



Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement

The policy was formulated during the school development planning day on March 5th 2008 with the collaboration of all teaching staff. Policy reviewed on 7th June 2011. The members of the committee responsible for reviewing the policy were Mary Pierce (Principal) and the Learning Support/Resource team: Susan Egan, Maria Gannon and Kathryn Keenan.

Rationale

This policy is underpinned by the 'Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools' (N.C.C.A. : 2007)

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by enabling each student to develop her intellectual, personal and spiritual attributes to the fullest.

Aims :

The aim of assessment is to gather, record, interpret, use and report information on each child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge skills and attitudes.

The school will aim:

- *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 strategies or difficulties*
- *To assist teachers' long and short term planning*
- *To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis*
- *To establish baseline data on children new to the school*

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Content of Policy

Purpose of assessment:

The principal purpose of assessment is to understand how each child is progressing at school and to use that information to further the child's learning. With this in mind assessment will be used to:

Inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum

- Gather and interpret data at class/whole school level
- Identify the particular needs of pupils/groups of pupils
- Contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- Monitor pupil progress and attainment
- Enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed (***See Differentiation Section in each Curriculum Plan***)
- Compile records of individual pupil' progress and attainment
- Facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs.
- Facilitate the involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work.
- Enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodology.

Assessment for learning:

A diversity of informal assessment methods will be used to gather information on how well children are learning across the curriculum.

Informal assessment methods will include:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Questioning*
- *Teacher designed tasks and tests*
- *Self -assessment*
- *Work samples, portfolios and projects.*

Each curriculum plan will contain a section on assessment

- Choice of informal assessment method will depend on age level of pupils and subject matter being assessed. For example:
 - *Art: portfolios of work will be assembled by the pupils as they progress through the school year.*
 - *An Art Copy will be started in the child's junior infant class and go with them to each of their subsequent classes to facilitate a record of their development of skills in this area.*
- Checklists of skills development in prioritised areas of learning eg. 'Speech and Language Therapy/Language Learning', 'Teacher as Observer – Some Early At -

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Risk Indicators' and the 'Checklists from the Report of the Task Force on Dyslexia' (2001) will be available for teachers in the class file to enable recording of teacher observations.

- Subjects where teacher-designed tests are to be used will be discussed as part of teacher planning
- Pupils will be involved in assessment of their own work and progress through the use of strategies for example using the weekly records in mental maths or a K.W.L. grid for self-assessment.

Standardised tests:

Standardised tests are administered in *Senior Infants, First to Sixth class.* (see *Special Needs Policy* for details of tests and times of year when administered)

- Tests are purchased, distributed and testing is coordinated by a designated member of the learning support team.
- Standardised tests are administered by class teachers and/or a member of the learning support team.
- Tests are administered to all pupils with the exception of those exempted under DES guidelines (Ref: Circular 0138/2006)
- Pupils exempted from Standardised tests are assigned suitable tasks for the duration of the test in their own or in another class
- Composite results pertaining to each test are recorded
- Analysis of results at a whole school level is carried out by the learning support team. Class teachers are involved in the tracking of results at class level.
- From 1st Class to 6th Class, the Sten with the descriptor will be included in the report card sent to parents at the end of the academic year. Results are discussed with parents at the scheduled parent- teacher meetings in Term1. Should it be necessary, meetings with particular parents will be organised to discuss results prior to the posting of the report cards.
- Results will be used to inform classroom planning at each level. The class teacher uses this information to adopt differentiation strategies in content and methodologies in order to provide for the specific needs of particular students. The learning support team, where appropriate, may assist class teachers with differentiation programmes. **(pg. 42 , 3.4 'Learning Support**

Guidelines',D.E.S. ,pg.50-51,'Special Educational Needs- A Continuum of Support Guidelines' –

NEPs , appropriate section in individual subject plan scoiles)

- On the basis of results pupils are selected for further diagnostic testing and possible learning support in accordance with '**Learning Support Guidelines' and DES circular 02/05 (See Special Needs Policy)**

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- **Screening: Refer to Learning Support Guidelines, Circular 02/05 and Scoil Naomh Bríd S.E.N. Policy**
- At Junior infant level – Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (B.I.A.P.) is administered **to all children**.
- At Junior Infant level Diagnostic tests eg. EYES/ LARRS are administered where appropriate.
- Senior infants – The middle infant screening test (MIST) is administered in the second term. Retest of M.I.S.T. is administered to selected children after completion of the follow on programme ('Forward Together') at the end of term 3.
- First to sixth classes – NRIT is administered to 1st and 4th classes and to children in other classes if appropriate.

The learning support / resource team and the class teacher are responsible for the interpretation of results.

Following examination of results, including class tracking results, and using the criteria in accordance with the Learning Support Guidelines and D.E.S. Circular 02/05 children are selected for diagnostic testing. Parents are informed, by letter, that diagnostic testing is considered necessary and are invited to meet with the class teacher and/or the learning support teacher to discuss their child's needs.

- **Diagnostic Testing : Refer to Learning Support Guidelines ,Circular 02/05 and Scoil Naomh Bríd S.E.N. Policy**

The Learning Support Teacher / Resource Teacher may then administer one or more of the following further screening/diagnostic tests to these children

English:

- Rain Sentence Reading Test
- Daniels and Diack (appropriate tests)
- Marino Word Recognition Test
- Neale's Analysis of Reading
- Schonell Spelling Test
- Young Non-reading Intelligence
- Jackson'Get Reading Right' Test for Phonic Skills
- Group Reading Test – nfer Nelson
- Cloze Group Reading Test – Young
- Aston Index
- Drumcondra Spelling Test
- WRAPs (Word Recognition and Phonics)
- Salford SentenceReadingTest (Hodder)

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- Dyslexia Screening Test
- Renfrew Language Scales (Speechmark)

Mathematics:

- ·Quest Basic Number Skills Test
- ·Basic Number Screening Test (Giliham & Morse)
- ·Basic Number Diagnostic Test
- ·Profile of Mathematical Skills (NFER NELSON)
- ·Maths Tracker: Maths Diagnostic Programme Level 1-6
- ·Assessment Tests :FlorenceGavin
- ·Maths Matters Assessment Tests
- ·Sigma T : Levels 1-5

Gross/Fine Motor Skills:

- ·Smart Moves Evaluation /Assessment battery of tests to be introduced in 2011

Identification and Selection of Pupils for Supplementary Teaching:

(N.B. refer to : Scoil Naomh Brid : S.E.N. policy)

The identification and selection of pupils for supplementary teaching is informed by the following:

- Circular Sp Ed 02/05
- ‘The Learning Support Guidelines’ (2000),
- ‘Special Educational Needs – a Continuum of Support’ – Guidelines and Teacher Resource Pack (DES -NEPs 2007)
- ‘Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties – A Continuum of

Support’ Guidelines for Teachers (DES – NEPs 2010)

The staged approach (per DES circular 02/05) will be adopted. Priority will be given to:

- Literacy at or below the 12th. Percentile
- English – Early Intervention – Sen. Inf. – 2nd. Class
- Maths at or below the 12th. Percentile.
- Maths – Early Intervention – 1st.Class. – 2nd.Class
- Maths 3rd. – 6th Maths

Priority for receiving supplementary teaching will be given to children who score at or below the 12th.percentile in the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test and / or the Drumcondra Mathematics Test. A limited degree of flexibility may be exercised in relation to the 12th percentile cut off point . Supplementary teaching will then be provided in English and Maths. The teaching provided is supplementary i.e. in addition to class teaching in English and Maths. It is not designed to replace classroom work in these subjects.

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At all stages parents are invited to meet with the resource teacher/learning support teacher and class teacher to discuss their child's needs, curriculum priorities and to evaluate their progress

Children who require supplementary teaching will be supported in a variety of ways. For details regarding models of support, i.e. early intervention and preventative strategies, in-class programmes and withdrawal groups please refer to **Scoil Naomh Bríd SEN Policy**.

Psychological Assessment: (Ref: Scoil Naomh Bríd SEN Policy)

- A child will be identified as having difficulties by class teacher and/ the learning support team. Diagnostic tests will be carried out. Procedures in accordance with Stage 3, DESCircular 02/05.
- A priority list for assessment is drawn up by the learning support team and discussed with the NEPs Psychologist.
- Psychological Assessment Reports will be incorporated into class planning and differentiation in delivery of curriculum.
- **At all stages parents are invited to meet with the resource teacher/learning support teacher and class teacher to discuss their child's needs and to complete any relevant forms from outside agencies.**
- Both parents where possible and appropriate will be required to sign consent forms before assessments by outside professionals take place. Parents will also be required to sign forms for the passing on of this information to named agencies
- Details of psychological assessments and records of test results are kept in the learning support / resource room and the Principals office.

Recording the results of assessment:

- Assessments are generally recorded in written form. Some test results are recorded in electronic format. Comments are recorded in an objective and instructive manner and there is an agreed terminology used and understood by all teachers.
- Details of psychological assessments and records of test results are kept in the learning support / resource room and the Principals office. Records of tests are also kept in the learning support / resource rooms.
- Copies of standardised test results are held in the class file. Sensitive data is referred to in the class file and teachers are advised to consult with the principal for further information.

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Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy are for eg.

- *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.*

Roles and Responsibility

The post holder /learning Support team in consultation with the Principal will assist teachers in the coordination and implementation of the policy.

Implementation Date

These procedures will be implemented following consultation with the staff and following ratification by the Board of Management.

Timetable for Review

The Policy will be reviewed every 2 – 3 years in accordance with Dept. Circulars (02/05)

This Policy will be communicated to all relevant parties.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 21/06/2011

Signed: Anne Connolly

Chairperson: B.O.M.

Reference Section

- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007
- Special Educational Needs – a Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers and Resource Pack for Teachers, NEPS, 2007
- Learning Support Guidelines, DES, 2000
- Circular 0138/2006 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools
- Circular 02/05 Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools
- Primary School Curriculum – section on assessment for each subject
- Working together to Make a Difference for Children, NEPS
- Drumcondra English Profiles. G. Shiel & R. Murphy, ERC, 2000
- Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Needs, Peter Westwood, Routledge Falmer, 1997
- A range of assessment tests are listed on the SESS website www.sess.ie