

Scoil Naomh Eoin

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ASSESSMENT POLICY SCOIL NAOMH EOIN, KILLENARD

Introductory Statement

This policy was drafted by the Board, the Principal, staff and the in-school management team during the school year 2021/2022 following a review of the previous Assessment Policy which documented practice & procedures in place over the years in order to comply with current legislation. This policy will continue to be reviewed regularly.

Rationale

The policy on assessment was formulated to record existing practice and to put a mechanism in place to have ongoing revision of the policy. We also wished to formulate clear guidelines for all teachers, parents and children. The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a school response to their needs.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Assessment activities used in Scoil Naomh Eoin will contribute to pupil learning and development by providing a suitable education in a caring and happy environment.

Aims:

- To benefit pupil learning.
- To monitor learning processes.
- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties.
- To assist teachers' long and short term planning.
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis.

Purposes of assessment:

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum.
- To gather & interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms.

- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the more able pupils.
- To contribute to the school's strategy for the identification and prevention of learning difficulties.
- To monitor pupil progress and attainment.
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work
- To develop a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success.
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

The two principle approaches to assessment are:

Assessment For Learning (AFL)

Assessment for learning seeks to identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes into consideration pupils' strengths and weaknesses. It enables continuous reflection on what pupils know and what they need to learn next. It also promotes immediate intervention and enables teachers to meet the needs of individual children more effectively.

Assessment for Learning includes:

- Teacher Observation,
- Conferencing,
- Self and peer assessment
- Concept Mapping,
- Questioning,
- KWL (What I **K**now, what I **W**ant to know, what I have **L**earned)
- WALT – **We Are Learning To...**
- WILF – **What I'm Looking For**
- Rubrics
- Homework assignments
- Portfolios – use of Seesaw platform to retain examples of work
- Parental feedback or observations
- Teacher designed Tasks and Tests,
- Standardised Testing and Diagnostic Testing.

Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of Learning provides a summary judgement of what has been learned at a particular point in time. Assessment of learning compares children to externally agreed criteria and standards. It identifies gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. These interrelated and complementary approaches emphasise two aspects of assessment that are central to the work of teachers in our school. The teacher uses evidence on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning. (AFL).

The teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents, teacher and other relevant persons.

Assessment of learning includes:

- The strategies above
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Psychological assessments

These assessment methods demonstrate the diversity of assessment methods available and in use in our school. They include methods which are teacher lead (standardised testing) and child- lead (self-assessment). All curricular areas are assessed using appropriate methods.

Informal Assessment

1. Informal Assessment

Homework and class work are marked and comments are made as appropriate. Work is ticked to indicate that the teacher has looked at it and a written comment to indicate sources of error, good points etc. will normally be made.

2. Class work

'Informal' assessment is ongoing during all lessons in response to oral work, team work, skill development, project work etc.

3. Completion of Project Work

The completed project or notes on a topic is collected and marked. The marking recognizes excellence and indicates the areas that need improvement.

4. Primary to Secondary

A meeting is held each year with learning support staff from the main local second-level school to discuss the accommodations required by children entering with special educational needs from our school. This meeting is attended by the sixth class teachers in consultation with principal/deputy principal.

Formal Assessment

1. Standardised Testing:

The school administers *New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (2018)* and *Sigma T (Maths)* to all classes from 1st upwards. The tests are usually administered in the last weeks of May or first week of June by class teachers and Special Education Team (SET). Standard, Sten and Percentile Ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the Principal's and Deputy Principal's office. The Special Education Team (SET), in consultation with the Principal analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in the next school year. The *Drumcondra Early Literacy and Numeracy Screening Tests* are administered to Senior Infants by class teachers and the SEN team in May to identify learning strengths and weaknesses.

2. Diagnostic Assessment:

Prevention strategies, early-intervention programmes, screening, assessment, caseload selection, permissions and reviews are included in our SEN policy

Diagnostic tests are administered by the SET following referral by the Class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 13/2017 Special Education Teaching allocation where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing /psychological assessment. Parents are provided with test results, advice intervention is sought from NEPS and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a consent form is completed. The Principal will facilitate such an assessment happening.

The diagnostic tests used in the school include;

- *NNRIT – New Non-Reading Intelligence Test*
- *NARA – Neale Analysis of Reading Ability*
- *Sound Linkage – Test of Phonological Awareness (Hatcher)*
- *Drumcondra Spelling Test*
- *PAT - Phonological Awareness Test*
- *WIAT- III. Wechsler Individual Achievement Test for Teachers 3rd Ed.*
- *Non-Verbal Reasoning Test (NVRT)*
- *Assessment of Comprehension and Expression (ACE)*
- *Teacher’s Resource for Phonic Assessment*
- *Progress in Learning Assessment for Phonics (Morris)*
- *Bangor Dyslexic Test*
- *Diagnostic Spelling Test (Nfer-Nelson)*
- *Maths Assessment for learning and teaching (MALT)*
- *Tried and Tested Maths Matters Diagnostic Assessments.*
- *Phonological Assessment Battery (Nfer-Nelson)*
- *NEPS First and Second Hundred Word Lists*
- *NEPS Phonics Test*

3. Screening:

In Senior Infants the *Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy/Numeracy - Screening* is administered to all students to facilitate the early identification of learning strengths / difficulties. They are administered by the class teachers and the S.E.Ts. There is joint interpretation of results. The *Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy/Numeracy – Diagnostic* is administered to children who attain a raw score of 17 or below on the Screening Test. Emphasis is put on early-intervention programmes for children who are not achieving. The class teacher and S.E.Ts then devise intervention strategies to

help these children. Parents are advised of these results at parent teacher meetings. All parents are notified in writing if their child requires remediation or support learning and parental permission is sought.

➤ Continuum of Support

Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per Continuum of Support and Department of Education and Science guidelines.

Stage 1: Classroom Support

Stage 2: School Support

Stage 3: School Support Plus

The Continuum of Support is outlined in detail in Scoil Naomh Eoin's *Special Educational Needs Policy*.

PM Reader Benchmarking is also used as a form of screening in Scoil Naomh Eoin. The children in First Class are usually benchmarked by special Education Teachers. Regular assessment in this area will ensure that children move on more quickly and are more challenged in their reading (in the PM reading scheme) and that all children are on levels appropriate to their individual ability – with the possibility of regular advancement within the PM reading scheme.

3. Educational Psychological or other Assessments:

S.E.Ts liaise with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required. This happens after consultation with class teacher and principal.

S.E.Ts and principal are responsible for liaising with NEPS and arranging assessments. S.E.Ts may also organise meetings/referrals for other professionals such as Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist or Audiologist, Occupational Therapist etc. Sometimes a teacher may suggest to parents to have a matter investigated further. The Support Plans are based on the recommendations of these assessments. Psychological reports are stored securely in the relevant S.E.T.'s locked cabinet or, centrally, in the Special Needs Co-ordinator's office.

Recording:

Files are stored in a locked cabinet in the SET Room, on the SET internal school server and stored electronically in Aladdin Student Management System with a copy of results of standardised tests held in the Principal's and Deputy Principal's office. This file records standardised test results and end of year reports. This file is passed from teacher to teacher as the child progresses through the system. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data.

Teachers keep an assessment folder pertaining to each child with samples of work, results of tasks and tests, self and peer assessments etc. Samples of their work on iPads or on the Seesaw platform may also be stored electronically every year.

Roles/Responsibilities:

The Deputy Principal is responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing and also for coordinating this policy.

- Each class teacher administers the standardised tests and in the case of the screening of the Senior Infant pupils, the Special Education Teachers take small groups.
- Scoil Naomh Eoin adheres to recommendations outlined in the *Information Note Regarding Exemption / Inclusion Criteria with regard to Standardised Testing in Primary Schools* sent by the D.E.S. to all schools.
- All the following scores are recorded: raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN, Reading age on the class sheet and detailed test results are recorded electronically on Aladdin.
- There is a uniform approach across all classes.
- The results of the annual assessments are graphed annually and an overview of results is presented to the Board of Management.
- Class teachers, principal, deputy principal and Special Education Teachers are involved in the analysis of results for individual classes, across the appropriate classes and at whole school level
- The information gathered from tests helps target the children for learning support and also helps the class teacher to adapt methodologies.
- One criterion for the deployment of teachers and/or the allocation of learning support in our school is the results of standardised tests.

Communicating Test Results to Parents

Parent-teacher meetings are held in November when previous assessment scores can be explained and discussed. STEN and standard scores are provided to parents in June with the school reports. Current legislation entitles parents to know the exact results obtained by their children. It should be emphasised that, unlike the disclosure of test results, there is currently no legal obligation to disclose the test contents to parents. The Board has decided that parents will not be given a copy of the test booklet to view because such a practice would destroy the validity of the results and of the testing process. When teachers communicate test results to parents at a meeting, this should be formally recorded, together with any recommendations that are made by the teachers on the basis of the assessment findings.

Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects.
- Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year.
- Early identification and intervention is achieved

Timetable for Review

Assessment is discussed regularly at staff meetings and the operation of the new procedures are reviewed and, if necessary, amended as a result of these discussions,. The deputy principal and the principal will initiate and co-ordinate a review when necessary.

Implementation

Implementation of this revised policy on assessment will be from January 2021.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin on 14th December 2021. The policy will be available for viewing on the school website.

Signed:Deirdre Doyle

(Chairperson) **Date:**14/12/21

Checklist for Assessment Folder

Junior Infants:

- *Busy at Maths* – Maths' Assessments
- Assessment of *Jolly Phonics* sounds (after every group)
- *Handwriting Without Tears* Draw a Man – Matman (September)
- Name writing – termly
- *Rainbow Oral Language* –in child's workbook.
- Tricky Hat Words (after each group)
- Gaeilge Checklist of vocabulary (6) after every theme.
- P.E. assessment – self-assessment after every strand.
- *Aistear Learning Log*

Senior Infants:

- Sightwords
- Phonics assessments
- *Rainbow Oral Language* (in child's workbook)
- Maths – number formation and place value
- *Busy at Maths* Termly Assessments
- Letter formation
- Benchmarking in reading
- Standardised Tests –(*Drumcondra Early Tests of Literacy and Numeracy*)
- Gaeilge – checklist of vocabulary at the end of each theme
- P.E. Assessment
- *Aistear Learning Log*

First Class:

- Maths' Test
- Creative Writing Genre Samples
- Handwriting
- Phonics Check-Up
- A piece of work that a child is particularly proud of.

Second Class:

- Maths' Tests
- Writing samples for various genres
- Handwriting sample
- *Spellings for Me*
- Piece of work I'm proud of
- Benchmarking results

Third Class:

- Writing sample from the start of the year
- Termly tests
- Class tests
- Handwriting samples
- *Thoughts About School* Checklist
- Reading Groups (*PM/Big Cats*)
- *Spellings for Me* – online testing

Fourth Class:

- Writing sample from September
- End of term tests
- Class tests (tables etc)
- Handwriting sample
- *Thoughts About School* Checklist
- Reading Groups (*PM/Big Cats*)
- *Spellings for Me* – online testing

Fifth Class:

- Handwriting sample
- Sample of a writing genre
- Maths' assessments
- Pupil profile
- Self-evaluation profile
- Sample of artwork
- Anecdotal records
- Teacher observations of the pupil 'as a whole'.

Sixth Class:

- Monthly test results
- Best written piece per month (Self Assessment)
- *Abair Liom* assessment (monthly)
- Seesaw – picture of proudest work
- Time of weekly tables test

Viewing of Standardised Test Scripts by Parents

To comply with GDPR, parents/guardians are entitled to view their child's test script. In the *Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – New* there is a booklet for Levels 1 and 2 (usually First and Second class) and an answer sheet alongside a blank booklet for Levels 3 to 6 (usually Third to Sixth class). The completed mathematics *Sigma – T* booklet may also be viewed.

However, the content of the tests is confidential and it is important that it does not circulate among the general public. Other pupils and schools will use these tests in subsequent years, and in order to protect the integrity of the test norms, the content must be kept secure. The Education Research Centre (the supplier to the Department of Education) and other test publishers only sell tests to schools for this reason.

Consequently, the school stipulates that the parent/guardian views their child's answers under the supervision of a school staff member and does not photograph or photocopy the test content. If possible the school recommends that phones are left in a secure place (e.g. in the school office) while the test is being viewed.

Records Retention Schedule – C.P.M.S.A.

Records relating to pupils/students	Final Disposition	Retention Comments
Enrolment Forms (for pupils admitted to the school)	Confidential shredding/ deletion	Student reaching 18 years + 7 years. 18 is age of majority + 7 years (6 years in which to take a claim against school, + 1 year for proceedings to be served on the school)
Pupil transfer forms (Applies from one school to another)	As above	As above
In-school standardised test results & SEN assessments	As above	As above (Completed booklets and answer sheets retained for one year. Results retained on records.)
End of term/year reports	As above	As above
Disciplinary notes	As above	As above
School tours/trip records (including permission slips, itinerary reports)	As above	As above