

St Canice's Co-Ed Primary School

Granges Road, Kilkenny.



Assessment Policy

Introduction:

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff of St Canice's Co-Ed Primary School so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. This policy was drawn up in line with "Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools" (NCCA 2007).

Rationale:

In order to ensure that all children in our school reach their full potential, we strive to identify learning difficulties at the earliest opportunity and to put in place an appropriate response to support the needs of children who may be encountering difficulties in school. An effective assessment policy is central to this process of teaching and learning. Through assessment the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the short term and long term needs of the children in their care and plans accordingly. Assessment assists communication between all interested parties involved in a child's education i.e. teacher with a child, teacher with a parent and teacher with another teacher. Assessment helps the child to become more self aware as a learner and develop powers of self-assessment. It is integral to all areas of the curriculum. It is central not only to the acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values but also to the child's growth in self-esteem.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and to the enhancement of the teaching processes. An effective Assessment Policy will identify the early interventions required to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved.

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 and to establish a firm link between assessment and decision making with regard to future strategies, content and methodologies in the classroom
- To describe strategies for assessment of pupils over as many areas of development as possible
- To emphasise the importance of early identification of pupils with specific numeracy and literacy problems through establishing relevant baseline data, that can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- To outline specific strategies for monitoring the progress of all pupils with particular learning needs
- To support practice on assessment for learning and assessment of learning

Policy Content:

Purpose of Assessment

- To inform planning for, and coverage of all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class / whole school level
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils / groups including the exceptionally able if applicable
- To monitor pupils 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 the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work where feasible
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

Assessment of Learning/ Assessment for Learning

Assessment of Learning

- (1) The following are among some of the methods of informal assessment that are used in the school
- Teacher observation
 - Teacher designed tasks and tests
 - Work samples, portfolios & projects
 - Checklists

- (2) The above assessment methods are used across the whole school, at the discretion of individual teachers, depending on the requirements of individual pupils, class level or subject. Parents are given feedback on a regular basis.
- (3) Depending on the subject and the class level and the needs of individual pupils, teachers may assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples, projects etc.
- (4) The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment
- (5) Examples of teacher designed tasks / tests
 - Weekly spelling test / table test
 - Weekly SESE review (senior classes)
 - Weekly/Monthly/Termly assessment in Maths (Busy at Maths Assessments)
 - Weekly/Monthly/Termly assessment in English (Folens /Fallons)
 - Assessments in Irish / English / Maths designed by teachers
- (6) Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work/progress. Examples include the use of
 - KWL (Know, Want to know, Learned)
 - Sharing the learning intention/objective and devising success criteria
 - Teachers may adopt WALT (We Are Learning Today) and WILF (What I Am Looking For)
 - Two Stars and a Wish
 - Rubrics and checklists
 - Mindmaps, Flow Charts, Diagrams, Pictures, Bullet points etc.
 - Self-editing /correcting / drafting / redrafting
 - Written Feedback/Comments eg. good /needs improvement etc.
 - Self-evaluation
 - Pair – collaborative assessment / peer assessment
 - This data will be stored in assessment folders / children's copies

Assessment for Learning

As a school we acknowledge the importance of assessment for learning. It is used:

- to gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms
- to inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum taking into account the particular learning needs of all pupils
- to select children for necessary interventions if required thus contributing to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties

- to monitor and compile records of individual pupils' pupil learning, progress and attainment thus enabling teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups 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
- as a guide to professional development
- to highlight school strengths and to guide the school to select target areas for further school development planning

Screening and Assessment (See Appendix 1)

1. Junior Infants

Whilst keeping in mind that children mature at different stages, the class teachers and the assigned SET will monitor the children in Junior Infants to see who may need additional support. The **B.I.A.P** test will be used to screen Junior Infants in February. The **MaLT 5** will be administered to the Junior Infant classes in May. Class teachers aided by the SET will carry out the initial screening tests. A list of children who potentially might need support will be drawn up following these screening tests.

2. Senior Infants

In Senior Infants, learning support resources will be put into team teaching of English language and phonics. Maths support will be covered by a combination of team teaching, in class support and withdrawal. The **Test2r** will be administered in March. This will give the class teacher and the SET a better idea of how well children are performing. A list of children who need language support will be drawn up after this test and changes will be made in team teaching groups to reflect these needs, if deemed necessary. The **Drumcondra Early Numeracy** test will be administered by the class teachers in May. Following this screening test, the SET teacher will be administer the diagnostic element of the test to children who performed below the agreed criteria.

3. 1st – 6th Classes New DPRT and New DPMT

From First Class to Sixth Class a standardised assessment in English, Maths and Spelling will be given to each child in May. The New Drumcondra Reading Test, the New Drumcondra Maths Test and the Drumcondra Spelling Test. The class teachers will administer and correct these tests. They will record these results into the online database, operational in the school. This is currently the Aladdin system. A hard copy of these results will be kept in the filing cabinet in the Deputy Principal's office. The SET team will discuss the recorded results with the class teachers, and carry out further screening tests and / or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these

tests will be available for the June Croke Park meeting. They will be used by class teachers and the SET team in selecting children who need learning support. The results of these tests (STEN score) will be made available to parents on each pupil's end of year report.

4. Verbal Reasoning and Non Verbal Reasoning Tests

In Second and Fourth Class, each child will be screened using the Verbal Reasoning and Non Verbal reasoning tests from GL Assessment. The results of these tests will help to screen children with perceptual and reasoning differences and potential literacy problems such as Dyslexia.

5. Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Screeners

The online Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Screening tests will be used to screen children whose teacher, SET or parent considers may have dyslexia or dyscalculia. A report of this screening test will be generated for the class teacher and the parent of the child.

6. "Dyslexia Portfolio"

A child encountering ongoing difficulties with reading will undergo the "Dyslexia Portfolio" test. The child's performance on the test will inform the teacher's planning for teaching and learning. The results will be communicated to parents.

7. "Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA)"

The Diagnostic Reading Analysis is an oral reading test designed that will be administered on readers where concerns arise.

8. "YARC - York Assessment of Reading Comprehension"

The York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) is a standardised assessment used to measure reading comprehension. It investigates the oral decoding (reading accuracy), fluency (reading rate) and text comprehension skills (reading comprehension concerning literal and inferential meaning). This will be used where questions arise regarding reading comprehension levels.

9. "A-Z Benchmark Passage Running Record "

10. PM Benchmark Literacy Assessment

11. Accelerated Reading Tests

12. Starlight Assessments

Psychological Assessment:

- The Principal, Learning Support Co-ordinator, SET team and class teacher liaise with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required. This may be done on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. The staff is cognisant of the fact that this can be an emotive issue for parents. Sensitivity and patience will be exercised at all times to allow parents time to assimilate and weigh up the potential outcomes of an assessment
- The principal is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from N.E.P.S. He will advise and support parents throughout the process.
- The assessment plays an important role in drafting an educational plan for a pupil as it identifies areas of weakness and strength as well as providing recommendations for learning. It will determine the level of intervention.
- The Principal will ensure that parents are aware that the secondary school should be furnished with copies of all relevant reports when their child is transferring to Second Level Education.

Recording Results of Assessment:

All sensitive data (such as test booklets, end of year reports, copies of assessments) will be securely stored.

In line with the National Strategy to improve Literacy & Numeracy, standardised test results will be given to the relevant second level school on transfer from Primary to Second Level. End of year assessment results will inform who will receive Learning Support for the following year.

The standardised test results will be given to the BOM to review overall school standards in Literacy/Numeracy. (No individual results will be identifiable)

Children with assessed conditions will have a Pupil Support File, containing all relevant reports and documentation, kept in a locked cabinet in the central locked store room.

Success Criteria:

The school wide implementation of this policy will ensure:

- 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 and the Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives

Roles and Responsibilities:

Mainstream, Special Education Teachers, the Vice-Principal and the Principal assume shared responsibility. Following the NEPS Continuum of Support model, it is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level (**Classroom Support**). At the next stage (**School Support**), the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal/ Deputy Principal assumes a primary role at the third and final stage (**School Support Plus**) when a Psychological Assessment or the help of outside agencies may be required. Parents have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must always be kept open.

References:

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

www.sess.ie

“Working Together to make a Difference for Children” – NEPS

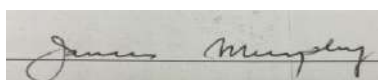
“Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools” (NCCA 2007)

Implementation/Ratification and Review

This policy was reviewed, updated and ratified by the Board of Management at their meeting on April 18th 2023. It will be reviewed again in 2025 or should new Department guidelines be issued prior to then.

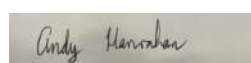
Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairman:



Date: 18th April 2023

Principal:



Date: 18th April 2023

Appendix 1

St. Canice's Co-Ed. List of Standardised Tests in use		
Class	Test	When test is administered
Junior Infants	B.I.A.P MaLT 5	Before February midterm May
Senior Infants	Test 2r Drumcondra Early Numeracy Test	March May
First Class:	New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 1 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 1 Drumcondra Spelling Test	May May May
Second Class	Verbal Reasoning Test from GL Assessment Non-Verbal Reasoning Test from GL Assessment New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 2 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 2 Drumcondra Spelling Test	Before February midterm Before February midterm May May May
Third Class	New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 3 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 3 Drumcondra Spelling Test	May May May
Fourth Class	Verbal Reasoning Test from GL Assessment Non-Verbal Reasoning Test from GL Assessment New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 4 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 4 Drumcondra Spelling Test	Before February midterm Before February midterm May May May
Fifth Class	New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 3 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 3 Drumcondra Spelling Test	May May May
Sixth Class	New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test Level 3 New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test Level 3 Drumcondra Spelling Test	May May May
Other tests in use when further investigation may be required		
Junior / Senior Infants + SEN	Jolly Phonics Reading Test	Throughout the year
Junior / Senior Infants + SEN	School Designed Phonics Test	Throughout the year End of year
All Classes	"Dyslexia Portfolio"	
	"Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA)"	
	"YARC - York Assessment of Reading Comprehension"	
	"A-Z Benchmark Passage Running Record "	
	GL Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Screening Test	
	Malt Diagnostic tests	
	Old Sigma T and Micra T tests	
	Bust at Maths Assessment Tests	
	Starlight Assessment	
	PM Benchmark Literacy Assessment	