



Assessment Policy

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy was drawn up with the full collaboration of all staff. It was approved by the Board of Management in 2014, and will be reviewed in 2016.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL ETHOS

At Navan Educate Together National School, our aim is to have high standards of teaching and learning, and to enable each child to attain the highest level of his/her ability at every stage. We consider assessment to be an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment enables teachers to know at what level to pitch work, and how to move forward in teaching. It allows parents and children to have feedback on how well a child is doing in learning, and to understand what they can improve upon, and how they can do this.

RATIONALE

This policy sets out to formalise our existing practice within this school, and is our response to the Department of Education's circular (0056/2011) which requires a review of schools assessment policies to ensure that it is fully informed by the NCCA publication (Assessment in the Primary School : Guidelines for Schools 2007) and the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

AIMS

Our aims in introducing this policy are:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To generate base-line 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.

FORMS OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment can be described in the following terms:

- Formative : Helping the child in the process of learning.
- Evaluative : Helping the teacher to evaluate the learning opportunities provided. We can carefully plan activities taking into account the needs of the child so that their skills, knowledge and understanding are fully developed. Children will also be involved in assessing their own work.

- Summative : Providing information for reports and school records. We can then write a summary report based on evidence of what a child knows, understands and can do.
- Informative : This provides information for parents and for the child's next teacher. We can then communicate to parents and teachers how the child is performing.

Each form of assessment will enable teachers

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at individual, class and whole-school level, and in relation to class and national norms
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils or groups of pupils, including the exceptionally able
- 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 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 enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

We recognise the four functions of assessment as being formative, summative, evaluative and diagnostic. Our approach to assessment focuses on the two principle, interrelated and complementary approaches namely, Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL) at all class levels. This means that evidence is used on an ongoing basis to inform teaching and learning (AfL), in addition to the periodic recording of children's progress and achievements, for the purpose of reporting (AoL). The school acknowledges the importance of a concentrated focus on Assessment for Learning, the key characteristics of which we identify as follows:

- the sharing of learning intentions with pupils;
- assisting pupils in identifying and recognising the standards being aimed for;
- involving pupils in self assessment and peer assessment;
- providing pupils with feedback which will lead them to recognise the next steps in their learning and how to take them;
- the promotion of confidence in pupils;
- involvement of teacher and pupil in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information.

Classroom practices and display charts reflect the school's policy of giving clarity and direction to teaching and involving pupils in their own learning and assessment, with the aim of increasing motivation and standards.

Every child who enters school from Junior Infants onwards is given a portfolio folder. Teachers add samples of work to these folders in all curriculum areas. One piece of work should be added each month as follows :

- September – English, Free Composition, Handwriting
- October – Science
- November – Learn Together
- December – Geography

- January – History
- February – Maths
- March – Art
- April – SPHE
- May – Gaeilge
- June - English, Free Composition, Handwriting

The end of term maths assessments will also be kept in the portfolios. All the samples of work will be accompanied by a self assessment sheet filled out by the pupil. The portfolio folders will be kept up to date by the class teacher and passed on to the next class teacher as the pupils move through the school.

TECHNIQUES OF ASSESSMENT

- Focused Observations - observing a child or a group of children at an activity.
- Random Observations - monitoring what is happening i.e. works better in a group, alone, tires easily, responds to visual promptings etc.
- Structured Observations - observing one particular child each day at set intervals.
- Discussion, conferencing - talking to and questioning the children about their work, setting targets for future work.
- Presentations - evaluating with the child the outcome or end product - writing, drawing, diagram, model chart etc.
- Monitoring spelling and tables tests.
- Teacher designed tests.
- Portfolios of work. (Teachers keep samples of children's work in all curriculum areas).
- Staged assessments at the end of blocks of work, particularly in Mathematics.
- Mental Maths tests.
- Behaviour and attendance monitored where necessary

STANDARDISED TESTS

Within the school, the Drumcondra Tests (Reading, Spelling, Maths) are administered to all classes from 1st to 6th in May/June of each year.

- The Support Staff (RT/LS/EAL) are responsible for the purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- Class teachers switch classes and administer these tests to a different class during the given period (indicated above), adhering strictly to the conditions outlined in the testing manuals.
- Exemption from standardised testing is considered when deemed necessary, as per Circular 0138/2006
- Raw Score, Standard Score, Percentile Rank and STEN are recorded electronically and manually by a member of the Support Staff.
- Principal, S.E.N team and staff are involved in the analysis of standardised test results for an individual pupil, class and whole school level.
- It is our policy to offer learning support to children with a Percentile Ranking of twelve or below as a priority.
- Information gathered from the analysis of results informs long term and short term plans, I.E.P.'s and Continuum of Support Plans (Stage one, two and three).
- Results are communicated to parents on the end of year report cards.

- STEN scores are used to communicate results to parents.

SCREENING

- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile will be administered in Junior Infants for selected children only. This screening test will be carried out by the class teacher or a member of the Support Staff. Results will be kept on the red Pupil Profile Form in the child's file in the Resource Teachers room.
- Early Numeracy Drumcondra Test and Early Literacy Drumcondra Test will be administered in the final term of Senior Infants. These screening tests will be carried out by a member of the Support Staff. Depending on a child's results, the diagnostic part of this test will be administered also. Results will be kept on the red Pupil Profile Form in the child's file in the Resource Teachers room.
- The NRIT (Non-Reading Intelligence Test) will be administered to children who are on Stage 1 (Classroom Support) of the Continuum of Support. Results are recorded together with the standard scores from standardised tests and will be kept on the red Pupil Profile Form in the child's file in the Resource Teachers room.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

After Stage 1 (Classroom Support) and consultation with the class teacher and with the consent of parents, the Learning Support Teacher will administer initial diagnostic assessment. For a complete list of tests which are available in our school, please see our Learning Support Policy, and Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

The results of diagnostic assessment are recorded on the red Pupil Profile Form in the child's file in the Resource Teachers room and in the Individual Learning Profile (Stage 2) for each pupil. The profile will also include:

- Previous test results
- Relevant information from class teachers, parents and other professionals
- Identification of the pupils particular needs.

PROCEDURES FOR FURTHER ASSESSMENT

After diagnostic assessment and a complete instructional term of learning support, each child's plan (Stage 2) will be reviewed. If there are serious concerns expressed by the parents, support teacher and class teacher, further psychological assessment will be explored. The Learning Support Teacher will seek the advice of the NEPS psychologist and discuss the test results and concerns about the pupil. Based on the advice received, the application for a full assessment, if required, will be completed by the Learning Support/Resource teacher. Psychological Reports will be kept in a child's file in the lockable filing cabinet in the resource teacher's room.

RECORDING RESULTS OF ASSESSMENT

- Assessment results are recorded using a Pupil Profile Card which is kept in the child's file in the Resource Teachers room. (Appendix 2)
- The results of each child's Standardised Drumcondra Tests are recorded electronically. This allows us to build up an Individual Pupil's Profile, a class profile, and a whole school profile. The electronic format of these results will be kept on the schools portable hard drive. The printed format of these results are kept in the filing cabinet in the Principal's office. Each child has a folder in the resource teachers room in which are kept copies of all reports and any other relevant information on the child. This office is locked when it is unattended.
- The results of standardised tests will be carefully maintained in the school (locked in Principal's Office) and will be made available to Department officials for inspection.
- Aggregated results of standardised tests will be reported to the Board of Management and the DES once annually.
- At the end and/or the beginning of each academic year each teacher will, where possible, be given the opportunity to have a meeting with the previous class teacher who will brief him/her on the strengths and

weaknesses of each pupil, and confirm the content of the curriculum covered in the previous year. Teachers are advised to ensure that their comments are based on objective evidence.

- Children's records are held in the school for a period of up to the child's 18th birthday.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

This policy will be successful when:

- 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
- The transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Principal, Class Teachers, EAL Teachers and the Learning Support/Resource Teacher will have responsibility for the coordination and implementation of this policy.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2014. It will be reviewed in 2016.

Ratified By The B.O.M.

Date_____

Signed by:_____

Chairperson

APPENDIX 1

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised (DPRT-R) : Levels 1 - 6
 - Teacher Manuals Levels 1 - 6
 - Pupil Booklets : Levels 1 - 6 Forms A&B (master copies)
 - Scoring Stencils
 - Answer Booklets
- Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised (DPMT-R) : Levels 1 - 6
 - Teacher Manuals Levels 1 - 6
 - Pupil Booklets : Levels 1 - 6 Forms A&B (master copies)
- Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) : Levels 1 - 6
 - Teacher Manual Levels 1 - 6
 - Answer Booklets : Levels 1 - 6 Forms A&B (master copies)
- Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy (Screening : DTEL-S. Diagnostic : DTEL-D)
 - Administration & Technical Manual
 - Display Booklet
 - Pupil Answer Booklet
 - Diagnostic Scoring Booklet
- Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy (Screening : DTEN-S. Diagnostic : DTEN-D)
 - Administration & Technical Manual
 - Diagnostic Display Booklet
 - DTEN-S Pupil Answer Booklet
 - DTEN-D Pupil Scoring Record or Report
 - DTEN Materials Pack
- MICRA-T (Reading Attainment Test) Levels 1 - 5
 - Teacher's Manuals Levels 1 – 5
 - Scoring Stencils
- SIGMA-T (Mathematics Attainment Test) Levels 1 - 5
 - Teacher's Manuals Levels 1 – 5
 - Marking Stencils
- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (B.I.A.P)
 - Teacher's Handbook and Resource Manual

Pupil Profile Booklets

- Middle Infant Screening Test (M.I.S.T) & Forward Together Programme
Teacher's Guide and Pupil Booklet (master copy)
- Non-Reading Intelligence Test (N.R.I.T) Levels 1 – 3
- Dyslexia Screener (GL Assessment) CD
- The Dyslexia Screening Test (D.S.T)
- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability II (N.A.R.A. II)
Manual for Schools
Reader
Record Sheets
- Spatial Reasoning Tests (GL Assessment)
Teacher's Guide (Ages 10 & 11)
Pupil Booklets (Ages 10 & 11)
- Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests (nferNelson)
Teacher's Guide (Ages 8 & 9; Ages 10 & 11)
Pupil Booklets (Ages 8 & 9; Ages 10 & 11)
- Reasoning Progress Tests (for assessing verbal and non-verbal abilities)
Manuals (Stage 1 : 5 – 8 yrs) (Stage 2 : 7 – 12 yrs)
Pupil Booklets (Stage 1 : 5 – 8 yrs) (Stage 2 : 7 – 12 yrs)
- Science Achievement Tests (IPSA-T)
Teacher's Manual
Pupil Test Booklets : 2nd, 4th & 6th Class (master copies)
- Colour Blindness Assessment

