d. an improvement cycle of reflection and action that dovetails with wider school aspirations and improvement.

9. A contribution to school improvement that:

- a. dovetails personal professional development and improvement with the school’s corporate aspirations and improvement;
- b. is reflected in performance management that is pertinent, challenging and measurably beneficial to student learning and welfare.

5. Professional characteristics of best SEMH practitioners:

Can you demonstrate and evidence them?

1. Are safe and transparent and have integrity and humility; they admit their errors and recognise their frailties and seek support and guidance. *When did you last admit a meaningful professional error or seek and apply advice? When did your professional ethics and values influence your decision-making and actions? When did you last do a difficult thing because it was the right thing?*
2. Believe we must change to change the students: we own the behaviour and must seek to change it positively. They look **in** for solutions not **out** for blame. *What have you done recently to improve your practice? What was its impact?*
3. Reflect usefully on successes and challenges and seek solutions together to those difficulties they face: they are always optimistic never gloomy; the glass is always half full for them and challenges are opportunities, they make the clichés meaningful again. *What challenges are you currently facing and more significantly what are you doing about it?*
4. Are prepared to graft and be generous in their discretionary effort to achieve those solutions: they go the extra mile. *When did you last do something in your own time professionally?*
5. Dislike the behaviour but always like the child and are quick to forgive the children, their colleagues and themselves and move on positively. *Can you give a recent example of showing this generosity of spirit?*
6. Are wise to the worst outcome but expect the best at all times: they have “withitness”, they pay attention to the detail. *When did you last prevent a difficulty through anticipatory, proactive and “withit” behaviour; give an example?*
7. Are on-time, visible, rigorous, energetic and proactive throughout their work. Have you been late recently? When were you last early? *When did you last lead or were you in charge of something; an activity, a trip, a team? What have you done to be proud of and celebrate?*
8. They make policy and guidance real by living it. *Quote some even loosely and evidence its significant application in your work recently*
9. They are diligent and meticulous in their recording and administering: they value it and do it even though it’s often irksome. *When did you last make an entry in the school record keeping book? Do you record serious incidents promptly and fully? Do you read the school recording/communication documents frequently? What was the last entry you made or read? Quote it?*
10. Believe reward changes and consequence discourages and use both imaginatively the latter powerfully but in moderation and with restraint the former with sincerity and often. *When did you last reward or sanction a student? Describe its nature; was it imaginative, impactful?*

5i. What do we see and experience when we encounter...

The outstanding SEMH teacher in the school community	Outstanding teaching in the SEMH classroom
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is ever present and has an outstanding attendance record: however good you are you are no good if you are not there. 2. They care about how they look and make an appropriate effort to be dressed appropriately and in context to show respect to the pupils: the PE teacher's trainers are clean; the DT teacher's apron too... 3. In all things they are the "extra-milers" who give discretionary effort freely because they have a strong pride in their vocation, in their profession, they are proud to be teachers because they authentically like and respect the children and young people and the students tell us so when asked. 4. However tough life may be personally and professionally they are "troopers" and present to the children always as committed and caring and enthused; their warmth and energy are contagious and adults and children feel better around them. 5. They go where the children are: they sit on the liveliest table at lunch; they ref the most fractious football game; they look to be useful; they offer themselves to colleagues; they never hide; they are true team players ☺ 6. They engage with parents and carers and professionals with care and sometimes necessary caution but they are accessible and seek to build a positive network of grown-ups around the child. 7. They contribute intelligently to the diverse conversation formal and informal about best practice and they have a platform to do so and are seen as authentic and credible by their peers because they are reliably successful in their teaching 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The classroom environment hits visitors immediately the very best draw instant praise with its warmth and good order and care with attractive cared for displays and a tidiness and attention to detail. Resources and equipment are diverse, pertinent, attractive and well cared for 2. You feel their energy and warmth and presence as you enter a lesson and as a result you feel the security and calm in the children and young people. 3. Praise and affirmation and celebration are ever present but also credible and supported by constructive criticism and a warm polite assertiveness about behaviour 4. It is clear the children and young people feel they belong and have an affiliation to their teacher and their classroom and their school. 5. Strong and familiar expectations, routines, rhythms are all embedded creating a climate in which... 6. ...the children are engaged and enthused and there is an element of risk and fun in learning and subject knowledge robust supporting and extending with confidence and skill. 7. Assessment for learning can happen freely and deep down and children and young people know where they are and what to do next in their learning and can tell you. 8. Progress is good and increasingly outstanding and can be seen happening... 9. Support staff are embedded and confident in this context and an extension of the teacher and able to operate independently and under direction.

5ii. What do we see and experience when we encounter...

...outstanding learning support in the school community	...outstanding learning support in the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our best colleagues are ever present and has an outstanding attendance record: however good you are you are no good if you are not there. • In all things they are the “extra-milers “who give discretionary effort freely because they have a strong pride in their work, they are proud of their role because they authentically like and respect the children and young people and the students tell us so when asked. • However tough life may be personally and professionally they are “troopers” and model for the children always commitment and care and positivity; their warmth and energy are contagious and adults and children feel better around them. • They like their best teacher colleagues go where the children are: they sit on the liveliest table at lunch; they play football with energy and humour; they look to be useful; they offer themselves to colleagues; they never hide; they are true team players 😊 • They listen hard and with compassion and are always alert to the children’s safety and wellbeing. • They ceaselessly seek to build their understanding of and respect for and rapport with the children and young people but also as they are so often the “glue” that holds the community together they do so with colleagues and as their confidence grows beyond to sharing with and challenging... <p>Parents and carers and professionals of all kinds and they are humble but confident in their insights and sharing and folk listen because they are clearly good at the work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They contribute intelligently to the diverse conversation formal and informal about best practice and they have a platform to do so and are seen as authentic and credible by their peers because they are reliably successful in their work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best LSAs relentlessly and skilfully build trust and rapport in the classroom with teachers and pupils as a result... • ...they have status, influence and are a “presence” in the classroom. • They are fluent in the expectations and rhythms, rituals and routines of the classroom and can assert them. • They have clarity about the learning objectives and goals and support them. • They are intelligently proactive and have sound judgment knowing when to intervene and when to hold, when to support when to assert and encourage greater independence in the child and they are always vigilant about the risks of dependency. • They are equally comfortable working under the direction of the teacher or using their growing insight and confidence to work autonomously and take the initiative and they move intelligently between the two. • <u>They are never passive</u> and if uncertain will speedily seek instruction if they need it. • As their confidence grows they not only work as a partner with the teacher but can challenge them and... • ...when necessary increasingly initiate and lead work in the classroom both in behaviour and learning. • In time they can lead small groups and purposefully cover classes as they develop and learn...

6. A habitual conversation about learning and teaching

Improving practice and moving over time from “Special Measures” to “good” has been rooted in identifying good teachers and teaching and effective practice and collectively as a small if diverse team together sharing and coalescing what is most effective through coaching and a collegiate approach to best practice (appendices 1 and 2 provide examples)

The team habitually talks about and shares the challenges in our setting (twice weekly problem solving meetings and every day in morning briefings and afternoon debriefings) because this is a rowing against the stream activity; stop rowing and you go backwards immediately and at pace...

Improvement then and consolidation has been rooted in embedding strong and consistent expectations in the classroom including a common structure, rituals and routines in all lessons (the exception is more personalised learning at KS4) that protect and promote a positive climate for learning because as our pragmatic 2020-21 **school improvement plan** sets out we must *“keep a very sharp focus on the most cohesive and stable and so productive combinations of our eclectic youngsters and staff: we maintain our “can do”, pragmatic and child-centred approach.”*

7. How can we make sure teaching is at least good and improving?

We first pragmatically and necessarily accept and understand that good teaching and so learning are constantly at risk in our setting if we don’t row hard we go backwards with unnerving speed...

We also understand the context described above where we must pay rigorous and relentless attention to our basic fitness for purpose and provide an environment and culture where leaning can happen and basic needs are met.

Fundamental to ensuring teaching is as at least good is we work hard to recruit well and then retain and develop good people; both teachers and support staff who are innately highly motivated and self-aware and so self-improving and curious to be better.

We seek people who are open and humble and so quick to identify and share obstacles to learning who look both inwards and outwards for pragmatic and imaginative solutions that are rooted in improving their practice never seeking to explain or excuse underachievement but wholly committed to challenging and overcoming it by improving their own insight and so practice to drive learning.

We have worked hard over time to create a culture where our inevitable failures and weaknesses can be shared freely and creatively and constructively tackled and failure is an unavoidable reality given the complexity and challenge and risk in our work: the young people will and do expose our frailties.

We move freely and frequently in and out of each other's classrooms and we share habitually and daily the obstacles to good learning and teaching.

There is a "can do" problem solving culture that is scaffolded by the humility to be promptly candid when things go wrong but in an SEMH setting frailties are in a majority quickly visible.

We run regular "supervision" sessions facilitated and led by the Educational Psychological Service to problem-solve collegiately and we are a part of innovative working with them for example "relational" practice, "an educational approach that emphasizes the importance of connectivity and relationships."

We agree and set shared goals invariably and pragmatically and necessarily revisiting the most powerful best practice we know is essential for learning to happen and includes the professional characteristics we know our best practitioners personify.

We see improving teaching as embedded in our day to day work not an "observation-feedback-PM" structure and this in step with our notion that it is better to create a culture and attract and keep people and create a team where the dialogue about doing things reliably well and better is habitual and instinctual because folk are naturally driven to and want to be better...

8. Curriculum planning

We start with class groups; these are decided primarily on the cohesiveness and stability of the pupil mix socially (what is most supportive of a positive classroom climate) prescribed by key stage and as with all our work a pragmatic flexibility is ever present as change must and will happen.

Planning is a collegiate and pragmatic task in context and one that requires flexibility and ongoing tweaks and modifications...some children and groups are by their nature so complex and mercurial a wholly personalised and flexible and innovative approach is best.

The teaching team works together to plan a coherent and cohesive and chronological content (long and medium term planning) across key stages 2 and 3 in English, Maths, Science and PSHE that seeks to avoid unhelpful repetition and duplication (some reinforcement is desirable).

Specialist subjects for example PE and IT are planned and taught discretely.

KS4 brings the structure of GCSE and other accreditation plus the vocational courses our young people access so planning is around the “offer” route the student takes...

Short term planning is left to the discretion and professional judgment of individual teachers and peer sharing its scrutiny and this in step with seeking to recruit and retain teachers who relish and want autonomy and responsibility.

The work at the “chalk face” demands relentless drive and enormous and draining energy and enthusiasm and being always “engaged” and “present” so the critical activity of teaching must not be degraded by staff distracted and wearied by cumbersome admin’ tasks so all planning must be sharp and focussed and minimalist.

9. Assessment 2020-21

“Teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning.”

“Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They check learners’ understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In doing so, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary, without unnecessarily elaborate /differentiated approaches”

Ofsted descriptors

Assessment of learning

We assess our students' progress against a set of Age Related Expectations (ARE); these are based on the lists of tasks published by DfE for each school year. ARE assume that a child who meets them throughout their school career will get Grade 7 (old Grade A) at GCSE; most students nationwide will therefore be working below their ARE, and this will apply to our students as well. (See ARE to GCSE, att)

Each year is divided into 3 sub-levels (Emerging, Developing, Secure), with 3 sub-levels in a year being regarded as Good progress. Thus: a Year 6 child who is performing to the national expectation would be at Level 6D at Easter. A child moving from 5S to 6S in a year would represent Good progress, regardless of the actual age of the child.

Given that progress needs to be tracked across the whole curriculum and only part can be taught each term, we formally assess progress annually, not termly. Nevertheless, each term teachers will record students' performance under the following headings, on a scale of 0 (none) to 4 (Outstanding):

- Attendance in class.
- Engagement with the material.
- Progress made.

This data can then help teachers make & justify formal (summative) assessment decisions at the end each year.

Subject Leaders will help Class Teachers make these assessments, and will ensure a uniform approach across their subject. Each student's levels are recorded, & progress calculated, in a school database which is updated annually, along with data concerning attendance, behaviour etc; this can then inform targets for the next year.

We have established a champion and leader for assessment to work with the team to address developments and improvements in the checking and moderating the reliability of our assessments and so targets and then the extent of reliably good progress including building stronger links with our sister special schools.

At certain points in a student's school career, their progress will be moderated by external exams. Examples of this are:

- KS 2 SATS
- Intermediate public exams, such as Entry Level, NCFE, Functional Skills or GCSEs taken early.
- GCSEs taken at the end of KS4.

The results of these exams provide the student's level for that subject for that year, & targets for the next, as they have been objectively assessed by the exam system.

At the same time, Class Teachers are expected to continually assess the effectiveness of their teaching, and confirm that students are indeed making the expected progress; and to vary, modify and differentiate their teaching to achieve this.

Under our Primary model teaching, Subject Leaders ensure that Class Teachers have sufficient levelled material to allow them to do this.

The pure academic data is supplemented by a record of each student's wider achievements, such as vocational qualifications, work experience, participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme etc. This allows us to describe each student's learning journey through the school and, if possible, some-time beyond.

This information, suitably anonymised, can be shared with the Governing Body in order that they can scrutinise the work of the school."

The teaching team uses a range of assessment of learning tools

Whole School

- Rising Stars Assessments from Year 1 to Year 9 PIRA and PUMA to formally assess Reading, Language and Maths Termly
- Beginning of the year Spelling and Single Word Reading test

KS2

- Rising Stars objectives which feeds into Classroom monitor for ongoing assessment of: Maths; English; Science

KS3

- Rising Stars objectives which feeds into Classroom monitor for ongoing assessment
- NCFE Level 1 and 2 for English and Maths plus Functional Skills for those that need it.

Boxall Profile is being explored and actively developed as a measure of personal development.

Assessment for learning

Creating and sustaining an *"environment that allows the learner to focus on learning"* is a complex challenge in an SEMH school.

Assessment for learning can only happen when the teacher can securely "boss" the room and there is an embedded positive climate for; without it the conversation about learning, the clarity about learning objectives and how to achieve them and the scaffolding and supporting of students' learning can't happen.

For that reason our ongoing improvement and best practice conversation as a team maintains a pragmatic focus on protecting and promoting a positive classroom climate where behaviour is reliably good and assessment for learning can therefore happen and this true of the diverse and various assessment methods used by teachers for example videoing practical demonstration in PE or photographing products in DT.

Beginnings and endings are critical and there must be a rhythmic, embedded classroom structure and routine where objectives can be made clear at the outset and the plenary allows orderly and purposeful reflection and feed-back.

Where that positive climate is secure (and this as described is hard won and always at risk) as the lesson progresses the conversation about learning can happen and understanding can be checked and support given.

The recurrent challenge is the unwillingness and sometime inability of our youngsters to access written feedback rooted both in literacy difficulties and the wider disconnection from and disaffection with school and learning that characterises many students.

In practice in our classrooms most assessment for learning happens through speaking and listening and the conversation about learning between teacher and student.

School improvement in 2018-19 had a description that is always going to be powerfully pertinent about what is essential in assessment for learning in our setting.

- There is a strong and embedded three part lesson and the children observe explicit and known behaviour expectations **most notably speaking and listening** because this impacts most powerfully on both behaviour and learning; these are powerfully positively reinforced across every classroom by every teacher and in every lesson
- Both at the opening of the lesson and its close it will be clear the teacher has tested and knows what has been learned securely and what needs to be supported and revisited and **what is next** (**clarity of objective**) and so, critically, do the children.
- The teacher employs pragmatic, practicable and innovative ways to make sure students engage with and understand how to progress and take next steps in both their learning and their behaviour (**assessment for learning**).

Whatever the method; if the children and young people know where they are, where they are headed and how to get there and learning progress is at least good that is the best evidence of at least competent and likely good assessment for learning.