



Assessment and Record Keeping Policy

Introduction /Rationale

In our school we regard assessment of children's learning as an essential and on-going part of the teaching and learning process. We believe that assessment enhances the teacher's awareness of each individual's learning strengths and weaknesses, provides accurate information about the child's understanding and skills and provides the basis for better planning.

In the light of this, and in order to co-ordinate methods of assessment being used throughout the school and ensure coherence, we have decided to draw up an assessment policy. The policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, Board of Management and parent representatives. It aims to reflect the overall educational philosophy of the school.

Relationship to Beliefs/Principles of the School

Assessment activities used in our school will contribute to pupil learning and development by acknowledging the positive achievements of each pupil, as well as indicating areas of learning difficulties – thus recognising the right of each child to a quality education as we endeavour to enable each one to develop his/her full potential.

Aims

By introducing this policy we aim:

- To benefit pupil learning.
- Monitor learning processes.
- Generate data that can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- Identify and manage learning strengths and difficulties.
- Assist teachers' long and short term planning.
- Co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis.

As a staff we regard the following as important purposes of assessment:

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum.
- To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms.
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils.
- To contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties.
- To monitor pupil progress and attainment.
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular needs of individual pupils/groups of pupils are being addressed.
- 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 enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies.

Formal Assessment – Standardised/Screening Tests

The following standardised/screening tests are used in school:

- BIAP (*Belfield Infant Assessment Profile*)
- MIST (*Middle Infant Screening Test*)
- Drumcondra Reading and Spelling (*Standardised Tests*)

- Sigma T (*Standardised Maths Attainment Test*)
 - The BIAP and the MIST are administered in May to Junior and Senior Infants
Drumcondra and Sigma T are administered in October (*1st – 6th classes*)
 - The learning support teacher orders, distributes and co-ordinates standardised/screening tests, and collates the results.
 - Tests are administered to all pupils, except for a number of international pupils for whom the tests are inappropriate due to language difficulties.
These pupils are catered for by language support teachers when tests are being administered.
 - Results of Micra T and Sigma T are recorded by individual teachers and all fields are completed.
The results are transferred onto a computerised scoring system (*commenced in Autumn 2007*) and stored on computer by the learning support teacher.
Children's individual test papers are stored in a secure filing cabinet in the classroom as part of each child's individual profile folder. These folders are passed on when pupils transfer to a new class.
 - Once results are collated class teachers, SET teachers and principal collaborate in the analysis of results at a whole school level.
 - Selection of pupils for learning support is based on performance in standardised/screening tests as well as in general performance in the classroom (*including informal test performance*) and supplemented by observation of class teacher.
- Priority to be given to:**
- (a) Pupils at or below the 10th/12th percentile in English and Maths.
 - (b) Early intervention (*Senior Infants – First Class*)
 - (c) Pupils with a low percentile rating-selected on basis of general performance in the classroom, opinion of class teacher and diagnostic testing.

Report Results to Parents

- At present results of standardised testing are conveyed to parents during parent/teacher meetings and recorded in Report Booklets. We have decided to use the attached report card devised by NCCA from summer 2009 as our end of year written report on each individual child. We will include results of standardised tests in end of year written reports.
Standardised scores along with descriptors to be used when reporting to parents.
- Results of Junior Infants screening (*BIAP*) are used to alert class teachers to possible learning difficulties.
Specific intervention at class level is initiated and pupils are monitored. If difficulties persist pupils are given supplementary teaching by the learning support teacher.
The following prevention strategies are in place:
 - Early screening
 - Whole school phonic programme
 - Shared Reading Programme (*Senior Infants*)
 - Prevention programme in phonics for all senior infants
 - Paired Reading (*First Class*)
 - Buddy Reading (*Second, Fifth Classes*)
 - Group Reading (*First Class - Last Term*)
 - DEAR Time (*Whole school – Last Term*)

Diagnostic Assessment

- Identification and selection of pupils
Senior Infants/First Class: Selected on basis of BIAP (*and subsequent performance following teacher intervention*) and MIST results.

First to Sixth classes: Selected on basis of standardised tests (*Drumcondra and Sigma T*). General performance in the classroom (*including informal test performance*) and opinion of class teacher is also considered in selection of children for diagnostic testing.

- Once children are selected parents are contacted and meet with class teacher and learning support teacher.
- With parents written permission children are diagnostically tested by the learning support teacher.
- On the basis of diagnostic testing, the learning support teacher, in consultation with the class teacher and where possible the parents, will develop an individual learning plan.
- Progress is reviewed through testing at the end of an instructional term, and based on this, supplementary teaching is either discontinued or a revised learning plan is developed and learning support is continued for a further instructional term.
- Diagnostic tests used by learning support/resource teachers:
 - Schonell Reading Test
 - Schonell Spelling Test
 - Jackson Phonics Test
 - Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
 - Error Analysis
 - Aston Index
 - Test of Phonological Awareness (*Sound Linkage*)
 - Basic Number Diagnostic Test (*Bill Gillham*)

Psychological Assessment

- If, following sustained intervention, it is felt that a psychological or other assessment is required, the class teacher and learning support/resource teacher liaises with parents. Permission to request and arrange an assessment with the relevant specialist is sought. The class teacher, L.S./Resource teacher and parents meet to complete the referral form.
- The resulting assessment report forms the basis for drafting an educational plan for the pupil.
- Psychological and other reports (*e.g. speech and language reports*) are maintained in the files of the Special Education teachers.
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Record Keeping

- Principal maintains psychological and other assessments in a Special Needs Folder in her office.
- Learning support/resource teachers maintain records of diagnostic assessments, learning plans and other planning records in locked filing cabinets in the learning support/resource rooms.
- Resource teacher maintains psychological reports and speech and language reports on pupils who have been allocated resource teaching time.
- Class screening tests and results forms are maintained in a locked filing cabinet in each classroom.
- Results of standardised English and Maths tests (*1st-6th*) are stored on a computerised scoring system on computer in the learning support room.
- Records are available to staff (*on transfer of pupils from class to class*), parents and on request to other interested professionals (*with parental consent*).
- Records are made available on transfer of pupils to another primary school or to secondary school.

Informal/Continuous Assessment

The following types of informal assessment methods are used throughout the school.

- **Teacher observation.**
Throughout the school, but particularly in infant classes, informal assessment takes place through teacher observations, discussions with the child and active listening to the child. Teacher designed tests and tasks (*written and oral*) are used throughout the school in all subject areas.
- **Work samples/portfolios and projects.** Individual art/craft portfolios are maintained throughout the school.
- **Self Assessment (*drafting, editing and involvement of children in selecting own work*)**
e.g. writing competition/copy display, school art display.
Criteria/targets are set and agreed by teacher and children beforehand.
- **Conferencing** – meetings are regularly arranged for the purpose of assessing progress of special needs children. These meetings involve all concerned with the child's education – teachers, SNA's, other professionals and parents.
- **Questioning (*oral and written*)** is used throughout the classes, in all subject areas in order to assess knowledge and understanding and to guide learning.
- Refer to assessment section for each subject area in curricular plans.

Assessment of non-English Speaking Pupils

Assessment of English Language Proficiency for non-English speaking pupils is provided for through the Primary School Assessment kit. This assessment kit was developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training with the help of Language Support Teachers. The tests are based on IILT's English Language Proficiency benchmarks over thirteen Units of Work.

The assessment consists of the following four skills **1.** Listening **2.** Speaking **3.** Reading **4.** Writing. There are three sets of Assessment **Set 1.** Placement **Set 2.** **Set 3.**

Each set is graded in relation to three levels **A1.** This is the lowest level – aimed at pupils with limited English Language Proficiency **A2.** Waystage - for pupils with developing proficiency **B1.** Threshold – this is the highest level of assessment and as pupils perform tasks at this level full integration into mainstream is possible.

The Language Support teachers administer the tests and an individual file for each pupil is maintained including all assessments, scoring sheets and pupil's assessment profiles.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board of Management**
To approve and ratify the policy and to ensure it is evaluated from time to time.
- **Principal and Staff**
To develop, implement and co-ordinate the policy.
- **Principal**
To monitor the implementation of the policy.

This policy was officially ratified by the Board of Management in November 2008.
It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Signed: Gerry Lynch:
(*Chairperson BOM*)