

Convent Primary School, Killaloe, Co.Clare
Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement

The policy is based on advice and information provided in the Primary Curriculum, the NCCA Website, the NCCA booklet *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools* and Circular 0138/2006. It is a reflection of current practice in our school and will continue to be updated on an ongoing basis.

Rationale

The policy on assessment was formulated to record existing practice and to put a mechanism in place to have ongoing revision of the policy. We also wished to formulate clear cut guidelines for all teachers, parents and children.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by gathering relevant information to guide each pupil's further learning (assessment for learning) and by providing information on each pupil's achievement at a particular point in time (assessment of learning).

Aims

1. To benefit pupil learning
2. To monitor learning processes
3. To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
4. To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
5. To assist teachers' long and short-term planning
6. To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis.

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 and in relation to national norms
- ✓ To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/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

Range of Assessment Methods used throughout the School

Both *assessment of learning* and *assessment for learning* will be used by teachers to make professional judgements about pupil achievement/progress. Deciding what to assess will be based on the curriculum objectives in each curriculum area/subject and on what the teacher intends to help the children to learn. Each teacher will use the most appropriate assessment method to measure the extent to which children have achieved these objectives. The range of assessment methods to be used throughout the school is outlined below.

Assessment for Learning:

At its heart, assessment for learning is a way of informing and involving the learners themselves in the process of assessment. The following methods of Assessment for Learning (AfL) are used in the school:

- ✓ **Teacher observation** Each teacher will have an observation sheet for each child where significant observations of children's progress will be recorded. This may be as a result of target child observation, event samples, anecdotal observation and/or shadow study. New Guidelines for Schools p.46 – 52
- ✓ **Teacher-designed tasks and tests** Teachers will refer to the Guidelines pp.54- 59 for suggestions. Also reference will be made to pp 89 – 90 where an excellent range of sample test questions is outlined.
- ✓ **WALT and WILF charts**
 - ✓ **We Are Learning To....**teacher shares learning intention with the children
 - ✓ **What I'm Looking For.....**criteria of success
 - ✓ **Rubrics** - Guidelines pp 52 and 54.
 - ✓ **Graphic Organisers** – include WALT/WILT charts and Rubrics mentioned above.
- ✓ **Completed assignments by pupils** – projects, copybooks, activities, work samples, homework
- ✓ **Parental, pupil feedback or observation**

There are different assessment methods depending on age level e.g. in the younger classes teacher observation is the prime method used along with one to-one assessments. The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment. The following subjects use teacher-designed tasks / tests: English, Irish, Maths, History, Geography, Science.

Pupils are involved in assessment of their own work/progress e.g. Looking and Responding to Art work, the writing process, circle time for SPHE etc.

Assessment of Learning:

Standardised tests

The following standardised tests are used in our school:

- ✓ Micra T (English) 1st-6th Classes
- ✓ Sigma T (Maths) 1st-6th Classes

Each class teacher administers the standardised tests and in some cases with the help of a SET. It is open to each class teacher to request help if necessary. All pupils are tested and no pupil is left out. All the following scores are recorded: raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN, Reading age on the class sheet. The percentile and standard score will be recorded in the data base. There is a uniform approach across all classes. Class teachers, principal and supplementary-teaching staff are involved in the analysis of results for individual classes, across the appropriate classes and at whole school level. The information gathered from tests helps target the children for supplementary teaching and also helps the class teacher to adapt methodologies. The deployment of teachers and/or the allocation of learning support/resource hours in our school are informed by the results of all standardised tests.

Screening:

MIST is used to facilitate the early identification of learning strengths /difficulties. It is administered early in term 3 in Senior Infants by the class teacher and the supplementary teaching team. There is joint interpretation of results. Emphasis is put on early-intervention programmes for children who

are not achieving. The class teacher and supplementary-teaching team devise an intervention strategy to help these children best. All parents are notified if their child requires extra support and parental permission is sought in writing.

Diagnostic Assessment:

Diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties. A list of diagnostic tests used in the school is attached as an appendix to this document. The learning support teacher and the class teacher are involved in selecting children for diagnostic assessment. Parental permission for the carrying out of these assessments has previously been granted at the time of the child's enrolment in the school. The learning support teacher administers the diagnostic tests and interprets the results. If the diagnostic assessment indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial this will be arranged. In consultation with the classroom teacher, a learning programme will be drawn up.

Psychological Assessment:

The class teacher liaises with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required. This happens after consultation with principal & SET. Standard consent forms are used.

The principal and class teacher are responsible for liaising with NEPs and arranging an assessment from them. Parents may also organise for other professionals such as Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist or Audiologist etc. Sometimes a teacher may suggest to parents to have a matter investigated further. The IEPs are based on the recommendations of the assessment. Psychological reports are kept by the class teacher in the pupil's file in the filing cabinet in the classroom and a copy of the reports shall be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the SEN room.

Recording the results of assessment

Class teachers record the assessment results on a specific form. Percentiles and standard scores are inputted into the data base. The agreed terminology used by all teachers is according to the test administered. Teachers are aware of the need to record comments in an objective and instructive manner. Sensitive data is kept securely in the filing cabinet in the SEN room. A file/information sheet and individual school record booklets are used for the transfer of appropriate information from teacher to teacher. Parents are informed of results at parent-teacher meetings and by the end-of-year report. Pupils from 1st to 6th class are informed of test results when appropriate and in a sensitive manner.

Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- ✓ 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 Principal has a particular responsibility for coordinating the policy.

Implementation Date for Updated Version

Beginning of school year 2017

Timetable for Review

Assessment is discussed regularly at staff meetings meeting each year) and the operation of the new procedures are reviewed and if necessary, amended as a result of these discussions. The principal will initiate and co-ordinate this review.

Ratification

This assessment policy was officially ratified by the Board of Management on 19th October 2017.

Signed:

Luke Murtagh

Chairperson B.O.M.