



***“Connecting Steps has allowed us to celebrate successes on a micro level rather than just focusing on the big changes. This means we can still show progress for the cohort of pupils who make slower improvements or for those going through a tough time. Experiencing small successes is so important for our pupils and also our teachers.”***

***Claire Houghton, Head of Lower School, Headlands School***

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Headlands School is using **B Squared’s Connecting Steps assessment software** with our Welsh Progression Steps and Routes to Progression assessment frameworks.

Our **Welsh Progression Steps**, developed for the new Curriculum for Wales, covers from Routes for Learning through to Welsh Progression Step 3.

**Routes to Progression** is our non-subject-specific learning framework. It covers the same developmental range as the Routes for Learning, but is split into 3 levels and covers a much wider scope.

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## Showing small steps of progress rewards pupils and teachers

Headlands is an independent day and residential special school in Penarth, South Wales. It provides high quality education and care to children and young people aged 7 to 19 years who have experienced early developmental trauma and those with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Conditions. The school’s therapeutic model of education holds the child at the centre of its thinking and is structured to meet the complex needs of all the children and young people it works with.

Most of the pupils at Headlands have missed a lot of schooling or have been out of school for large chunks of their life. As a result of this, it can take some time to build up their ability to feel safe and secure enough in the classroom environment to access any learning.

According to Head of Lower School, Claire Houghton, *“During this period of settling in, it can feel to the outside world as if our pupils are not making any academic progress. However, Connecting Steps has enabled our teachers to celebrate progress for all pupils right from the start of their journey with us. Even a one percent increase is progress and something to be proud of. Our teachers really do take pride in celebrating every step, whether small or large, and sharing it with the pupils, their parents or caregivers and the multi-agency wider teams working around the pupil.”*

### **Celebrating small steps of progress during tough times**

*“There will always be times in our pupils’ lives where things aren’t going quite right - learning and achieving isn’t their top priority and it can feel like they’re at a standstill. Connecting Steps enables the team around the child to highlight the fact that they do continue to make those small steps of progress during the tough times.”*

### **Continuous assessment informs planning & saves time**

*“Rather than waiting until the end of term to try to recall each pupil’s achievements or relying on test outcomes, our teachers continually assess progress using Connecting Steps. Our assessment data is used to inform planning. So pupils not only have a voice in what they learn but also receive a curriculum which is bespoke for them, taking into account their individual needs and gaps in their learning. This approach also saves precious time which we can use to prepare child-centred sessions that are engaging and educative.”*

*“Our school can be a challenging environment to work in and sometimes it is difficult to see the difference that you make. Our teachers use Connecting Steps data to highlight the small things - which can make a big difference! It also works alongside our systems for monitoring social and emotional progress, to create an overall picture of what is working well for our pupils and what to focus on moving forward.”* Claire Houghton, Headlands School.