



St. Mary's Secondary School

Assessment and Reporting Policy



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Assessment and Reporting Policy

St. Mary's Secondary School

A. Introduction

St. Mary's Secondary School is an all-girls voluntary Catholic secondary school, under the trusteeship of CEIST, where we aim to provide our students with an education that equips them for life and living in the modern world. This policy is devised and agreed as part of a consultative process between the Board of Management, Senior Management, Parents, Students and Staff of St. Mary's Secondary School. It addresses a variety of assessment procedures and methods but is not designed to be exhaustive or to be overly prescriptive. Where innovative assessment techniques are discovered and recommended, teachers will use their professional judgement in the implementation of these for the benefit of students and their progress in learning. Such techniques will be shared amongst teachers and, where possible, a school-wide implementation of agreed assessment and reporting methods will be used. The NCCA's Glossary of Key Terms associated with Assessment and Reporting can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy document. In this policy the term 'Parent' is taken to include the term 'Guardian'.

B. Relationship of this Policy to Our Mission Statement

St. Mary's is a Mercy school which is concerned with developing the whole person within a Christian atmosphere. By providing a balance of educational activities, we foster growth in self-esteem and respect for others. We take pride in encouraging high standards of teaching and learning. In St. Mary's Secondary School, our Assessment and Reporting practices strive to help all students to reach their potential. In the context of students' wellbeing, our Assessment and Reporting practices are designed to be helpful, supportive and encouraging of students so that all students can reach their own potential. In partnership with parents, who are the primary educators of students, we strive to respect the dignity, worth and individuality of our students by affirming genuine effort and success, and providing encouragement, motivation and support to students to help them reach their potential.



C. Assessment – Definition

Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems. Educational assessment provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes (see www.ncca.ie).

Assessment Methods: - This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning (see ncca.ie).

D. Types of Assessment

- Formative Assessment e.g., oral questioning, students' homework and classwork
- Summative Assessment e.g., House Exams, TY Assessments, Mock Exams, Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Exams, CBAs
- School Self Evaluation
- Oral and Aural Language Assessments
- Assessment Tasks & Classroom Based Assessments
- Project Work – Presentations, PowerPoints, Portfolios/Eportfolios, visual displays, posters
- Practical Exams in Art, Home Economics, Music, DCG, Technology etc.
- Field Study – Geography, History, Home Economics and Science etc.
- Standardised assessment measures ability across a range of areas including verbal, numerical and reading and identifies each student's strengths and abilities. In relation to standardised assessment the following is administered: (mostly taken from AEN policy) –

Incoming students are invited to take The Drumcondra Reasoning Test (DRT) usually in March/April of their entry year. This paper based standardised test helps identify the academic needs of individual students and the student group as a whole so as to allocate resources appropriately.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT-4) is administered online to all first-year students during the first term to further assess their strengths and needs.

Additional standardised assessments such as the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) and Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT-III T) may be administered as necessary to inform interventions or accommodations. CAT-4 is administered to Transition Year students to assist them in making decisions around senior cycle programmes, subject choice and levels.

- Effective Communication Exams in TY in association with The Leinster School of Music and Drama every May



Assessment takes two key forms:

- a) Assessment **of** Learning, which is summative in nature and provides a 'snapshot' of student attainment and progress at a given time (e.g., Christmas Tests / Summer Tests / State Examinations / Psychometric Tests / CAT 4 Test / Entrance Tests / Differential Aptitude Tests). The purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of a teaching unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Students will sit 2 formal exams per school year – all will sit in-house exams in November, exam classes will sit mocks in February and the rest of the years will sit exams in May. Second and third year will do Classroom Based Assessments.
- b) Assessment **for** Learning which is formative in nature and intended to inform teaching and learning, to impact positively on student engagement and to guide student progress (e.g., students answering questions in class, helpful feedback given by teachers on students' written work, suggesting the next steps they need to take to improve). The purpose of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching, and by students to improve their learning. Formative Assessment helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need more attention and work by the student.

Teachers will generally use both types of assessment in the course of teaching and learning.

Assessment at Junior Cycle places the student at the centre of the learning process allowing for new ways of learning and a broader range of skills to be assessed (see www.ncca.ie). Assessment at Senior Cycle aims to help students experience success in the Leaving Certificate/Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, and fosters independent learning and critical thinking skills, in line with the Key Skills for Senior Cycle.



E. Assessment – General Aims

- a) To inform parents, teachers and students of students' progress.
- b) To encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.
- c) To help students reflect on their learning and to set and achieve realistic improvement targets.
- d) To pursue academic excellence while providing for the holistic education of students.
- e) To ensure the learning process is as interesting and enjoyable as possible to facilitate and encourage a love of learning that will become a lifelong process.
- f) To encourage parents to take an active role in, and a shared responsibility for, their child's learning and education.
- g) To help parents to understand and support the progress their child is making and to monitor their child's progress throughout their time in school.
- h) To support the processes of School Improvement and School Self-Evaluation and to comply with all requirements of Legislation, the Department of Education Inspectorate, Circulars, the Curriculum and other relevant documentation arising from time to time.

Each department will, following professional consultative and collaborative dialogue at subject department level, publish to their own Microsoft Team an outline of their subject department's agreed Teaching and Learning plan for each module with assessment methods named.

The type(s) of Assessment to be utilised during each module, and for the purpose of reporting will be advised by each individual teacher to students. It must encompass a range of measures, or a range of measures as outlined in Section D of this document.

Formative reports will be generated for all year groups except Transition Year twice yearly:

- December – all year groups except Transition Year
- March – Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert years
- June – 1st, 2nd & 5th year.
- Transition Year will receive a report at the end of each module (3 times/year).



F. Rationale

The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School is committed to the successful implementation of Education legislation and other relevant publications pertaining to Assessment and Reporting, in particular:

- The Education Act (1998),
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004),
- The Framework for Junior Cycle (Department of Education and Skills [DES], 2015),
- Looking at Our Schools (DES, 2022),
- School Self-Evaluation Guidelines (DES, 2016),
- Subject Specifications / Syllabi,
- Reporting Guidelines, NCCA (March 2018).
- Ongoing Reporting for Effective Teaching and Learning (NCCA, 2018),
- The Data Protection Act, 1988, Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003, and The General Data Protection Regulation, 2018.

The Education Act, 1998, requires that schools regularly evaluate and periodically report on students' learning. Assessment and Reporting are key features of this process. Assessment supports students' learning by acknowledging what students know, understand and can do, and points them in the direction of improvement, with the guidance and support. Assessment fosters self-reflection by students, and the practice of reviewing their own learning process, with the purpose of reaching their own potential. Assessment should enable students to make informed decisions about subject choice, careers, progression to Third Level / Further Education and about life skills. Assessment helps students to gain a better understanding of their subjects and an appreciation for the same. Assessment helps to develop the required knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and dispositions that are embedded in the curriculum. Assessment also helps to motivate students and enables them to gain a sense of achievement. All teachers will keep a record of class assessments, homework and end of term assessments in their Teacher's Dairy/Compass/Office.

G. Key Skills

Assessment focuses on not just what students know, but also what they understand, the dispositions they are developing and the skills that they are learning.

In Junior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills

- Managing Myself
- Staying Well
- Communicating
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Managing Information and Thinking
- Being Literate
- Being Numerate.



In Senior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills:

- Communicating
- Working with Others
- Being Personally Effective
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Information Processing.

Students will demonstrate their learning in these Key Skills both explicitly and implicitly through their work, and the acquisition of the relevant skills should be relevant in both summative and formative assessment.

H. Assessment in Transition Year

The focus in Transition Year is on experiential learning and personal development. The forms of assessment used will therefore vary. Some examples of forms of assessment in Transition Year include:

- a) Class test/other assessment at the end of each module in the core subjects
- b) Portfolios / e-Portfolios of classwork.
- c) Student Self-reflection.
- d) Student Peer-Reflection.
- e) Individual / Group projects.
- f) Oral Presentations / Discussions.
- g) Work Experience Reports.
- h) External certifications (e.g. GAISCE / John Paul II Awards).
- i) End of year interview



Transition Year Credit System

Criteria	Assessment Details	Credits Awarded
Core Modules/Subjects - English - Maths - Irish - ECDL/Computers - Religious Education - Language - PE	10 credits per module/subject per term	70 * 4 Total: 280
Subject Sampling Modules - Business - Music - Art - Science	10 credits per module/subject per term	40 * 4 Total: 160
TY Specific Modules - YSIY - Safe Food - Speech and Communications - GAA Future Leaders	10 credits per module/subject per term	40 * 4 Total: 160
Rolling Modules - Geographical Skills Development - Heritage Studies - Masterchef - Community Care - Positive Mental Health - Etiquette Sustainability	5 credits per module per term	35 Total: 35
Career Investigation Career Guidance Work Experience	Attendance, Evaluation/reflection presentation/ePortfolio, Employers report Career investigation	Total: 100
Participation in TY Programme Attendance Punctuality Behaviour		Total: 100
Interview ePortfolio (OneNote, office 365)	Showcase, Extra-Curricular participation.	Total: 55
	TOTAL	890



I. Assessment/Homework Practices to Include Students with Additional Needs

At St. Mary's Secondary School we endeavour to make our assessment practices as inclusive as possible, within the resources available to us. These practices are in line with national guidelines. Teachers actively use differentiated learning and assessment strategies with students to help all students to experience success and challenge, and to guide the learning process.

Teachers will employ a range of differentiated learning and assessment strategies, individual/small group student support tuition, co-teaching, visual aids, spelling waivers, increased time and bi-lingual dictionaries amongst others, as determined by the AEN Team in consultation with individual subject teachers and students' parents.

Where possible, and subject to available resources, we endeavour to provide reasonable accommodations for students who have a specific physical or learning difficulty and who may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in their State Examinations. A reasonable accommodation may be the use of assistive technology (e.g. keyboard / laptop) or support provided by a Special Needs Assistant and this is always subject to available resources. This is done to remove, as far as practicable, the impact of the student's disability on their performance in assessments. Usually, key formal assessments may be supported in this way (e.g., House Exams / Mock Exams) but are subject to resources. Accommodations will be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year.

The Additional Educational Needs Coordinator will apply to the State Examinations Commission for the appropriate Reasonable Accommodations in State Exams. In the event of new or additional needs emerging with a senior cycle student the appropriate testing will be conducted, and new applications made in this respect, having due consideration for criteria in that particular year. Students may be withdrawn for individual Learning Support assessments, and samples of their writing may be gleaned from their House Exams and during individual or group withdrawal sessions for this purpose.

We aim to ensure that all students, including those with additional needs, have the opportunity to successfully complete homework at a level suitable to their ability through differentiation strategies. Expectations for completion of homework and feedback of same will be appropriately adjusted to accommodate students with additional needs. In some cases, alternative arrangements may be necessary for completing homework. If this is the case, a plan will be developed on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with the relevant member(s) of the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Team, parents, class teachers, and the student.



Our approach to homework includes multiple measures of representation and expression and incorporates independent, self-directed learning tasks such as revision, review, and research of class content (record, draw, model design, blog, mindmap, video). Teachers will encourage students to engage in these tasks, thus providing opportunities for a manageable and balanced workload. This approach means that students will always have some form of meaningful and relevant tasks to work on and should never find themselves without any homework.

J. Academic Tracking/Monitoring

Academic Tracking was introduced in the school year 2022-23 for all students. In keeping with our Teaching and Learning cycles, teachers will report two assessment results per school year for each student. The data is overseen and monitored by class teachers. Student Support Teams, including the AEN Team, Year Heads and the Pastoral Care Team, work collaboratively to monitor academic performance and will investigate any inconsistencies.

We will make use of both quantitative data such as assessment results, student targets and National Curriculum level outcomes, and qualitative data such as teacher and student comments and opinions to help motivate appropriate improvements in student learning. The school will use data to help set challenging targets for individual students. Subject teachers will analyse assessment data to identify patterns in student achievement and to address any difficulties or issues which arise from them. Academic Tracking/Monitoring is designed for students to raise expectations of success. It provides a framework within which to motivate students to engage in their learning process and target-setting which supports students in taking greater personal responsibility for their learning.



K. Formal Assessment Calendar at St. Mary's Secondary School

Teaching & Learning Cycles

	T&L Cycle 1	T&L Cycle 2
1st Year	1 terminal assessment	1 terminal assessment
2nd Year	1 terminal assessment CBA to be completed in Cycle 1 or Cycle 2	1 terminal assessment CBA to be completed in Cycle 1 or Cycle 2
3rd Year*	1 terminal assessment CBA to be completed in Cycle 1 or Cycle 2	1 terminal assessment (Mocks) CBA to be completed in Cycle 1 or Cycle 2
TY	2 Classroom assessments	2 Classroom assessments
5th Year LCA	1 terminal assessment TASK 1 TASK 2	1 terminal assessment TASK 3 TASK 4
6th Year** LCA**	1 terminal assessment TASK 5 TASK 6	1 terminal assessment (Mocks) TASK 5 TASK 6

*Junior Cycle State Exam - June ** Leaving Cert State Exam - June



L. House/Mock Examination Centre Procedures & Rules

- Students must present themselves in full uniform in the appropriate classroom/ exam centre 5 mins in advance of each exam.
- Students must be in attendance for the full school day (9.00am to 3.50pm- Monday/Tuesday and 9.00am- 3.10pm- (Wednesday –Friday).
- Students must remain seated in the exam centre for the duration of the exam, and will not be permitted to leave early (unless in very exceptional circumstances e.g. illness, medical appointment as evidenced by a signed note from parent).
- Students must ensure that they have with them all necessary writing materials and equipment appropriate for each exam. No borrowing or sharing of these materials is permitted.
- Only materials necessary for the exam are allowed on the desk. All other books must be stored in the pupil's locker. Phones must be fully powered off and seal in a transparent bag (bag provided by the school).
- Silence must be observed at all times. No talking, whispering, gesturing or other communication is permitted between students.
- Students needing extra exam materials must first ask permission of the supervisor.
- Students will be given the full allocated time for each exam.
- On occasion, some study time may be afforded to students in advance of some exams. Students may use books, copies and notes for this study period. Phones are not permitted for this study. It is expected that students will maximise the use of their time during the exam and check over all fully completed answers.
- Before handing up exam scripts, students must ensure that their own name and their teachers' names and any other required information are clearly marked on each script.
- Exam scripts must be properly secured.
- Students presenting late and / or disturbing the exam centre will be sanctioned, as appropriate.
- Students may only attend the exam centre allocated to their class / subject group and must sit in the seats allocated to them.
- The timing of House Exams is usually one hour for Junior Cycle subjects, and 1.5 hours for Senior Cycle subjects. Teachers may request a longer period for an exam and will be granted, if possible.
- Students will receive their exam timetable the week before the exams, and any variations to these times will be evident on the timetables.
- Block classes will be facilitated for any subjects not doing an exam.
- Students should ensure that they attend to toileting needs in advance of entering the exam hall. Exits to the toilet during exams causes distraction and disturbance to the concentration of other students and must therefore be curtailed to an absolute minimum, at the discretion of the exam supervisor(s).
- House exams are assessed and marked by students' teachers. Mock exams are generally marked externally or by the subject teachers (Phys-Chem). The services of a variety of Mock Exam paper and marking companies, at the discretion of each subject department are used. Upon the return of students' marked scripts,



students will be encouraged to engage in self-reflection and implement recommended steps to improvement. Subject marking schemes should be used by students and teachers alike to help determine required standards in line with grading descriptors. Additionally, teachers will note key information from Chief Examiners' Reports and advise students, as appropriate, in this regard.

- Every effort should be made by students to attend their exams. Students not presenting for an exam due to illness or other exceptional circumstances must adhere to the procedures for non-attendance at school by informing the relevant teacher in advance, where possible, and supplying a note signed by their parent, explaining the reason for non-attendance, upon return to school.
- If a student is absent for an exam, they or their parents/guardians should contact the class teacher to allow for the student to sit the exam or one similar to it. The school will try and facilitate this in school as best they can but if it is not possible, the student may sit it the exam at home under their parents'/guardians' supervision.

M. Assessment in State Examinations

The Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate State Examinations are conducted by the State Exams Commission (SEC) nationally for students in 3rd Year and 6th Year each June. For 3rd Year students these results will be included on students' Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement in the autumn of Fourth Year or 5th Year. The marks obtained helps to inform students' subject choices for Senior Cycle. For students in 6th Year the results help formulate decisions on Third Level education and various career path opportunities. Strict Exam Centre rules are issued by the SEC and apply throughout the duration of the exams. Students in St. Mary's Secondary School must be in full school uniform and adhere to the normal school rules and policies throughout the examination period.

For students who have been granted Reasonable Accommodations in the State Examinations, appropriate arrangements will be put in place for the proper conduct of students' exams in order that the assessment procedures are applied in a fair manner so as not to disadvantage any student (e.g. access to a reader / scribe / individual or shared exam centre, access to assistive technology e.g. laptop etc.).

Students are required to sit the Mock Examinations as part of the academic programme in the school. Students must pay the required fee before they sit the Mock Examinations. Please be advised that Mock Examinations are included in our Teaching & Learning Policy and therefore form an integral part of our Assessment & Reporting Cycles. All students in examination years are expected to sit Mock Examinations unless the Department of Education or Public Health issues advice to the contrary. The decision of the Board of Management is final in this matter



N. Annual Analysis of State Examination Results

Once the SEC issue results for the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate examinations, each Subject Department in St. Mary's Secondary School will conduct an analysis of the relevant subject results by using the electronic template available on www.pdst.ie. Teachers in each Subject Department will compare their Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate results to the National average and compare trends in their subject results over a three year period. The differential in the results are reported in the minutes of Subject Department folders along with a print-out of the results analysis. Additionally, Subject Department reflections and strategies for improvements are discussed and noted. Teachers are asked to collaborate and reflect on the results and set measurable targets that can help lead to incremental improvements, where possible. Areas of effective and innovative practice should be identified and discussed to ensure these results are maintained.

O. The Guiding Principles of Reporting

Reporting should:

- a) Encourage authentic engagement with parents
- b) Provide opportunities for students through feedback to reflect on their learning
- c) Value the professional judgements of teachers
- d) Use the language of learning to provide effective feedback
- e) Be manageable and not take away from learning and teaching
- f) Clearly communicates students' progress in learning
- g) Provide information on a broad range of achievement
- h) Be sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students and take an inclusive approach (*Reporting Guidelines, NCCA, 2018*).

Section P: Purpose of Reporting

Reporting at Junior Cycle culminates in the awarding of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), and at Senior Cycle in the Leaving Certificate. The JCPA links Classroom Based Assessments, State Examination Assessments and Other Areas of Learning, in which student's development of some Key Skills through co-curricular or extra-curricular involvement is reported. This offers parents a clear and broad picture of their child's learning journey over the three years of Junior Cycle' (*The Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015*).

This style of Reporting at Junior Cycle contributes to the personal development of students, supports learning and teaching and is both manageable and accessible for everyone involved (*Reporting Guidelines, NCCA, P.4*). Formal reporting arrangements complement other reporting opportunities, including parent-teacher meetings, teacher-student dialogue and other home-school written communications. All reporting is about informed discussions, either orally or written, between teachers, parents and students



about how to improve learning. 'In building a process of effective reporting, we aim to ensure that the students' learning and achievement are clear to all and that parents are actively engaged in the student's learning on an ongoing basis' (*Reporting Guidelines, NCCA, P.4*).

P. Types of Reporting

Reporting on student progress takes a variety of forms in St. Mary's Secondary School:

- a) Informal oral and written feedback
- b) Student Journal
- c) Communication and engagement with parents via the Compass website/app phone, text message, post, our social media accounts and school website
- d) Parent Teacher meetings
- e) Formative school reports for each year group arising from our two Teaching and Learning Cycles and following the **SIR** approach- *Strength, Improvement, Recommendation* for each student (Refer to Section K for further detail).
- f) Discussions with class teacher/Year Head/SEN coordinator / SEN Team / Student Care Team
- g) Student portfolios, learning logs and reflections
- h) End of unit/topic/term/year reports / Christmas Test Progress Reports / Summer Tests Progress Reports
Ongoing reporting can reflect many aspects of school life
- i) Our school calendar and our teaching/learning programmes
- j) Students' learning progress and achievement in subjects
- k) Engagement with the learning behaviours and dispositions of students
- l) The well-being of students
- m) Punctuality, behaviour and attendance
- n) Student participation and achievement in extra-curricular activities
- o) The results of classroom-based-assessments (CBAS)
- p) The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement, including 'Other Areas of Learning'
- q) The Leaving Certificate Results.

As per DES Circular 56/2011 St. Mary's Secondary School will request information from feeder-primary schools regarding students' reports, in particular results of standardised tests. The student's Education Passport documentation (see NCCA template materials on www.ncca.ie) will also be requested from primary schools of students once enrolled, to support the transfer of student information from primary to post primary school. Requests for such reports and information may also be made to schools when students are transferring to St. Mary's Secondary School.

Section R: Progress Reports

Formative SIR progress reports are available on Compass to all parents and students, twice a year, following the culmination of each Teaching and Learning Cycle. Access to Compass is granted through the provision of an individual code which is generated by the



school for each parent. Arising from our SSE/SIP process, reporting in St. Mary's Secondary School has evolved to increasingly focus on formative feedback which is designed to acknowledge the student's strengths and skills in a subject, and identify areas for improvement, as relevant. As part of our SSE targets, a constructive comment will be included on all reports.

Q. Informal Reporting

- An integral part of teaching, learning, assessment and reporting is the teacher providing formative feedback – oral and or written – to the student regarding their progress.
- Formative feedback will acknowledge the students' strengths, skills and efforts which recommend areas for improvement and the steps the student should take to help themselves improve.
- Teachers may use the student's journal to record a note / message for the attention of parents.
- Students should use the Academic Tracking Record pages of the journal to record their assessment scores across subjects (using black colour), as well as their target scores (using red colour). Parents should check their child's journal weekly. The Academic Tracking pages provide a source of educational dialogue between parent and child, and an opportunity for encouragement, praise and motivation. Parents should also check the journal for any notes that a teacher may have included for their attention.
- Any subject teacher, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor or other member of staff may make direct contact with parents as they see fit regarding the educational progress of students or in connection with the preparation for, or outcome of, an assessment undertaken by a student. The form of communication for such reporting may be made via the Compass website/app, phone, letter, text message or note in the student's journal.
- Teachers may request the signature of parents on students' homework, assessments etc. as evidence that parents have seen and are aware of the contents of their child's written work.
- Teachers will report to parents at the Parent-Teacher meeting in person. Parents should bring the student's journal to this meeting as a focus for discussion regarding homework, academic assessments etc. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend their child's Parent-Teacher meeting, and use the feedback received from teachers as a source of encouragement, support and motivation for learning with their child.



R. Reporting Using Descriptors

Reporting Descriptors for Junior Cycle

Distinction	> 90 to 100
Higher Merit	> 75 and < 90
Merit	> 55 and < 75
Achieved	> 40 and < 55
Partially Achieved	> 20 and < 40
Not Graded (NG)	> 0 and < 20

Reporting Descriptors for Junior Cycle CBAs

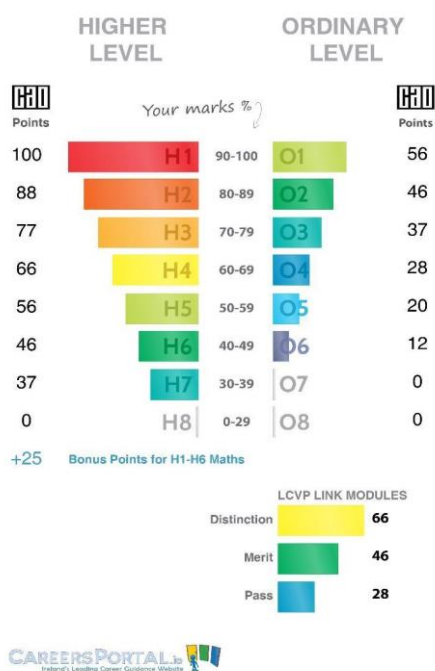
Exceptional
Above Expectations
In line with Expectations
Yet to Meet Expectations

Reporting Descriptors for Transition Year

Distinction	85-100%
Merit	60-84%
Pass	40-59%
Fail	0-39%



Reporting Descriptors for Leaving Certificate



Reporting Descriptors for Leaving Certificate Applied

Level	Marks and Credits Required
Pass	60-69% (120-139 credits)
Merit	70-84% (140-169 credits)
Distinction	85-100% (170-200 credits)

Reporting Descriptors for Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Distinction	80-100%
Merit	65-79%
Pass	50-64%



S. Assessment and Reporting Responsibilities

School Management should:

- Support teachers and students in the smooth and effective running of assessment and reporting procedures.
- Encourage and support teachers in engagement in Professional Development opportunities pertaining to Assessment and Reporting.
- Facilitate opportunities for professional dialogue by teachers in Subject Departments or by teams of teachers to discuss assessment/recording/reporting.
- Analyse and evaluate assessment results and discuss implications of findings with Subject Departments / Teacher Teams with respect to future developments in teaching and assessment.
- Support, monitor and evaluate assessment/recording/reporting within the school.

Subject Teachers should:

- Monitor and record students' progress through effective teaching, regular assessments and regular recording of students' progress on Compass and other educational platforms utilised by the school.
- Ensure that students are actively engaged in their learning and in the self-assessment of their progress and check the Academic Tracking section of students' journals to ensure assessment targets and marks are recorded by students.
- Ensure that all students take an active role in setting and recording their own improvement targets.
- Share learning intentions and success criteria with students.
- Provide students with regular formative feedback on the standard of their work, in line with agreed marking and assessment procedures, with constructive feedback on the next steps to take for improvement.
- Use assessment data to inform lesson planning, including differentiated learning and assessment activities to meet the identified needs of individual students. Teachers will consult the Special Educational Needs Register and the Student Support file in this regard to ascertain students in their classes who have identified needs, and plan and implement differentiated teaching, learning and assessments accordingly.
- Provide the Year Head / Guidance Counsellor / school Management with a summary of student performance in relation to target level/descriptor in accordance with the Assessment and Reporting Policy.
- Complete the relevant section of a full report on student performance to be published to parents twice yearly at regular intervals on Compass in accordance with agreed procedures.



Year Heads should:

- Liaise closely with subject teachers, students, parents and the Student Care Team on issues related to assessment, recording and reporting. Where students are seen to be underachieving, or excelling expectations, Year Heads will take appropriate actions to ensure that supports are sought or the students are affirmed as appropriate.
- Conduct regular assemblies where relevant aspects of assessment and reporting are addressed and affirmed.
- Monitor the content of the students' assessment data and reports and liaise with the subject teachers and parents where there is cause for concern or sometimes when the content is excellent.
- Engage in the academic tracking of students and implement suitable intervention strategies where students are showing signs of falling below their expected scores.
- Review school reports for errors/omissions (no grade entered for a subject/stylistic errors etc.) and report the same to admin staff for the purpose of rectifying before they are published to COMPASS.

Students should:

- Actively and consistently engage in their own learning, and follow all directions of their teachers in relation to classwork, homework, projects and other assessments to the best of their ability.
- Take responsibility for their own learning through self-assessment.
- Make ongoing and genuine efforts towards achieving agreed target levels/descriptors.
- Reflect on assessment marks and actively take steps for improvement, in line with their teacher's direction.

Parents should:

- Support and encourage their child's learning by working in collaboration with the school, e.g. attending Parent-Teacher meetings, checking their child's journal weekly, monitoring homework, being familiar with the school's Assessment and Reporting Calendars.
- Endeavour to provide a warm, quiet, distraction-free environment for their child for homework and study purposes for optimum embedding of learning.
- Communicate with the Year Head, as appropriate, regarding particular concerns which may interfere with their child obtaining optimum assessment results.
- Use the Student Journal to supply relevant notes to Year Heads and teachers.



T. Section V: Homework

Homework plays an important part in the education process. It provides a link between school and home and also gives parents the opportunity to reinforce the importance of learning. It provides a parent with a means of becoming involved in the student's learning

Teachers may on occasion, depending on the circumstance award a portion of assessment marks for application to homework, engagement with homework tasks and/or homework completed.

Parents Can Help by:

Shaping good attitudes and habits in relation to their child's homework. We ask that parents/guardians spend time monitoring their child's journal ensuring that homework is being recorded and then completed, according to the needs of the student. We ask that parents encourage their child to persevere with difficult assignments; valuable learning comes from attempting work, as well as completing work. Encouraging a positive attitude is most beneficial and parents can play a major role in this.

If for some reason the assigned homework is not done or completed a note in the journal from a parent explaining why is required

Types of Homework

Homework can be short term (due for the next day) or long term (writing of an essay or completion of a project). Homework can be written work, practical work or oral learning. In relation to oral learning, it is very important that the student completes this each evening. Homework can also be the revision of work already learnt. Our approach to homework extends beyond written assignments and incorporates independent, self-directed learning tasks such as revision, review, and research of class content. Rather than solely relying on written assignments, teachers will encourage students to engage in these tasks, thus providing opportunities for a manageable and balanced workload. Students will always have some form of meaningful and relevant tasks to work on and should never find themselves without any homework. The use of technology will be encouraged in the doing and submitting of homework. Students have access to Microsoft Office. (Outlook, Teams and One Note)

Organisation of Homework

Students should expect to receive homework in most subject areas. Homework, both written and oral, is considered of equal importance. Homework is regarded as an extension of class work and as a preparation for the next day's work. In order to achieve this, students must be prepared to spend time studying and revising as well as doing their homework. It is very important that a student's very best effort is made at all times. When difficulty is encountered, a student should refer to her textbook or examples given in class. It is required that there would be some evidence of effort made.



Suggestions for organising homework

- Find a quiet place where possible and establish a routine.
- Try to avoid all obvious distractions from TV, radio, phone calls, text messages.
- When possible, homework should be completed on the night it is given, even though it may not be required for the next day.
- Design your own personal timetable for homework, half hour blocks are recommended followed by a short break. Allocate time for study and revision.
- Take notes when studying, highlight key areas, headings, etc you can use these later for revision.
- Use your textbook or notes given in class to help you answer written questions.
- Where the homework involves solving problems, study the examples given in class first before attempting the problems.
- When you have to know and understand material such as vocabulary, grammar, definitions, diagrams or formulae, test yourself regularly and keep testing until you know it.
- Make sure all written work is neat and tidy.
- When homework is completed, timetable and schoolbag should be checked to ensure that all books, copies, PE gear, art materials, etc are ready for the next day.
- Microsoft Office can be used when doing homework. Notes can be accessed on Teams and One Note.
- Homework can be done and submitted through Teams.

Student Journal

Each student must buy a school journal at the beginning of the year to record details of homework for each school day. Students should enter the different subjects separately and when homework is completed, a mark should be made to show this.

Students should record carefully the instructions for their homework. They should ask questions, when necessary, to clarify the assignment. Before leaving school in the evening they should check that they have all the books, copies and any other materials needed for the night's homework.

Students should carefully plan for the completion of long- term projects. If a student is absent from class they should find out what work was missed and what homework was given. Those involved in extra-curricular activities must also complete their homework. For this purpose, it is worthwhile having a contact number of another student who was present in class or accessing the Teams App or One Note.



Average Recommended Time on Homework

1 st Year	1.5 hrs
2 nd Year	2-2.5 hrs
3 rd Year	3 hrs
Senior Students	3hrs +

Supervised study (2hours) is available after school. There is a fee for this, payable per session.

Sanctions for Homework Not Done:

- If homework is not presented a teacher may send a note to the parent/guardian via the student journal.
- Where a student persists in not doing homework the Year Head may contact home to arrange a meeting.
- A new points system that was introduced for Second Year 22/23 can be used for homework not done or for homework done with great effort. This system will be rolled out to all year group in the school year 23/24.

U. Monitoring Procedures

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored as follows:

- 1) Subject teachers monitor their students' journals, particularly the pages for Academic Tracking, and checking that homework is written in by the students.
- 2) Year Heads will advise students in their Year Group on the importance and procedures of Assessment and Reporting, answering any questions that arise therein.
- 3) Assessment and Reporting matters may be discussed at Staff Meeting level, and any issues addressed.
- 4) Subject Department meetings provide an opportunity for teachers to plan, evaluate, discuss and share practice on Assessment and Reporting. Teachers may also use some of their Professional Time to address such matters and follow-up, where necessary.



V. Ratification

This Assessment and Reporting Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Assessment Team in consultation with teaching staff, the Student Council and the Parents' Council ratification by the Board of Management and Trustees.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **19th September 2023**

Signed: *Bongala Ky*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Phunt O Kelly*
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management



Glossary of Terms

Assessment	Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems. Educational assessment provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes.
Assessment Task (AT)	The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class-time, and is sent to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task for each subject will provide all the necessary details and they are also available in the Assessment Toolkit.
Assessment Method	This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback in order to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning.
Blended Learning	This refers to the practice of using both online and real-time learning experiences when teaching students. This combination of content delivery allows for both methods to support and complement each other and personalise the learning process. This can also be referred to as 'hybrid learning' or 'mixed mode learning'.
Classroom Based Assessment (CBA)	Classroom-Based Assessments in subjects and short courses provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in ways not possible in a formal examination. Classroom-Based Assessments, facilitated by the classroom teacher, are undertaken by students in a defined time period, within class contact time and to a national timetable.
Diagnostic Assessment	This is a type of assessment that is intended to diagnose the strengths and/or areas of need in students prior to a learning activity. It allows for the identification and provision of the appropriate interventions and pedagogical approaches necessary to scaffold the learning to meet the individual learning needs of students.
Differentiated Instruction	Differentiated instruction refers to the wide range of strategies, techniques and approaches that are used to support student learning and help every student to achieve and to realise his or her potential.



Examples of student's work	Annotated samples of authentic student work are published online to illustrate levels of achievement in relation to features of quality. They are developed so that teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders can familiarise themselves with achievement levels.
Expectations for Learners/Students	An umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work and demonstrates the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised.
Features of Quality	Features of quality are the statements in the subject specifications that support teachers in making judgements about the quality of student work for the purpose of awarding achievement grades for certification. As success criteria are closely linked to learning intentions and based on the day-to-day processes in the classroom, student learning will gradually come to reflect the requirements set out in the features of quality which are used for assessment and reporting purposes.
Formative Assessment	Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process, and used to adapt teaching to meet student needs. The process permits teachers and students to collect information about student progress and to suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach to instruction and the student's approach to learning. Assessment for learning covers all aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning.
Individual Education Plans (IEP)	Plans developed in schools which detail the teaching and learning approaches intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests and aspirations of individual students.
Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement	The JCPA is the award that students will receive at the end of their junior cycle. The award will reward achievement across all areas of learning and assessment including ongoing, formative assessment; Classroom-Based Assessments; and SEC grades, which include results from the final examinations and the Assessment Tasks.
Learning Intention	A learning intention for a lesson or series of lessons is a statement, created by the teacher, which describes clearly what the teacher wants the students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities.
Learning Outcome	Learning outcomes are statements in curriculum specifications to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning.



Moderation	Moderation is a collaborative process that enables teachers to reach consistency in their judgements of student work against agreed success criteria or features of quality. The moderation process involves teachers discussing the qualities demonstrated in examples of student work to reach agreement about the standard of that work.
Ongoing Assessment	As part of their classroom work, students engage in assessment activities that can be either formative or summative in nature. Teachers assess as part of their daily practice by observing and listening as students carry out tasks, by looking at what they write and make, and by considering how they respond to, frame and ask questions. Teachers use this assessment information to help students plan the next steps in their learning. Periodically, this assessment will be in more structured, formalised settings where teachers will need to obtain a snapshot of the student's progress in order to make decisions on future planning and to report on progress. This may involve the students in doing projects, investigations, case studies and/or tests and may occur at defined points in the school calendar
Peer Assessment	Peer assessment is the assessment of the work of others of equal status. In the context of student learning, peer assessment is used by students to estimate the worth of other students' work with reference to specific and agreed criteria.
Reliability	This is the extent to which the assessment would give the same result if repeated. Reliability in assessment means that high quality evidence and information is provided on student performance and is comparable (i.e. it stands up when compared to judgements across learners, departments and schools).
Reporting	The communication of information on the results of assessment of student achievement.
Self-Assessment	Self-assessment is the involvement of students in making judgements about their own work, based on features of quality. It is a measure of the extent to which their own work has met these features of quality.
Specification	A subject specification details the intended learning outcomes, and how they can be achieved and demonstrated. The specification outlines how the learning in any subject or short course is linked to particular statements of learning and key skills.
Standardised Test	This is a test that is given in a consistent way to all the test takers and uses uniform procedures for administration and scoring. This term is primarily associated with large-scale tests administered to sizeable populations of students, and allows for comparison of relative performance of individual students or groups of students. These tests will provide an additional indicator of student progress and are devised to supplement and not replace the teacher's professional judgement.



Subject Learning Assessment and Review (SLAR) Meeting	Following the completion of a Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers will engage in review meetings, where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build common understanding about the quality of student learning.
Success Criteria	Success criteria are linked to learning intentions. They are developed by the teacher and/or the student and describe what success looks like. They help the teacher and student to make judgements about the quality of student learning.
Summative Assessment	Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or of a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the students' achievements and to determine whether and to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality.
Validity	This is the degree to which an assessment instrument accurately measures what it was designed to measure.