

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

Associated documents
Curriculum statement
Display and Learning Environment Policy
Waking Day Curriculum Policy
Examination Policy/Controlled Assessment Policy
Assessment malpractice policy

This policy aims to:

- Explain how we create an environment at St John's College where learners can thrive, have the opportunity to take part in new experiences, and to learn and develop skills and knowledge.
- Summarise expectations to make sure everyone is committed to achieving a consistent approach to teaching and learning across our college.
- Promote high expectations and raising standards of achievement for all learners in our college.
- Involve learners, parents and the wider college community in learners' learning and development.

1. Objectives

1.1 St John's College is a specialist college for autistic young people. Our learners follow a specialised curriculum designed to give each of our learners the skills they need for their identified destination and personal aspirations. Teaching staff plan learning for the small classes of up to 8 learners. They will be taught by specialist teachers and facilitators who work alongside a transdisciplinary team consisting of Occupational Therapists (OTs), Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) Employment Specialists (ES) and Positive Behaviour Support Specialist (PBSs)

1.2 The Ambitious Approach underpins all our thinking and practice. It is an approach to education created by Ambitious about Autism to support young people with autism. It has been developed to provide high-quality education whilst affording dignity, respect, and compassion, in all aspects of our provision, including the consideration of mental health and wellbeing. The Ambitious Approach is based upon a person's indisputable rights to be:

- Treated with dignity and compassion.
- Valued
- Listened to
- Supported to have the best quality of life possible
- Empowered to make choices and decide on how they want to live their life

We enact our Ambitious Approach and aim to ensure learners have improved quality of life during, and beyond, their time in college through:

- Our Curriculum
- Curriculum Delivery, including College-Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- Collaboration

Dual pillars underpin our work: social and academic progress for all learners. This policy articulates our approach to our academic curriculum.

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

1.3 Our curriculum and assessment model aim to:

- Prepare learners for their identified destinations post St John's College.
- Give learners the opportunity to learn in workplaces and in the community where relevant and possible
- To apply learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Skills build and progress through rigorous baseline assessment and target setting.
- Plan and deliver learning so that is sequenced and broken down in to appropriate steps in order that we understand where learners are on their journey towards target achievement.
- Prepare learners to work with greater independence in all areas of their life.
- Attain accredited achievement, where relevant and meaningful
- Support and increase a quality of life for all learners.

1.4 Our curriculum process

- All learners are assessed for a suitable programme during the admissions process, taking in to account prior learning and achievements.
- When learners first start with St John's College they are baselined in all subject areas.
- In the first six weeks of term year one learners are assessed as to the appropriateness of the programme and tutor group they are in.
- Where it is necessary, and after a full TDT consultation, year one learners are moved to more appropriate groups/courses at half term in Term 1.
- After the first 6 weeks of assessment, year one learners are set targets which draw on outcomes from their EHC plans, our own baseline assessments and the destination plan.
- Progress towards targets is evidenced by teachers and learning support on a weekly basis and reviewed termly by the TDT through the review and reset process during collaborative meetings.
- Learners are assessed for progress against their baselines on a half termly basis and this is recorded on Earwig assessment and reporting system.
- Learners not making expected progress at the termly review and reset have intervention plans written and recorded in each learner's progress over time folder.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 This policy reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010 and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

2.2 It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Learner Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

3. Principles

Curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked and are integral parts of the teaching and learning process. Fundamental to our approach to teaching and learning at St John's College is the ability and commitment to adapt delivery to the unique qualities and needs of each learner. This is informed by knowledge of the strengths and challenges associated with autism.

Our ultimate aim is that our learners enjoy, learn from, and participate appropriately in the world around them whilst at college and ultimately as an autonomous adult, empowered

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

through their education to lead a full and enjoyable life.

3.1 Teaching and Learning Principles

St. John's College has high expectations of, and is ambitious for, all its learners in all aspects of college life. The following principles support learners to reach their fullest potential:

- Ensure a safe and positive environment which helps motivate and engage learners, and that learning is enjoyable.
- Programmes of learning are shaped by individual learner aspiration, abilities and needs with a focus on the learners intended destination.
- Recognition that learners may have significant gaps in their learning.
- Teaching and learning seek to meet individual learner need.
- The teaching strategies used will give learners the greatest chance of success including the use of interventions to overcome potential barriers to learning.
- Teaching and learning approaches and interventions are supported by research evidence.
- Teaching and learning approaches and interventions for each learner are based on evidence of their progress and learning outcomes.
- Learners are encouraged to use Information Communication Technology as a learning tool across the curriculum, and where appropriate the use of alternative communication (AAC) devices.
- Learning opportunities to apply learning to real world contexts are maximised.
- Opportunities to use the local community as a venue for learning and to ensure learners contribution to the community.
- Learners have the opportunity to repeat taught skills and knowledge over time, supporting them to secure this into long term memory and be available to them to apply to future situations.
- Learning is practiced in a variety of contexts and environments to best support the generalisation of skills.
- Teaching and learning will develop independence and self-regulation skills.
- Learners' successes and achievements are celebrated and shared.
- Best practice in teaching and learning is identified, celebrated and shared.
- There is a transdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning, progress is achieved through collaborative and integrated working.

3.1.1 Planning

All planning should be based on prior learning, differentiated to meet all learners' needs and carefully.

sequenced to lead to progress.

3.1.2 Learners' work

Learners will be encouraged to maintain high standards when it comes to the presentation of their work –

this will look different in different subjects.

3.1.3 Feedback

St John's College promotes the importance of regular feedback/feedforward to help a learner make progress. This can take many forms including:

- Self and peer assessment (using answers, checklist criteria, key word lists, model examples);
- Teacher led feedback on strengths/areas for development verbally or written.
- Exemplar work shared with the group.

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

- Analysis of whole group performance to inform future teaching.
- 1-1 verbal feedback during the session.

3.2.4 The Learning Environment

The session room should promote effective learning. We expect that all learners will experience consistently high-quality learning environments that support predictability in each learning environment (as detailed in the Display and Learning Environment Policy):

- Displays with information that is helpful for learners on their current topics.
- Quality displays celebrating the learner's work.
- Behaviour prompts and expectations.
- All session rooms will be clean, tidy and uncluttered.
- Corridor displays change every term.

3.2.5 Functional skills:

St John's College is committed to providing high quality Functional Skills learning to support progress and achievement. This relates to improving the quality of teaching and learning and learning of Functional Skills English and Maths and Digital Skills at the college.

Successful delivery of Functional Skills is achieved through having.

- A comprehensive baseline and initial assessment process.
- A co-ordinated approach.
- Defined support system (managerial, resources, learner support, staff development)
- Procedures for initial, formative, and summative assessment and the review and monitoring of learners' progress.
- Effective internal verification and moderation.
- Procedures for sharing good practice.
- Standards set by the assessment, moderation, and external examination process.
- Quality assurance processes by external awarding bodies (Pearsons Edexcel)
- Comprehensive continuous quality assurance processes in place.

All learners will have an initial assessment of their current level of English and Maths. The completion of this initial assessment and diagnostic assessment will ensure that each learner's current levels of skills will be identified and will allow us to monitor progress. Learners working at Entry 1 and above will use the online diagnostic and initial ACC assessment tool so teachers gain a robust understanding of their levels and areas for development.

Learners who are Pre-Entry will have their key skills in maths and English baselined and reviewed termly.

- Learners for whom it is appropriate, who have not achieved GCSE Grade A – C in English or Maths will be given the opportunity to complete a programme of study that leads to them acquiring an appropriate Functional Skill, GCSE qualification or other steppingstone qualification.
- All learners will have access to appropriately trained and qualified Functional Skills teachers.
- Wherever possible, the teaching and learning of Functional Skills should be delivered in the context of the learner's course and/or individual needs.
- Teachers need to plan delivery and assessment of Functional Skills according to the needs of their learners.

The Quality Assurance of Functional Skills will be through St John's College's standard procedures, such as Course Review, Standardisation and Evaluation and Observation of Teaching and learning and Learning and the Awarding Bodies external moderation process.

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

3.2.6 Principles of assessment

- Is functional for small cohorts;
- Is in line with current educational thinking/research;
- Is accurate (or honest about what it can't be) and has internal integrity so that when learners complete accredited assessments then the outcome is predictable/coherent;
- Is sustainable (workload)
- Produces information that makes sense/useful to a range of stakeholders. Each stakeholder has different ways they engage with the system/information and different priorities
- Uses a range of assessment:
 - Holistic assessment
 - Resilience assessment
 - Community Inclusion assessment framework (Earwig)
 - Travel Training assessment framework (Red, Amber and Green)
 - Social Skills Analysis
 - Critical Communication Checklist
 - Literacy assessment
 - Numeracy assessment
 - Special Interest assessment framework (Earwig)
 - Motor and Process Skills assessment
 - Sensory Processing assessment
 - Independent Living Skills assessment framework (Earwig)
 - Learner feedback and questionnaires

4. Assessment approach

Initial Assessment, in the form of baselines, are conducted for all learners in all subjects in the first six weeks of a learner's time at college. These are then reviewed each term for progress.

Formative Assessment is conducted throughout the teaching week and is individualised by teachers appropriate to their learners needs.

Summative assessment takes the form of accredited examinations where appropriate.

Learners have an EHCP, which outline their aspirations, outcomes, needs and support. We also embed these EHCP targets within our curriculum delivery to ensure that the learners' educational needs are at the centre of our curriculum offer. They form the basis of the learners' Individual Education Plan (IEP). Progress is regularly and comprehensively monitored, evaluated and reported. We tailor the courses of the college to match the individual learner, and we also measure whether the approach is working through auditing and consistent ongoing review and resetting. This helps to ensure that learners make the best progress they can. Learners have access to a range of qualifications and accreditation depending on their interest and desired outcomes. We also use non-accredited learning and quality assure this through a robust RARPA process.

5. Roles and Responsibilities, including monitoring:

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

	Curriculum	Teaching and learning	Assessment
Governing Body	<p>Oversee that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities, which are ambitious, complies to its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes Functional English and maths, RSE and Personal Development and enough teaching time is provided for learners to cover the requirements of the funding agreement.</p>	<p>Ensure proper provision is made for St John's College learners with their special educational needs and range of abilities.</p> <p>Monitors the improvement of T&L via the SAR and implementation of the QIP.</p> <p>Carry out focus visits to observe T&L in practise.</p> <p>Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.</p> <p>Monitor learner attainment.</p> <p>Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote outstanding quality teaching.</p>	<p>Be familiar with, and ensure implementation of, statutory assessment systems as well as how the college's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all learners.</p> <p>Hold college leaders to account for improving learner and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data.</p>
Principal	<p>Ensure that all subjects which the college chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the overall aims of the college.</p> <p>Ensure the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board.</p> <p>Involve the governing board in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.</p>	<p>Ensure that the college buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning</p>	<p>Ensure that the policy is adhered to.</p> <p>Ensure the college's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.</p> <p>Report to governors on all key aspects of learner progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years</p>

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

	Ensure proper provision is in place for learners with different abilities and needs.		
Vice Principal	<p>Review and update this policy annually.</p> <p>Ensure the policy is adhered to.</p> <p>Manage requests to withdraw young person from curriculum subjects, where appropriate</p>	<p>Lead the observation processes.</p> <p>Review and update "Ambitious Approach".</p> <p>Organise the sharing of termly reports with parents and parents' evenings.</p> <p>Ensure a high quality CPD provision for all aspects of C, L, T&A is in place.</p>	<p>Monitor standards in core subjects.</p> <p>Analyse learner progress and attainment, including individual learners and specific groups.</p> <p>Prioritise key actions to address underachievement.</p>
Wider Leadership Team/Subject Leads	<p>Ensure that long term planning and medium-term curriculum overviews are in place.</p> <p>Lead the review and adaptation of these documents.</p>	<p>Undertake regular supportive, ungraded observations.</p>	<p>Ensure that high quality summative assessments are in place.</p> <p>Monitor that formative assessment is taking place.</p> <p>Analyse summative assessment data and input into the college review process.</p>
Teachers Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards	<p>Follow the centralised curriculum.</p> <p>Participate in the review and adaptation the centralised curriculum.</p>	<p>Deliver excellent, well planned engaging lessons that support progress.</p> <p>Respond to observation of T&L feedback and proactively improve practice.</p>	<p>Follow the assessment procedures outlined in this policy</p>
Parents/Carers and learners	<p>Ensure the best attendance possible.</p> <p>Inform the college if there are matters outside of college that may affect a young person's performance or behaviour.</p> <p>Approach learning with a positive attitude.</p> <p>Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/college agreement.</p>		

6. Continuing Professional Development

St John's College is a research-engaged college.

- Senior and middle leaders are expected to engage with the developments in assessment through reading widely (books, blogs), attending conferences and CPD opportunities and then curate the key findings for teachers. Teachers are

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

encouraged to be equally proactive in developing their understanding of assessment.

- The overall responsibility for the quality of CPD is with the Principal.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all learners, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of learners' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience, and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all learners. However, this should account for the amount of effort the learner puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

For learners working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to learner starting points and take this into account alongside the nature of learners' learning difficulties.

8. Learner Voice and Participation

Our learners are the centre of their own learning journeys, and it is crucial we consider and act upon their wishes, thoughts, and feelings at all times. Learners are involved in decisions about their learning, support, and future. Their voices and opinions are valued. We continuously invest skills and resource in enabling learner participation in a variety of ways. All learners inputted into a learner charter which sets out expectations of the learners at college. We have a learner council that inputs into the curriculum, assistive communication technology, learner surveys, interest assessments, suggestion box and a range of dynamic and ongoing practice-based ways in which to receive learner feedback. Resulting from learner input changes can be made within the college and the curriculum should reflect the aspirations, interests and supported life journey of our learners. We also have a learner charter produced by the young people at our college which sets out what we need to all do to keep ourselves and others safe.

We also recognise the enormous importance of working together with families to ensure that the partnership between college and home supports the learner to plan for the future.

9. 'Learner Journey' and Destination Planning

We are clear that from the moment learners come to St John's College we seek to identify and target positive destinations. In conjunction with learners, parents/carers and other stake holders we identify a destination for each young person. The Learner Journey document focuses on what the learner wants to gain from being at St John's College and how the curriculum will support learners to gain the skills and knowledge to achieve their aspirations and reach their intended destination post College.

All learners will achieve knowledge and skills appertaining to placement outcomes relating to five key areas:

- Wellbeing
- Communication
- Skills (Social and vocational)
- Independence
- Employability

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0

The Transdisciplinary Team sets targets that both draw from the learner's EHCP Outcomes and towards gaining accreditation. With this approach we seek to set meaningful targets from the outset that give the learners the skills they need to thrive and to achieve their desired outcomes post College.

Policy Owner	Principal College	Review Date	March 2025
Policy No.	116e	Version No.	1.0