

**Scoil Mhuire
Droichead an Chláirín
Co. na Gaillimhe
H91D7P3**



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Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy sets out our approach to assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Assessment is about building a picture over time of a child's progress and/or achievement in learning across the Primary School Curriculum. Information about how the child learns (the learning process) as well as what the child learns (the products of learning) shapes the picture. The teacher uses this information to identify and celebrate the child's current learning and to provide him/ her with appropriate support for future learning.

Rationale

The core of this policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavors to identify at the earliest possible opportunity children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

Relationship to School Ethos

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and the enhancement of teaching processes to meet these needs. An effective Assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved.

Aims and Objectives

- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- To target the needs and strengths of pupils.
- To create a procedure for monitoring progress and achievement.
- To monitor learning processes which assist the long-term and short-term planning of teachers.
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis, involving principal, class teachers and SET's.

Policy Content This policy is aimed towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils so that adequate strategies are in place. These strategies may include pupil self - assessment, pupil profiling, two - way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and student support plans. (See also SEN Policy)

(A) 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
- This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally able, so that adequate strategies are put in place early enough to facilitate remediation.
- To enable 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

(B) Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)

Assessment for Learning is an ongoing process of recognising and responding to the child's learning in order to enhance it. The following types of informal assessment methods are used in the school:

- Teacher observations
 - Teacher designed tasks and tests
 - Termly tests in core subject areas
 - Questioning (lower and higher order)
 - Discussion and conferencing- chatting with a child (one to one) on a topic, question or strategy to assess understanding
 - Work samples, portfolios and projects
 - Checklists
 - Running Records
 - Mind maps
 - Self assessment- Emoji's, Thumbs up/down, circle the best letter/word completed, Rubrics, KWL, Two stars and a wish.
- Peer assessment through pair work and discussion. Oral feedback e.g. to writing or during looking and responding

(C) Assessment of Learning (AOL) (Summative and Evaluative)

Assessment of Learning provides a summary judgment of what has been learned at a particular point in time. Assessment of learning compares children to externally agreed criteria and standards. It identifies gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. These interrelated and complementary approaches emphasize two aspects of assessment that are central to the work of teachers in our school. The teacher uses evidence on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning. (AfL). The teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents and other teachers. The emphasis in Assessment of Learning is on measuring a child's progress towards curriculum objectives. Examples include:

- Teacher designed tests and tasks
- Weekly tests i.e. table checklists, spellings
- Standardised Tests
- Diagnostic Tests

Assessment Techniques used by teachers in our school: * *Teacher survey 2023*

- Teacher observation (focused, continuous, informed and structured).
- Teacher questioning (targeted and specific).
- Self assessment e.g Two Stars and a wish, WALT/ WILF Peer/ Group Feedback, checklists/rating scales.
- Teacher designed tasks and tests (weekly and termly tests, interactive quizzes, projects, reports and homework).
- Discussion/ conferencing.
- Standardised testing.
- Diagnostic testing.

Standardised tests

The following are carried out annually in May from First to Sixth Class in the areas of Numeracy, Literacy and Spellings.

- Drumcondra Spelling Test – May (First to Sixth Classes)
- Drumcondra Reading Test / Micra T in May (First to Sixth Classes)
- Drumcondra Maths / Sigma T in May (First to Sixth Classes)
- Drumcondra Irish Test in May (Third to Sixth Classes)

Administration of Standardised Tests

- The SENCO is responsible for the purchase, distribution and collection of standardised tests, teachers manuals and correcting stencils.
- The class teacher administers the Standardised Tests in coordination with the SET.
- The choice of Standardised tests are reviewed regularly by the teaching staff.
- The Standardised tests results from 1st - 6th are communicated to parents/guardians in the end of year school reports.
- An information sheet is sent home to parents/guardians which explains about Standardised testing and scores before the testing begins. Teacher arranges a check-in phone call with the parent of a child who scores outside the expected norm and suggests ways of assisting the child's knowledge in that area. If required, teachers can arrange appointments with parents after results are sent home.
- If a pupil is absent on the day of testing the test will be administered to them by a SET at the earliest date possible.
- In the case of children with specific needs, the tests may be carried out on a one to-one basis or within a small group.
- The Principal and all teachers are involved in the analysis of results across all classes and at the whole school level

Exclusion from Standardised Tests.

As per circular 56/2011 'Students may be excluded from standardised testing if in the view of the school principal they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the tests or, in the case of migrant students, where the level of English required in the test would make attempting the test inappropriate'

Test Analysis

The results of Standardised tests are shared with the relevant members of school staff in order to plan to meet the educational, emotional, behavioral and wellbeing needs of the student.

From time to time this information may need to be shared with external agencies including NEPS, CAMHS and the Inspectorate. Parental consent will be sought to share information with external agencies.

Results are never used in isolation, but rather in conjunction with other information that may already be available about the student. Information gathered from assessments are considered alongside information that is gathered from the children, parents, primary schools and teachers .

As per the ERC GDPR guidelines, parents/guardians are entitled to view their child's test script.

"Please note that the content of the tests is confidential and it is important that it does not circulate among the general public. Other pupils and schools will use these tests in subsequent years, and in order to protect the integrity of the tests, the content must be kept secure. **As such, we would stipulate that a child's answers be viewed under the supervision of a school staff member only.** The test content must not be photographed or photocopied."

Screening and Diagnostic Assessment:

The following are a sample of tests that may be used to screen in Scoil Mhuire, Clarinbridge. It is not an exhaustive list and is subject to change pending the availability of new evidence based assessments.

- ALPACA Infant Assessment (*September, January, May*)
- BIAP (Belfield Infant Assessment Profile) (*March onwards*)
- MIST (Middle Infant Screening Test) (*Senior Infants, March or April*)
- Jackson Phonic Test / Core Phonics Survey (*can be administered at any time*)
- YARC Reading Test (*can be administered at any time*)
- Drumcondra Reading Analysis (DRA) (*can be administered at any time*)
- NEPS Checklists e.g TOAD (*can be administered at any time*)
- SIGMA T and MICRA T in 1st class (*Autumn*)
- SIGMA T, MICRA T / Drumcondra Reading /Drumcondra Maths, Drumcondra Spelling (*1st- 6th, May*)
- Drumcondra Gaeilge (*2nd -6th, May*)
- NRIT (*end of second class*)

Diagnostic testing is used intermittently throughout the school year for Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning. They are used to determine the appropriate support for pupils.

Early Intervention

There is an emphasis in our school on early intervention in Literacy and Numeracy. Whole class screening is initially completed by our Special Education Teachers (SET's).

Following screening, the class may receive in-class support and/or children may be withdrawn in small groups, with parental consent.

Psychological Assessment

The school's policy on Psychological Assessment is a three-step approach based on the NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) Continuum of Support process. Please see Scoil Mhuire's Special Educational Needs Policy. **Some children may move directly to stage 2 or 3 depending on their level of need.**

The Principal, SENCO, 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 at any stage throughout the school year. The principal is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from N.E.P.S.

An educational psychological assessment may determine a child's needs for additional resources and plays an important role in drafting an educational plan for a pupil.

Provision of Psychological Assessment

- The school is assigned a school psychologist through NEPS scheme (National Educational Psychological Service).
- Our current school psychologist is Eimear Seery (NEPS)
- The number of educational assessments provided under this scheme is at the discretion of NEPS and our school allocation is usually limited to two assessments per school year.
- Parents may choose to arrange an assessment privately through a private Educational Psychologist or other agency.

Procedure for Psychological Assessment

- The Class Teacher in consultation with the Special Education Teacher recommends an assessment.
- Where the assessment is to be carried out with NEPS Psychologist, consent forms / referral forms are completed with parents in advance. A report is issued to the school following the assessment.
- Psychological reports are stored safely in locked filing cabinets.

Recording & Storage of Assessments

Class Based Assessments / Tests

These tests may be sent home with pupils at the end of the week / month / school year.

- A selection of samples may be provided to the next year's teacher to inform their knowledge and understanding of the incoming class.

Standardised Test Results

- Test results will be recorded electronically (via the school data system Aladdin) by the Class Teacher/Special Education Teacher.
- Test booklets are stored for 12 months in a secure filing cabinet, until replaced by the following year's test. The test booklets are then shredded.
- Class Results sheets, along with school reports are kept as per Scoil Mhuire's Data Protection &

Record Keeping Policy – until the pupils have reached aged 25(18 years +7 years), and then shredded.

Diagnostic Test Results

Outside Agencies' Assessments eg. Educational Assessment, Occupational Therapy Assessment, Speech & Language Assessment.

- Results of any such testing are kept securely in the pupil's individual file in a locked filing cabinet and a copy is also stored in the Class Teacher and Special Education Teacher locked filing cabinets.
- These assessments and accompanying recommendations are scanned and attached to the child's file on Aladdin. These documents are password protected.
- These are kept as per Scoil Mhuire Data Protection & Record Keeping Policy – until the pupils have reached aged 25 (18 years +7 years), and then shredded.

Success Criteria

We know that the policy will have succeeded when:

A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used throughout all school areas as an integral part of teaching and learning.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the BoM in February 2024. Every teacher will be provided with a copy of this policy for their files. It will be communicated with all parents.

Date of next policy review: _____

Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____

