



KENT CONTINUUM OF NEED AND PROVISION CASE STUDIES: ASSESSMENT



By Schools, For Schools

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Mainstream Primary School Case Studies

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School- Using assessment to plan strategically for vulnerable pupils: a whole-school Case Study

Contact:

Beth Carra - b.carra@st-augustines-hythe.kent.sch.uk

Brief description/ overview

School leaders at St. Augustine's have taken a positive and proactive approach to inclusion, ensuring that the curriculum is carefully tailored to meet pupils' diverse needs. Their guiding principle is a "stage not age" approach, underpinned by the belief that happy children learn best.

The school's key priority has been to strengthen social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) provision as a foundation for improving academic outcomes and closing curriculum gaps.

Through visionary leadership, intelligent use of data, and a relentless focus on inclusion, the school has built a culture where every child can thrive. The creation of bespoke learning communities—The Cove and The Bridge—demonstrates how a personalised, flexible model can close gaps, enhance wellbeing, and secure reintegration, ensuring that no learner is left behind.

Strategic Approach

Leaders recognised that, to secure rapid and sustained progress, they needed to redesign support structures and reimagine the role of support staff. Rather than deploying teaching assistants within individual classrooms, they created specialist provision leader roles to enable targeted, high-quality interventions.

The wider support team now includes ELSA practitioners and Forest School leaders, offering therapeutic and experiential learning opportunities for all pupils.

To meet the needs of pupils requiring significant additional support, two internal specialist provisions have been established:

- The Cove – designed for pupils working at EYFS to Year 1 level, focusing on SEMH development for children typically in Years 1–4.
- The Bridge – catering for pupils working around a Year 3 level, supporting children from Years 3–6.

Pupils access these provisions flexibly, attending specific sessions where targeted input is needed while spending the remainder of their time integrated within mainstream classes. This model promotes inclusion, continuity, and belonging. Each group comprises 7–10 pupils, maintaining a nurturing environment and enabling precise adaptation.

Pupils in both The Cove and The Bridge also participate in weekly Forest School and outdoor learning sessions, fostering teamwork, resilience, and engagement with nature.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

The curriculum within each provision is highly adapted and personalised, planned collaboratively by the SENDCo and provision leaders. Learning activities are grounded in pupils’ interests and real-world experiences, for example:

- Creating characters from natural materials during an autumn topic.
- Writing instructions after caring for a visiting guinea pig.
- Exploring a topic on space by writing key words in “moon dust.”

This approach ensures that learning is meaningful, memorable, and fun.

Pupil work is often captured through floor books containing photographs, annotations, and snippets of writing—providing rich evidence of progress without relying solely on traditional recorded work. Leaders report that this approach has had a notably positive impact on pupil engagement.

Learning environments are calm, beautifully designed, and stimulating spaces where children feel secure, valued, and motivated to learn.

An overview of what we did

Leaders have strengthened assessment systems to ensure that identification of learning needs is both accurate and timely, enabling precisely targeted support. The approach combines robust academic tracking with a strong focus on pupils’ social and emotional development, ensuring that the *whole child* is understood.

The school recently implemented Quest assessments, in addition to NFER, to gain a more nuanced picture of pupils’ attainment and progress. Pupils complete assessments that are carefully matched to their current stage of learning, not their chronological year group, reflecting the school’s “stage not age” philosophy.

Assessments are externally marked, providing high-quality, reliable data. Reports offer:

- Detailed cohort, group, and individual breakdowns of performance.

- Question-level analysis, highlighting precise misconceptions and gaps in knowledge for each pupil and across the cohort.
- Insights that reduce teacher workload, as marking and analysis are automated, freeing up time for responsive planning and teaching.

Teachers and leaders use these reports to identify priority areas for reteaching, to adapt their planning, and refine interventions. This ensures that additional support is sharply focused and that progress is monitored closely over time. Quest data also contributes to termly progress discussions, enabling leaders to track improvement at pupil, class, and whole-school levels.

To complement academic assessment, the school has also embedded a comprehensive suite of SEMH and cognitive screening tools that provide a rounded understanding of each child's strengths and barriers to learning. These include:

- Language Link and Speech Link assessments for all pupils, ensuring that any language or communication needs are quickly identified and addressed.
- Working memory and phonics assessments, used as screening tools to pinpoint specific cognitive or literacy-related difficulties.
- Boxall Profiles and Leuven Scales for all pupils with SEND, allowing staff to monitor emotional wellbeing, resilience, and engagement in learning.

Assessment outcomes are triangulated across these sources, providing a rich evidence base to inform decision-making. Findings are reviewed termly through Pupil Progress Meetings, where class teachers, senior leaders, and the SENDCo work collaboratively to interpret data, plan interventions, and evaluate impact. The SENDCo plays a pivotal role in ensuring that academic and SEMH data are viewed together, helping staff to understand the interplay between learning, wellbeing, and behaviour.

Within The Cove and The Bridge, leaders have developed bespoke small-step assessments tailored to the needs of pupils working below age-related expectations. These tools track progress in literacy, maths, and Forest School, celebrating incremental successes and building motivation through visible progress. Evidence from these assessments feeds directly into provision plans, ensuring continuity between specialist and mainstream settings.

Taken together, this highly responsive assessment system enables leaders to identify gaps swiftly, target support effectively, and measure progress meaningfully. It reflects a culture in which data is used as a tool for understanding and improvement, not accountability, empowering staff to make informed decisions that have a direct and positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Impact

This joined-up approach has had a transformative impact:

- Pupils have made rapid progress, with some achieving two years of academic gain and successfully reintegrating into full-time mainstream classes.
- Improved SEMH outcomes have enabled pupils to form positive friendships and develop greater independence.
- Teachers report being better equipped to meet diverse needs in their classrooms, supported by accurate data and responsive intervention planning.
- The system of personalised assessment and provision planning has reduced workload while improving the precision and quality of support.

St Edmund's CoE Primary School- Supporting pupils working at pre-key stage levels

Contact

RStoneham@st-edmunds.kent.sch.uk

Brief description/ overview

Large cohort of pupils working at pre key stage level for literacy throughout Key Stage 2. Some of these pupils have EHCPs and some have SEND support with HNF.

The school needed a form of assessment where teachers could record their small steps of success as pupils are not accessing the national curriculum for their age.

The school also needed a writing framework to help teachers understand how to teach writing to the pupils at the different stages.

An overview of what we did

The school researched and bought the B Squared Primary Steps assessment framework for £400 for 30 users and teachers baselined their pupils using the online assessment framework. This helped teachers to start developing confidence in understanding where their pupils were for literacy and as a school helped us to develop a pre key stage writing framework to support teachers in understanding how to support pupils writing at the different levels.

The school worked with the cognition and learning specialist teacher from STLS to develop a writing framework for teachers to use to support pre key stage writers in their classes and a bank of example pieces of writing were created for each stage so that teachers could use these to support the moderation process.

Actions taken:

- Use of external system to measure steps of success.
- Staff are aware of pupil's starting points to inform more personalised planning.
- Consideration to stage not age learning.

Impact

Teachers can talk confidently about the writing levels of these pupils, their small steps of progress and their next steps.

In understanding how to adapt writing activities, pupils can engage and complete appropriate writing activities independently.

This has had an impact on the self-esteem for pupils, there is less dysregulation as pupils are able to engage with the materials, understand what is being requested of them and it has also seen more pupils working in the classroom alongside their peers.

Outcome:

- The pupils can access the mainstream curriculum alongside their peers with increasing confidence.

Temple Ewell Church of England Primary School- Using holistic assessment: a whole-school Case Study

Contact

senco@temple-ewell.kent.sch.uk

Brief description/ overview

At Temple Ewell Church of England Primary School, inclusion and wellbeing are at the heart of everything the school does. The school's long-serving SENDCo, who has been part of the community since 1996 and in role since 2014, combines deep local knowledge with specialist expertise as an Advanced Skills Teacher and trauma-informed practitioner. She acts as an emotionally available adult, providing continuity of care and trusted relationships throughout the week.

Temple Ewell is part of the Aquila Trust, and the SENDCo plays a leading role in supporting and mentoring new SENDCos across the trust, modelling reflective, research-informed practice. Her ongoing commitment to professional learning ensures that provision continuously evolves in response to pupils' needs and emerging best practice.

The school's ethos is built on strong relationships, stability, and a genuine sense of family. Staff, pupils, and parents describe a nurturing community where children feel safe, known, and valued. A stable and motivated staff team contributes to this sense of consistency and care, underpinned by high expectations and a shared belief that every child can thrive when their emotional needs are met first.

Wellbeing is central to the school's offer. With three trained ELSAs, two nurture-trained staff, Mental Health First Aiders, and a Sports and Wellbeing Coach, the school provides an extensive range of emotional and therapeutic support. Staff receive regular supervision from the Trust Educational Psychologist, supporting reflective practice and timely intervention.

The physical environment has been carefully designed to promote emotional regulation and inclusion. The site features a sensory garden, outdoor sensory circuits, nurture spaces, and adaptable breakout areas. Zones of Regulation are used consistently in every classroom, and personalised lanyards help children communicate their emotions and needs. Every available space is used creatively to support wellbeing and readiness to learn.

The school's culture of inclusion extends beyond the classroom. Every Key Stage 2 pupil represents the school in some form of sport or activity—competitive or otherwise—and the majority of EYFS and Key Stage 1 pupils also take part. Notably,

100% of pupils with SEND represent the school, reflecting a culture of belonging, participation, and pride.

This combination of relational practice, staff stability, and emotionally intelligent leadership ensures that Temple Ewell is a place where children and adults alike feel supported, valued, and empowered to do their best.

Temple Ewell Church of England Primary School exemplifies how trauma-informed leadership, relational practice, and intelligent assessment can transform outcomes for pupils and families. Through its unwavering focus on wellbeing, inclusion, and collaborative partnership, the school has built a community where every child is known, every parent is supported, and every member of staff is empowered to make a difference.

An overview of what we did

Assessment at Temple Ewell is holistic, responsive, and deeply child-centred. Leaders recognise that understanding the “whole child” requires attention not just to academic performance, but also to social, emotional, sensory, and environmental factors. This belief underpins a comprehensive system that combines observation, dialogue, and diagnostic tools to build a complete picture of each pupil’s strengths and needs.

Early identification is a key priority. In Reception, the SENDCo and EYFS specialist staff work closely with nurseries to ensure smooth transitions, attending multiple meetings and observations before pupils start school. Parents are actively involved through transition meetings, and additional visits are arranged for children who may feel particularly anxious. Weekly “Tiddlers” sessions—volunteer-run stay-and-play groups for pre-schoolers—help families familiarise themselves with the school community. From February half-term, “Story and Snack” sessions offer further opportunities for children and parents to build confidence and relationships ahead of starting school.

On entry, all pupils are screened for speech and language needs using Language Link and Speech Link, ensuring that support can begin early and effectively. The school also uses the Dyslexia Portfolio (GL Assessment), which produces robust reports for both staff and parents, helping identify learning barriers and secure appropriate adjustments such as additional time or adapted resources.

As a trained Sensory Champion, the SENDCo conducts Sensory Profiles to understand how individual pupils experience their environment—an essential step in identifying triggers, particularly around behaviour or sensory sensitivities (for example, uniform fabrics or classroom noise levels). Further tools such as the

Anxiety Scale Checklist and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) are used to provide deeper insight into pupils' emotional wellbeing.

This academic and emotional data is triangulated with regular learning walks, pupil voice activities, book looks, and attendance pattern analysis, ensuring that staff understand how children learn and feel in different contexts. Such rich, qualitative evidence helps teachers adapt provision responsively, balancing academic ambition with nurture and care.

Assessments are not seen as one-off events but as part of an ongoing cycle of reflection and response. Teachers, support staff, and the SENDCo meet regularly to review findings, celebrate progress, and refine strategies. This enables the school to act swiftly when new needs emerge and to ensure every pupil receives the right support at the right time.

At Temple Ewell, assessment is more than a process—it is an act of understanding. By seeing each child in full context, the school ensures that progress, wellbeing, and belonging go hand in hand.

Impact

Temple Ewell's holistic, child-centred assessment approach ensures that academic, social, emotional, and sensory needs are understood and addressed from the outset. Early identification, diagnostic screening, and ongoing triangulation of data enable timely, targeted support. This responsive system allows teachers and leaders to adapt provision effectively, promoting progress, wellbeing, and a strong sense of belonging for every pupil.

Mainstream Secondary School Case Studies

St. Edmund's Catholic School- Building a trauma-informed, reflective culture for learning: a whole-school Case Study

Contact

gparsons@st-edmunds.com

Brief description/ overview

At St Edmund's Catholic School, inclusion and compassion are woven into the fabric of everyday life. The school's unashamedly Catholic ethos nurtures a culture where care, dignity, and aspiration coexist—creating an environment in which both pupils and staff can flourish. Leaders and staff take great pride in belonging to a thriving faith community that balances academic ambition with moral purpose.

With 43.9% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium, leaders are deeply committed to ensuring that every young person—whatever their starting point—has access to the support, encouragement, and opportunity required to thrive. Their approach is grounded in a belief that excellence and equity go hand in hand.

St Edmund's leadership team is forward-thinking and strategic, focused on sustainable improvement rather than quick fixes. This long-term vision has driven a deliberate cultural shift towards a trauma-informed, relational model of education. Supported by Virtual School Kent, the school is progressing toward full Trauma-Informed School accreditation in 2025. Eleven practitioners have already achieved the full diploma, and all staff—including key governors—are participating in a programme of training and reflection to embed these principles across every layer of the organisation.

This transformation is not seen as a single initiative, but as a whole-school way of being. The traditional notion of “time-out” has been replaced by “time-in,” emphasising co-regulation, reflection, and connection. Pupils are provided with booklets of strategies to support them to regulate within the classroom. Pupils identified with a high number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are supported through mentoring and structured emotional check-ins with the SEND team. Staff have been trained to listen deeply, hold restorative conversations, and respond to behaviour through a lens of empathy and understanding.

This relational ethos extends beyond classrooms. Every adult—from teachers to receptionists—models calmness, consistency, and compassion, reinforcing the school's commitment to positive relationships. Systems such as Edukey provide

transparent communication with parents, allowing families to access real-time information about support and provision, particularly for pupils with SEND. The House Manager structure adds further continuity: families are linked to the same house across siblings, ensuring consistent relationships and a sense of belonging throughout their school journey.

Through these combined efforts, St Edmund's has become a calmer, more connected community. Staff speak of a shared language and collective responsibility where "everyone is a teacher of SEND" and emotional regulation is embedded in daily practice. The result is a school that truly lives out its values—faith in action, compassion in practice, and inclusion at the heart of everything it does.

An overview of what we did

At St Edmund's, assessment is viewed not as a measure of judgement but as a tool for understanding and improvement. Leaders have created a responsive, evidence-informed system that triangulates predictions, targets, and classroom performance to form a rounded, accurate picture of each pupil's progress. The process is designed to support learning, inform teaching, and promote reflection.

Assessment is structured around four nine-week cycles across the academic year, allowing teachers and middle leaders to identify gaps swiftly and plan timely interventions. This rhythm provides consistency while remaining flexible enough to respond to individual needs. The model has reduced unnecessary workload and ensured that assessment remains purposeful and focused on improving outcomes.

To prepare students for external examinations, St Edmund's runs a dedicated end-of-year assessment week, giving pupils structured experience of formal exam conditions. This practice not only builds familiarity and confidence but also supports the implementation of exam access arrangements. In Year 11, pupils complete weekly assessments across a range of subjects, enabling staff to refine predictions with greater accuracy and helping students use their additional time and support more effectively. Staff training in access arrangements has strengthened equity across cohorts and ensured that every pupil can demonstrate their knowledge and skills under fair conditions.

Early identification is a cornerstone of St Edmund's assessment strategy. All pupils complete CATs and Language Link screening on entry, allowing leaders to gain a clear understanding of each child's cognitive and communication profile from the outset. When data revealed that a cohort had lower-than-average language and literacy skills, leaders acted swiftly and strategically- recognising that pupils must be able to read at or above their chronological age to fully access the GCSE curriculum. Staff

were empowered to adapt curriculum design, refine teaching approaches, and implement targeted intervention pathways to address these needs, ensuring that every pupil was equipped with the literacy foundations essential for success. Two high-fidelity, evidence-based interventions—Direct Instruction and Thinking Reading—have been implemented with striking success. Leaders recognised early on that improving literacy was a key strategic priority, essential to ensuring all pupils could access the secondary curriculum with confidence. They carefully selected and trained staff to deliver the Thinking Reading programme, ensuring both expertise and consistency of practice. Delivered through short, focused 1:1 sessions three times a week, the intervention has had a transformative impact on reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Pupils “graduate” once they reach their chronological reading age, marking a significant milestone in their learning journey. These improvements have not only accelerated academic progress but also strengthened pupils’ self-esteem and motivation, creating a ripple effect across the wider curriculum.

Throughout all aspects of assessment, St Edmund’s maintains a reflective, relational ethos. Data is used to inform practice rather than dictate it. Teachers engage in professional dialogue with middle leaders to interpret outcomes insightfully, identify barriers, and plan next steps collaboratively. This approach ensures that assessment remains anchored in the school’s values—fair, compassionate, and focused on helping every pupil to grow in both confidence and capability.

Impact

St Edmund’s sustained focus on relational practice and intelligent assessment has led to tangible improvements in outcomes, wellbeing, and school culture.

- Pupil outcomes at Key Stage 4 have risen significantly, with students demonstrating greater confidence, resilience, and preparedness for examinations.
- Suspensions for secondary behaviours have reduced notably, reflecting calmer classrooms and more effective self-regulation among pupils.
- Teachers report a deeper understanding of each learner’s strengths and challenges, enabling more precise teaching, intervention, and support.
- Reading interventions have had a transformative effect—students leave sessions more confident, fluent, and able to access the wider curriculum and GCSE content with independence.

- Parental engagement and trust have strengthened through consistent communication, transparency, and a shared commitment to each child's success.

In essence, St Edmund's exemplifies how faith-driven values, trauma-informed leadership, and intelligent assessment can combine to create an inclusive, aspirational environment where every young person is known, supported, and able to thrive.

PRU Case Studies

Alternative Learning Trust- Using baseline assessment

Contact details

mwoolston@estuaryacademy.co.uk

Brief description/ overview

Individual pupil case study:

- PEX from local mainstream secondary school December 2024
- Second mainstream school that they had attended since Year 7
- Failed managed transfer.
- ADHD – not taking medication
- Aggressive and confrontational towards staff and students.
- Strong views and opinions, reluctance to attend as he did not see the point
- Had negative views of himself, lacking motivation and hated any praise.

An overview of what we did

Data on Entry (April 2025):

- R.A – 13yr
- S.A – 12yr 3 m
- Numicon - 21/40
- Baseline Maths Grade 1

- Initial home visit as parent unable to get him to the assessment centre
- Supported with bus pass to support him coming to the centre
- Maths and English Interventions
- SEMH interventions
- Supported back on medication
- Attended assessment centre for 5 weeks to plug gaps in learning and build self-esteem and confidence.
- Full information package completed to transfer to mainstream school
- Supported admission meeting back to mainstream school
- Visits completed by transition coordinator to support reintegration back into mainstream school.

Impact

Through a combination of different support strategies and interventions, Student A has successfully reintegrated back into mainstream school.

One suspension of 3 days, however, he has reflected on what happened, apologised to staff and accepted he dealt with things in the wrong way.

Started Year 11 attending all lessons, on a full time timetable, with support from school staff and building up positive relationships.

The school thanked the assessment centre team for all their hard work and support which has allowed him to be on the pathway to complete his GCSEs and Post 16 destination.

SRP Case Studies

Ashford Oaks Primary School- Supporting Year 6 pupils

Contact details

Beccy.wilsher@ashfordoaks.kent.sch.uk

01233 631259

Brief description/ overview

Focused on a Year 6 specialist resource provision for pupils with autism, including those in access classes. The group had a wide range of needs, both academic and social-emotional, so we wanted to get a clearer picture of what support would be most effective and use a variety of assessments to identify gaps and also as a tool for tracking progress.

An overview of what we did

To understand and support the pupils better, we use a range of tools and strategies to get a full picture of each child's needs. These include regular EHCP reviews, teacher assessments, individual provision plans (interventions), classroom observations, and gathering pupil voice to make sure their perspectives are heard.

We work closely with external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) and Occupational Therapists (OT), who provide targeted assessments and recommendations. These help inform our planning around communication, sensory needs, and access to learning. The Boxall Profile gives detailed insights into pupils' social, emotional, and behavioural development, while the 21 Steps assessment framework helps us identify specific academic gaps and measure small-step progress across core subjects. This mix of approaches allow us to create more personalised support plans that responded to both learning and emotional needs.

For a small group of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium, we introduced equine therapy as an alternative intervention. Sessions were held weekly and focused on developing skills such as confidence, communication, empathy, and emotional regulation through structured activities with horses. The calm, outdoor setting and non-judgmental nature of the animals helped pupils to open up, manage anxiety, and build positive relationships. This approach proved especially effective for pupils who struggled with traditional in-class interventions or had high levels of emotional dysregulation.

Impact

Using this wide range of assessment approaches gave us a much fuller understanding of each pupil's needs, and helped us tailor support more effectively. We saw clear progress in areas such as engagement, communication, and self-regulation.

- The Boxall Profiles showed improved social and emotional scores, and pupil voice highlighted that children felt more confident and supported in school.
- Equine therapy in particular had a strong impact on a small group, boosting their confidence and helping with behaviour and emotional well-being.
- The 21 Steps framework helps track academic progress clearly and shows where targeted teaching had successfully closed gaps as well as identifying areas which needed to be worked on.

Special School Case Studies

Aspire School- The Engagement Model

Contact details

Headteacher - Neil Dipple

Email : Neil.Dipple@ba-mat.org.uk

(01795 899788)

Brief description/ overview

Since the school opened in September 2020, there has been a gradually increasing cohort of pupils that are pre-verbal, or have limited functional language, and are working at very early stages of engagement. Generally, these pupils are demonstrating limited interactions with other pupils and adults, and no interest or fleeting interest in learning activities and tasks.

This cohort of pupils now represents 32% of the overall school cohort, and it was therefore identified that a curriculum and assessment model was required that could appropriately meet their needs.

An overview of what we did

To meet the learning needs for these pupils, the school's Pathway 1 curriculum model was introduced. This includes a curriculum that focuses teacher input entirely on enriching opportunities that provide the pupils the platform to engage in. This includes opportunities, such as messy play, sensory stories, Attention Autism, dance massage, exploration of food, etc.

The Engagement Model was identified as the assessment model to run alongside this curriculum offer. This focuses on the 5 Areas of Engagement (Exploration, Anticipation, Persistence, Realisation and Initiation), and supporting adults are required to recognise and identify how the pupil's engagement and interactions may link to any of these 5 areas. These observations are then recorded, as they occur, on the Engagement Model formative assessment records (please see example below):-



Individual for all,
Aspirational for everyone.

Disengaged	Fleeting	Partly sustained	Mostly sustained	Fully sustained
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Name of Learner

Area 1 -Exploration: This shows if a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity

The Learner....	Observations Notes and Date
Reacts in some way to a new stimulus or activity – this may be an involuntary or startled reaction.	
Responds to a stimulus or activity that is highly noticeable or engaging to them.	
Tracks or follows a moving stimulus	
Responds to a wide range of stimuli or activities, for example by looking, reaching or otherwise indicating an intentional response	
Explores toys and objects using their senses.	
Responds in a consistent way to a given stimulus or activity, indicating a preference for a dislike of the stimulus or activity.	
Responds to and changes their behaviour in response to an interesting event nearby.	

Bi-termly teachers then complete a summative Engagement Profile assessment, based upon the ongoing engagement assessments (please see example below):-

Name: Pupil A

Exploration

Pupil A enjoys dry sensory falling through his fingers. He enjoys filling and emptying different containers.

With support, Pupil A will explore the outdoor area. He enjoys climbing the obstacle course. Pupil A enjoys row, row your boat with an adult and will smile as the adult sings.

Pupil A enjoys high vestibular stimulation activities such as bouncing on the trampette.



Engagement Profile
High Engagement Presentation

Realisation

Pupil A will explore his favourite activities with any familiar class staff.

Pupil A will respond to an adult's verbal requests and follow them. EG: When an adult says 'Outside' he will go to the door.

Pupil A will activate a switch to get a desired outcome. EG: To say the day of the week.

Anticipation

Pupil A will hold his hand out when an adult is holding a massage toy to show them, he would like his hand massaged. Pupil A will move an adult away if he does not want to do what they are asking him to do.

Pupil A recognises what is about to happen when he sees an object linked. EG: Chairs set out for bucket, Pupil A will come and sit down for bucket. Pupil A will show signs of excitement when he is excited by an activity.

Persistence

Pupil A will copy an adult when they are using Play-Doh he will roll the Play - Doh.

Pupil A explores magnetic bricks he enjoys building them and he will take turns with an adult to build a tower.

If Pupil A needs are not immediately met, he will walk away from an adult. Pupil A will repeat the pressing of a switch to get a desired outcome.

Initiation

Pupil A will turn away and push items away to indicate he does not want to engage in an activity, such as pushing away the item to taste in Sensology.

Pupil A will independently walk to a sensory tray and start exploring it by touching the sensory and pouring it over his fingers.

Pupil A will take an adult's hand and walk with them to explore his environment.

The Engagement Model is the only assessment tool that we are using with Pathway 1 pupils. When teachers identify that a pupil might be demonstrating engagement in all 5 areas of the Engagement Model AND they are doing this across a range of contexts, including adult-led and child-initiated, we hold a moderation meeting to identify whether the pupil is ready to move on to the Pathway 2 curriculum model.

Impact

Some of the impact we have identified so far is:-

- Greater consistency and approach across all of the Pathway 1 classes. This includes consistent and embedded use of the Engagement Model language;
- Increase in the range and creativity of the enriching opportunities that Pathway 1 staff are implementing for their pupils;
- Staff members becoming more adept at identifying indicators of small steps of progress. Staff members also becoming more efficient at recording these small steps of progress effectively;
- The singular focus on engagement for these pupils has also seen an increase in the progress that they are making;
- Greater clarity around the school's curriculum as a whole, and how the Pathway 1 curriculum model connects with the rest of the school's curriculum approaches.

A summary of effective strategies evidenced in the Kent Case Studies for Assessment

1. **Adopt a Stage-Not-Age Approach**

- Recognise that pupils develop at different rates; plan and assess based on individual learning stages rather than chronological age.
- Use small-step progress tracking to ensure pupils working below age-related expectations are supported appropriately.
- Adapt curriculum and assessment tools to match each pupil's readiness and engagement level.

2. **Implement Holistic, Child-Centred Assessment**

- Combine academic, social-emotional, sensory, and environmental data to understand the whole child.
- Use triangulation of observations, diagnostic tools, pupil voice, and staff insights to inform teaching and interventions.
- Ensure early identification of needs through screening tools (e.g., Language Link, Speech Link, Dyslexia Portfolio, CATs, SDQs).

3. **Use Evidence-Based and Flexible Assessment Tools**

- Select high-quality assessment frameworks (e.g., B Squared Primary Steps, Quest, 21 Steps, Engagement Model) appropriate to pupil needs and settings.
- Provide moderation, example work, and staff training to ensure confidence and consistency in assessing small steps of progress.
- Embed formative and summative assessments to track growth over time and inform curriculum adjustments.

4. **Integrate Assessment with Targeted, Personalised Interventions**

- Use assessment outcomes to design tailored interventions in literacy, numeracy, and SEMH.

- Implement specialised provisions or programmes to close gaps and boost engagement.
- Monitor progress frequently and adjust strategies to maintain momentum and reinforce strengths.

5. Foster Reflective, Trauma-Informed Practice

- Embed relational approaches in assessment processes, recognising emotional regulation and wellbeing as core to learning.
- Train staff to interpret data with empathy, ensuring that assessment informs supportive teaching rather than punitive measures.
- Use assessment cycles to promote reflective practice, collaboration, and professional learning across teams.

6. Support Successful Transitions and Inclusion

- Use assessment to guide reintegration, transitions, and curriculum access across mainstream, PRU, SRP, and specialist settings.
- Engage parents, carers, and external professionals in interpreting data and planning next steps.
- Ensure pupils can access learning alongside peers with confidence, agency, and increasing independence.

7. Celebrate Progress and Strengthen Confidence

- Recognise incremental achievements, social-emotional growth, and academic milestones.
- Share successes with pupils, families, and staff to reinforce engagement and motivation.
- Use assessment as a tool to enhance self-esteem, belonging, and aspiration for every child.