

Cloonakilla National School

Policy on Assessment

Introduction

Assessment is integral to high quality teaching and learning and lies at the heart of the process of promoting children's learning at Cloonakilla N.S. It provides a framework for setting educational objectives and monitoring and communicating children's progress. Assessment is a part of all teaching strategies, to help identify areas for development and track progress. It helps us to strengthen learning across the curriculum and helps teachers enhance their skills and judgments so that all learning is personalised and most importantly, the child is actively apart of their own learning

This policy was last reviewed in September 2020 with emphasis placed on Assessment for Learning. Assessment for learning (AFL) is an approach to teaching and learning that creates feedback which is then used to improve students' performance. Students become more involved in the learning process and from this gain confidence in what they are expected to learn and to what standard. This current policy was examined by all staff members during a staff meeting in September 2024 to implement a shared vision for assessment throughout the school, in line with the Primary Curriculum Framework (March 2023).

Teachers use appropriate and evidence-based pedagogical approaches and strategies to foster children's engagement, ownership, and challenge.

In class assessment folders will continue to be used as well as an important information folder A word bank of suitable vocabulary will continue to be used in written reports to parents. This was implemented in order to ensure uniformity of reporting throughout the school. It was agreed that concept mapping will be one of the main methods used as a whole school approach to AOL and AFL. Teacher's will also use a range of intuitive assessment, planned interactions and assessment events to monitor children's learning.

Rationale

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy strives to identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties. We then endeavor to put in place a whole school response to meet their needs. The aims and objectives of this policy are;

- To facilitate improved pupil learning.
- To create a procedure for monitoring achievement.
- To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers.
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis, involving parents and pupils, in managing strengths and weaknesses.
- To focus on assessment for learning to ensure all children feel a sense of achievement and play an active part in their own learning.

Policy Content

This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils including the exceptionally gifted so that adequate strategies are put in place early enough to facilitate remediation. These strategies may include pupil self-assessment, pupil profiling, two-way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and Individual Education Plans.

Continuum of Assessment

There is agreement among staff as to the modes of intuitive assessment, planned interactions and assessment events used in all classes and those are used at the discretion of the individual teacher. This will inform teachers of both AFL and AOL.

Intuitive Assessment

- Teacher observation – teachers base their questioning on content objectives in all subject areas.
- Teacher questioning to scaffold learning
- Teacher/pupil conversations (Guided Reading)
- Brainstorming
- Peer collaboration
- Work samples
- Playful approaches (concrete materials)

Planned Interaction

- WALT/WILF/Learning Outcomes
- Concept Mapping
- KWL
- Teacher /Pupil discussions
- Self-assessment (samples stored in teacher's assessment folder)
- Two wishes and a star
- Thumbs up/down
- Traffic Lights
- Number Talk (Senior Classes)
- Dictation

Assessment Events

- Standardised Tests
- LLO Assessment
- Checklists
- Writing Rubric for genre writing/ project work
- End of week assessments
- Spellings For Me Assessment (Online)
- Cloze Test (Guided Reading) senior classes

Samples of work for School Support and School Support Plus pupils will be maintained by the SEN teachers and stored in the pupil's file. This is used to monitor progression as he/she progresses through the school.

Records of teacher-designed tests are kept by the individual teachers in an assessment folder and communicated to parents at the Parent-Teacher meeting/end of year report. Friday tests (English and Irish Spellings and Math's tests) are sent home every week to be signed. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing. The most common types of informal teacher designed testing in our school are Maths tests, spelling tests, revision tests and table quizzes. Teachers use results from Action Maths/ Planet Maths/Cracking Maths Assessments to inform their teaching in Maths. Class teachers liaise with Special Education teachers to

supplement Strands in Maths in which individual children may be weak. The results of Math's assessments may be analysed per section for weaker children. There is also a greater emphasis on self-assessment which gives the child a chance to analyse their own work with a view to improving it.

Standardised Testing

The Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT), the Drumcondra Spelling Test and Sigma T are the tests used throughout the school. All classes from 1st class upwards are tested. The tests are administered in June by the class teacher and 1st class are also tested in Drumcondra Reading and Sigma T in October. Tests are corrected by the SEN team. Standard and Percentile Ranking scores are recorded on Aladdin and are readily available to all teachers. The SET analyse the results for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

Analysis of Test Results

Assessment results are analysed at class level and at school level and are used to select pupils for extra support. Pupils at/below the 12th percentile may be selected for further diagnostic testing or support teaching. Results are also used to inform whole-school planning in literacy and numeracy. They are also used to identify the learning needs of exceptionally able pupils. The outcome of assessments is communicated to pupils, parents, other teachers and to school management. Pupils are involved in assessing their own work from time to time and samples can be found in teacher's assessment folders.

I.Q. Testing

Pupils will be given an I.Q. Test at the end of 2nd class and at the end of 4th class. The results will be compared with results in standardized reading and Math's tests to ensure pupils are working to their full potential. The NRIT will be used.

Screening

Screening tests are used to facilitate the early identification of pupil's learning strengths/difficulties. The screening tests used to identify learning strengths and weaknesses in our school are;

- Micra T (1st Class)
- Jolly Phonics Checklist
- Schonell Reading Test
- British Ability Test
- Schonell
- M.I.S.T
- Lexia Placement Assessment
- Literacy Lift Off – Word Reading Test
 - Written Vocabulary Test
 - Letter Identification Test
 - Running Records

These tests are administered individually to senior infants and first class Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per circulars 24/03 and 02/05.

Diagnostic Assessment

Formal diagnostic tests are used to determine appropriate learning support for individual pupils. Such tests are administered by SEN team 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 02/05 where a staged approach is implemented.

The diagnostic tests used in the school include;

- The Heggerty Phonological Awareness Assessment
- Mathematics Recovery (Wright)
- B.I.A.P
- W.I.A.T
- Jump Math's Assessments
- Reading Recovery Observation Survey
- Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment
- EAL initial interview

Continuum of Support Process

Where a teacher or parent have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child the school will follow these guidelines:

- The teacher should meet with parents as early as possible to pool their information about the child.
- **Stage 1, Classroom Support**, should be implemented. The teacher should administer screening checklists and profiles for children in infants and first classes. Norm referenced tests will be administered to older children and behavioral checklists will be used where appropriate. A plan for extra help within the normal class should be drawn up and reviewed with the parents.
- If concern remains after two school terms, the SEN team should be consulted with a view to moving on to **Stage 2, School Support**. The child with learning difficulties should be referred for Learning Support after securing parental permission. If further diagnostic tests reveal that the child would benefit from supplementary teaching an School Support Plan (SSP) will be drawn up.
- A written application for an Irish exemption is made by the parent/guardian to the school principal on behalf of their child. The application should state the reasons why the exemption is being sought. A child will only be considered for an exemption where his/her education circumstances come within the provision of the primary circular 0052/2019.
- If significant concerns remain after a school term it may be necessary to implement **Stage 3, School Support Plus**. With the permission of parents, the school will formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist in respect of the child's learning difficulties. Such specialist advice may be sought from physiologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, audiologists and general practitioners for referral to CAMHS. In consultation with the relevant specialists the SET and the class teacher should then draw up a learning plan and parents will be fully consulted throughout the process.

Recording

Each pupil has an individual file which is stored in a filing cabinet in the office. This file records end of year reports. Aladdin is used for the recording of standardised test results. While most information will be stored in the pupil's file some may be stored electronically. Teachers will use agreed

Cloonakilla National School

terminology when commenting on pupil's progress and are constantly aware of the need to record comments in an objective and instructive manner. (See Appendix 2).

Each class teacher is provided with an "Important Information Folder". This folder is passed on to the relevant teacher at the end of each school year. This folder contains:

- Important test results including NRIT and standardized test scores
- Class tracking system (which contains a summary of SEN interventions throughout their time in school)
- A current list of SEN supports (updated at the end of each school year)
- Current guided reading groups

Reporting to Parents

Teachers report to parents at least twice yearly. One report is an oral report at Parent/Teacher meetings. A written report is sent to all parents in mid-June. Reports of standardised tests are included on written reports for 1st-6th classes. Scores provided are class based and standardised scores and NCCA Report templates will be used. Parents are given the opportunity to seek a meeting with the Principal/class teacher to discuss the written report if necessary.

Reporting to Primary/2nd level Schools

A Passport (including the information from standardised tests) must be sent to the relevant primary/secondary school to which a student transfers on proof of enrolment.

SEN teachers liaise with the secondary schools and where necessary a NEPS transfer form is filled in and sent to the school with a copy of their psychological report

Reporting to BOM and DES

The Principal is required to report annually aggregated assessment data from standardised tests to the BOM in June.

The Principal is also required to report aggregate standardised test results to DES in June for 2nd, 4th and 6th classes.

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if:

- Early identification and intervention is achieved.
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in staged approach.
- Procedures are clear and roles and responsibilities are defined.
- The SEN Team has clearly defined roles and objectives.
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Class teachers, Special Education teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged intervention at class level. At stage 2 the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal and the SENCO assume a primary role at Stage 3, when outside intervention may be required. We recognise the importance of communicating regularly with parents as they have a major role to play in their children's education.

Implementation and Review

This policy is effective from September 2024 and will be reviewed in September 2027.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Chairman - Board of Management, Cloonakilla N.S.