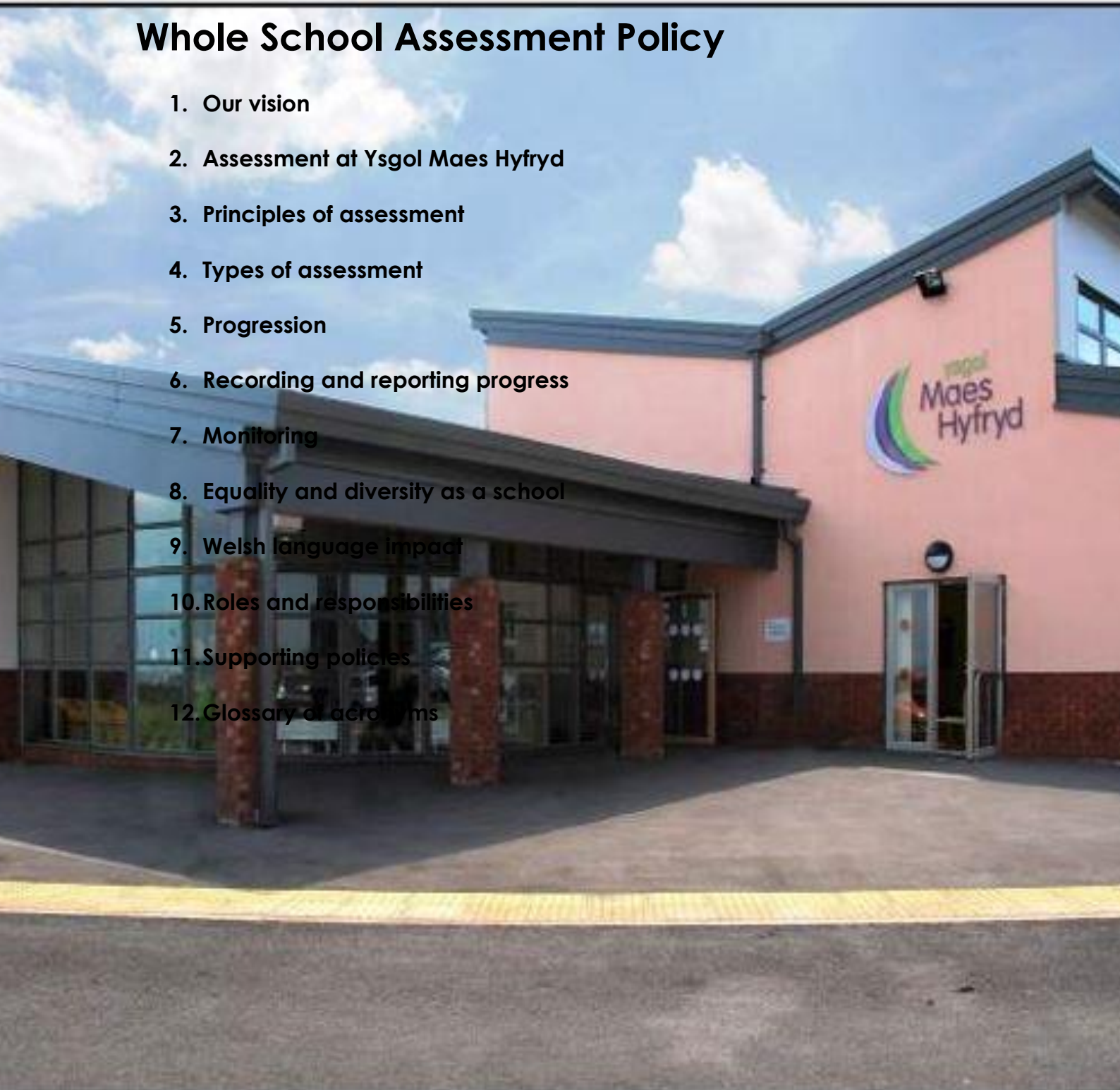


Ysgol Maes Hyfryd

Specialist High School
Ysgol Uwchradd Arbenigol

Whole School Assessment Policy

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Our Vision

Each pupil enters Ysgol Maes Hyfryd with unique and significant challenges and obstacles to learning. Each pupil will leave Ysgol Maes Hyfryd equipped with the necessary skills to fulfil their own unique potential.

At Ysgol Maes Hyfryd we strive towards the four purposes of the curriculum for Wales maximising our pupils' life chances, supporting their individualised future plans, by developing the 4 Purposes of the curriculum for Wales in their own individual way.

We aim to support and address our vision within a holistic approach to learning encompassing the whole environment and school day.

This policy reflects the inclusive, child-centred approach to assessment at Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, focusing on the individuality of each pupil while supporting their development across all areas of learning.

Assessment at Ysgol Maes Hyfryd

At Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, we believe that assessment plays a central role in supporting and enhancing the learning and development of every pupil. Our policy is grounded in the understanding that every child deserves assessments that are meaningful, purposeful, and responsive to their unique developmental needs. We aim to create an environment where assessment serves as a tool for growth, helping to track progress and shape personalised learning journeys, while ensuring pupils are both supported and challenged. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils make progress at a pace appropriate to them, helping them work towards achieving their long-term outcomes as outlined in their IDPs.

Principles of Assessment

Our assessment philosophy is centred on three core principles:

Holistic Approach: Assessments should contribute to building a comprehensive picture of each child, focusing on their strengths, learning

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styles, and areas for development. It is vital that assessments inform and guide next steps in teaching and learning, enabling individualised support.

Progress Monitoring: The primary purpose of assessment is to track and support pupils' progress in a manner that is aligned with their individual developmental stages and curriculum pathways. At Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, we understand that progress is unique to every child, and we celebrate this through our flexible, individual approach.

Inclusivity: Assessment is inclusive and adaptable, ensuring that it meets the diverse needs of all pupils, particularly those working below or within progression Step 1. We incorporate the development pathways assessment document and assessment code to guide our practice.

Types of Assessments

Our assessment system integrates a variety of formal, informal, and pathway-specific methods to meet the needs of each pupil. These assessments reflect the pupil's developmental stage and their personal learning goals (PLGs), aligned with their Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

Generic Assessments

These assessments are used across the school to ensure consistency and meet the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. They include:

- Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)
- Digital Competency Framework (DCF)
- Communication assessments as appropriate to each individual (e.g., Blank Level Communication Work, Communication Matrix, Colourful Semantics, PECS/PODD)
- Behavioural assessments where appropriate – reviewing positive behaviour support plans.
- Regulation framework developed in house (including intrinsic feelings)
- MAPP (Measuring and Assessing Personal Progress) The MAPP assessment provides a clear continuum for tracking progress against –
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- Personal Learning Goals (PLGs), helping us understand both the milestones and the individual pathways that each pupil takes.

Pathway-Specific Assessments

Tailored to meet the needs of pupils working on different curriculum pathways. We have developed an in-house assessment process that captures the full curriculum offer for pupils working pre progression levels or straddling early stages of progression step 1. Aligned with the development pathways assessment model, this process ensures that assessments remain purposeful and meaningful, reflecting each pupil's developmental stage and personal learning goals and are generally assessed through professional staff judgements through ongoing observation. We also recognise that while there is a bank of assessments for each pathway pupils will straddle pathways and so will access, if necessary, assessments from a number of pathway assessments

Pre formal pathway assessments

Routes for Learning,
YMH Pre-formal Assessment

Informal pathway assessments

Routes for Learning
YMH informal pathway Assessment
Attention Autism (where applicable)
Phonics Assessments (where developmentally appropriate)

Bridging and Beyond Pathway:

YMH Bridging and Beyond assessment
Attention Autism (where appropriate)
Phonics (where appropriate)
GL assessments – numeracy, literacy and attitudes to school (where appropriate)

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Formal Curriculum – Lower School:

White Rose Maths

Phonics Assessments

GL assessments – numeracy, literacy and attitudes to school (where appropriate)

Curriculum Assessment Books - We use a three-point scale to record progression: Experience, Develop, Achieve, which reflects pupils' growth within the identified statement of what matters within the Areas of learning experiences (AoLEs) and progression steps.

Upper school -all pathways

14-16 curriculum specific certification award:

School Curriculum Certification 'Learning for Life' Model, with bronze, silver, and gold awards

14-16 formal pathway & 16-19 ILS and Work based learning pathway

16-19 curriculum specific RARPA certification award

Duke of Edinburgh (pupil specific)

John Muir Award (pupil specific)

At YMH, we have intentionally decided not to assess our pupils with the GL numeracy, reading, and writing assessments once they enter the sixth form. This phase provides an opportunity for pupils to develop, consolidate, and grow their skills for life beyond school. Most traditional assessments are not designed for students aged 16-19 and would not offer meaningful or relevant data for our curriculum provision. During this stage, pupils focus on building skills for daily living and work, following a RARPA certification programme. However, we will continue to track and assess their progress using the LNF, DCF, and PLG (MAPP) criteria.

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At YMH, we recognise that pupils' individual needs are diverse and can change over time. These needs can be influenced by various factors, including medical conditions, behavioural concerns, sensory sensitivities, or other personal challenges that may not always be immediately apparent. As a result, it is not uncommon for a pupil to need a change in their curriculum pathway model during their time at school. The monitoring of curriculum development through assessment and observation allows flexibility to adjust the curriculum pathway, ensuring that each pupil receives the most appropriate and supportive learning experience, tailored to their current needs.

The Engagement Model

Some pupils may struggle to engage with the standard curriculum due to a range of complex needs. These may include sensory processing difficulties, communication challenges, or behavioural concerns that prevent them from fully participating in the planned educational activities. This can happen to any pupil on any pathway. When this happens, we may determine that the current curriculum pathway and assessments are not meeting their needs and opt to switch to an alternative model, such as the Engagement Model. This approach allows us to respond to a pupil's immediate needs while also considering their long-term educational and developmental goals. The Engagement Model is designed to support pupils whose engagement with learning is significantly impaired due to these challenges. The model focuses on seven key areas of engagement: awareness, curiosity, investigation, discovery, anticipation, persistence, and initiation. Staff work closely with pupils, using a range of resources such as their one-page profiles, communication passports, and sensory profiles to ensure that the activities are fully personalised. In collaboration with the pupil, their family, and any relevant professionals from the multidisciplinary team (MDT), we will design a learning plan that fosters engagement and provides opportunities for incremental progress.

As engagement increases, we gradually introduce more challenging activities to further develop the pupil's skills in the areas of awareness,

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curiosity, and persistence. The objective is to help the pupil transition back to a more structured curriculum pathway when they are ready, ensuring that they are always working within a model that best supports their current needs.

Assessment of Well-Being

At Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, we recognise the importance of well-being in the development of our pupils. We include the assessment of well-being as part of our holistic approach. This includes:

Social and Emotional Development: Observations to assess how children show they are happy, settled, and engaged in relationships with peers and staff.

Physical Development: Assessing how children engage in physical activities, their confidence, and coordination in gross and fine motor skills.

In addition, we use CORDS to support with recording against specific ELSA targets

Progression

At Ysgol Maes Hyfryd we recognise that progression in learning is a process of increasing depth, sophistication, engagement and learner control, rather than purely covering a body of content. Progression is not linear and different learners are likely to progress in markedly different ways. Progression is at the heart of our curriculum design. When selecting the content of our curriculum and assessment, we use the principles of progression for each area to inform our approach to progression.

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Recording and Reporting Progress

Progress is tracked through both formal and informal assessments. As this policy identifies we use a variety of assessment tools and models to ensure that we capture the full spectrum of pupil development. Evidence for Learning is the tool YMH predominantly use to capture and record assessments and evidence to inform these assessments.



When communicating and engaging with parents and carers, we share information about:

- the progress their child is making
- their future progression needs
- how future progression needs can be supported at home
- their general well-being in school

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress throughout the year via:

- Phone calls
- Dojo
- Evidence for Learning
- Formal reports (IDP reviews, PLG reports, Curriculum reports)
- Parents evenings

Recording of progress is a continual process and this is reported back formally on a termly basis either through

- IDP review
- PLG report
- Curriculum report

In addition, the continuous correspondence with parents through telephone calls and dojo ensures that parents are always aware of their child's development and any next steps in their learning journey.

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Monitoring

We view progress as a dynamic, individual process that occurs over time. It is not a one-time judgement but rather an ongoing development journey. We aim to adapt our teaching and assessment practices to ensure that each pupil's progression is supported, celebrated, and understood.

Staff regularly reflect on the assessment process and collaborate to ensure consistency and a shared understanding of progression is held across the school. Discussions take place regularly, involving internal staff and external ALN schools, to improve practice and ensure that assessments reflect both the individual needs of our pupils and the curriculum requirements.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members monitor and moderate assessments on a termly basis to ensure that assessment practices are consistent across the school. This includes reviewing PLGs and Evidence for Learning work to ensure a shared understanding and progress tracking.

Equality and Diversity as a school

As an employer and provider of services Ysgol Maes Hyfryd will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or on the grounds of Welsh Language.

All pupils, their parents and carers, volunteers, staff and school governors are valued and will be treated with dignity and respect. Ysgol Maes Hyfryd will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

In order to make sensitive and well-informed professional judgments about a learner's needs and a parent's capacity to respond to their child's needs, it is important that school staff are sensitive to differing family patterns, and lifestyles and to child rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

We will work across our school community to ensure our commitment to equality and fairness is shared and take steps to ensure that our school is accessible, welcoming and inclusive.

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Ysgol Maes Hyfryd values the individuality of all pupils and is committed to giving each one every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. The expectations of all staff are high and students are encouraged to have a positive attitude and to achieve the best that they possibly can, both in and out of the classroom.

Welsh Language Impact

Wherever possible and appropriate, we will use the Welsh language as a natural part of all aspects discussed in this policy document.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

By adopting this policy, the governing body of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd recognises its responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively. This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body within a 3-year period, or sooner to take account of any local and national initiatives or changes in the assessment procedures at YMH. We will ensure the policy is in alignment with the latest Welsh Government guidance and statutory regulations.

Senior Leaders

Leaders at our school will establish a strong learning culture that supports and challenges our staff to enable pupils to make developmentally appropriate progress.

PLGs will be monitored termly by identified Assistant head teachers for the classes and the assessment lead, this ensures that pupils individual needs are met, sufficiently challenging and relevant targets are set and where possible the targets are interwoven with the curriculum.

School Staff

Staff at our school will plan for and provide effective learning experiences

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that are appropriate to the age and development of our pupils. They support and challenge pupils effectively to ensure individuals make progress from their own starting points. They will complete the necessary assessment requirements identified within this policy and as a school, consequently evaluate and use the results to support the teaching experiences they provide.

Pupils

Our pupils will participate in and contribute to the assessment process in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development, our pupils will be supported and encouraged to:

- understand where they are in their learning and where they need to go next
- develop an understanding of how they will get there
- respond actively to feedback on their learning

Parents and carers

We value the input of parents and carers in the assessment process. Their insights into their child's unique set of skills, knowledge, cultural background and needs are integral to creating accurate and holistic assessments. Parents and carers are encouraged to share observations, which are used alongside staff assessments to inform next steps.

Parents and carers have an important role to play in assessment and we will engage with them so that they can support their child's progress in an appropriate way.

We will encourage and enable parents and carers to:

- engage regularly with our school in order to understand and support their child's progression in learning
- share relevant knowledge and understanding with us which will support their child's learning and progression

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respond actively to information provided about their child's learning and, in collaboration with us, plan ways of supporting that learning within and outside of school

External partners

We will engage external partners to:

- help our staff assess and identify the needs of pupils who may require additional support and then help them through the provision of advice and support. This includes specialist educational support and support from other agencies such as health
- provide information about learning progression that has taken place for our pupils who may spend some of their time in other contexts.

Review and Updates

This assessment policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure its effectiveness and continued alignment with best practices and the evolving needs of our pupils.

Supporting policies

Ysgol Maes Hyfryd whole school assessment policy supports and should be read in conjunction with:

- Curriculum policy
- Individual Curriculum Pathways Guidance
- RARPA procedures
- External exams procedures and policies

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Glossary of acronyms

AoLE	Areas of learning experiences
CORDS	Child outcomes record data system
EFL	Evidence for learning
GL Assessments	Granada learning
IDPs	Individual development plans
MAPP	Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress
PECS	Picture exchange communication system
PLGs	Personal learning goals
PODD	Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display
RARPA	Recognising and recording progress and achievement
RFL	Routes for learning
YMH	Ysgol Maes Hyfryd