St.Paul's Primary School

Assessment Policy

Amended January 2016.
Mrs Gillian McCotter

Article 28 Everychild has the right to an education.
Article 29 Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full
Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children
Article 12 Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously
Article 18 Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child

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<u>Definition of Assessment</u>

Assessment is an integral part of good teaching and learning. Teachers must be conscious of this and build in opportunities for Assessment in planning schemes of work.

The aim of assessment is to show progress in learning, to ascertain to what extent pupils have achieved the skills, knowledge and understanding outlined in teachers' schemes of work and to identify those who have learning difficulties in specific areas of the curriculum. *(Article 3)*

1. Positive assessment can help individual pupils improve their performance.
2. Teachers can use the outcome of their assessment to inform future planning- to consolidate or extend learning and address areas of difficulty.
3. The school can use assessment outcomes to set challenging and achievable targets for the ongoing improvement of the school. Test results are analysed for evidence that appropriate progress is being made by individual classes, year groups and key stages.

In St.Paul's Primary assessment is the term used to allow children to demonstrate their progress and achievement. Assessment incorporates a variety of methods to make judgements about children's personal needs and achievements and thus show progress in learning. It helps identify areas where children could develop their skills and understanding. These informed judgements are integrated into the teaching and learning process and used to plan future action. Assessment is always ongoing and can be formal or informal in nature.

<u>Purposes of Assessment</u>

- to identify current achievement levels in children
- to communicate this achievement to children *(Article 13)*
- to diagnose difficulties and strengths and specific learning needs
- to allow children to identify ways of self-improvement *(Article 12)*
- to inform teachers of how successful they have been in chosen teaching methods and organisation for the delivery of the Curriculum and aid in future planning
- to ensure continuity between year groups and key stages
- to provide reports and records to pass on to subsequent teachers

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- to identify resource and curriculum need
- to foster high self-esteem and ensure progress
- to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of their children's progress
- to allow the school to set achievable targets for the improvement of the school
- to comply with legislation

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Assessment should be:

1. <u>Formative</u>: so that the positive achievements of pupils may be recognised and discussed and the appropriate steps planned.
2. <u>Diagnostic</u>: so that the strengths and weaknesses of pupils may be identified and appropriate steps taken.
3. <u>Summative</u>: so that overall achievements of pupils may be recorded in a clear and systematic way.
4. <u>Evaluative</u>: so that the information gathered about pupil achievement, is used by the school in the making of decisions regarding resources and curriculum planning.

Assessment Arrangements in St.Paul's Primary School (See overview table of assessments)

Schemes of work:
Appropriate assessment methods are reflected in teacher planning and schemes of work. Assessment tasks are varied in nature and reflect all the ability ranges there may be within each class. These are constantly being reviewed as the Northern Ireland Curriculum matures.

Class Tests:
Class tests may be daily, weekly, half-termly, termly or at the end of topic work. Teachers may use methods such as planned and recorded observation, class activities, diagnostic tests, pupil self-assessment, peer assessment running records, spelling tests, dictations, differentiated written or oral tests.

Baseline:
Baseline assessment: is carried out in P1 between September and October. This consists of parent interviews plus an assessment by teacher and classroom assistant on PSE Development, language and mathematical development.

Comet Resources: Throughout P1 &P2 pupils will be continually assessed using comet resources and these are also logged on to SIMS.

Numeracy Profiling: This is a baseline assessment, which when used formatively enables the teachers to clearly identify the strengths and areas for development for each child. This information is also used to set targets for the children's learning of early mathematical ideas, thus providing a means to measure value added as the children progress through the school.

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The numeracy profile is intended for use when the children enter year one. If the children come with a comprehensive record from their pre school setting, the assessment may not be necessary.

Guidance is provided to guide teachers when assessing. Record sheets follow.

All record sheets will need to be copied to allow for different class numbers.

When the guidance suggests moving the children to a supplementary activity, this is aimed at those children demonstrating a level of proficiency. Only these children will move on to supplementary, as it is the ability to talk about the activity which we want to assess rather than simply a child 'doing' the activity. Progress from Emergent to Firm Grasp rather than taking the children to a more sophisticated context is encouraged.

Standardised tests (Article 28 &29)

As part of the new CDS (Complete digital solutions) package we are trialling a number of on line standardised numeracy and literacy tests

PTE and PTM Progress in English and Progress in Maths (formally PIE and PIM):
Pupils from P3 to P7 are tested every May by GL NFER standardised tests in numeracy and literacy. Since 2012 these have been conducted online and they produce a wealth of information about the achievements of each class and the information is broken down into component parts of both English and Maths to give the teacher an in-depth insight into the areas that need developed within the class. This year 2015/2016 the PIE and PIM will be updated by GL assessment and replaced with PTE and PTM.

1.**Baseline** (P1) It is a one-to-one assessment that is delivered on two tablets – one for the pupil and one for the teacher. Teachers control the audio, the test progression and are responsible for recording the answers of the pupil. The assessment contains oral and touch-based questions, with full-colour illustrations. It is divided into three sections that assess literacy, language and mathematics. Baseline takes less than 25 minutes to complete. Deliver in one session or separate sessions depending on the pupil. You can choose to assess each pupil twice in a year - at the beginning and, optionally, end of the year

2.**New Group Reading Test (NGRT**)

The New Group Reading Test provides an age **standardised score and a reading age** from the test as a whole which gives reliable indication of a pupil's reading ability. It allows the assessment of reading and comprehension in a single test, whilst providing a wealth of diagnostic information. *NGRT* provides an overview of a pupil's reading and comprehension ability whilst identifying areas where they may be experiencing difficulties, to better inform target-setting.
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This test can be used TERMLY and will adapt to the pupils responses. This year it is used selectively with pupils and has proved useful with our recent underachievement programme.

3.**Cognative Ability Test – CAT4**

Helps pinpoint gifted and talented pupils and underachievers. Supports schools in monitoring progress and setting targets for future attainment. Information about a pupil's reasoning ability will be key to many decisions and should be considered alongside attainment data and other factors known to impact on learning, such as attendance and attitude. This is administered in P4 and P6 and used to identify underachievement in literacy and numeracy. % of whole school underachievement can be seen at a glance through sims assessment manager

4.**Single word spelling test**

Aimed at pupils between 6 to 14 years, *SWST Digital* is a group test that comprises a series of nine standardised tests designed to assess spelling attainment. Each test covers everyday vocabulary and contains between 30 and 50 words (depending on level), including high frequency, literacy hour and spelling bank words. The Single Word Spelling Test (SWST) comprises a series of nine standardised tests designed to assess spelling attainment. Use to support teacher judgement as and when needed

5.**NRIT (Non reading Intelligence test): P3 Only** is used to confirm levels of attainment and to assist in identifying pupils who require additional help by comparing their achievements in literacy tests with their NRIT outcome and where children are seen to be underachieving support is provided for them in terms of withdrawal groups.

The use of these standardised tests focuses the teachers' subsequent planning whilst also allowing a comparison with the National Average.

6.**PASS:** The *Pupil Attitudes to Self and School* (*PASS*) attitudinal survey offers a way for staff to gain an insight into any barriers that are preventing children from achieving their full potential and proactively intervene at an early stage. Students are asked a series of short psychometric questions designed to measure students' attitudes in nine core factors which have proven links with academic outcome. These include confidence in learning, a measure of perseverance in the face of a challenge, and feelings about school or 'connectedness' to the learning environment, which can bring to light feelings of social exclusion or potential bullying. These results are available through sims. They are carried out at the start of the year and at the end of the year. P3-P7

7.**Diagnostic Reading Assessment:** is carried out by the SENCO with children who are low achievers. This also helps to identify children who are in need of outreach support by the current provider- St Gerard's

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End of Key Stage Arrangements: There will be no statutory assessment or recording/ reporting of levels due to industrial action.

Assessments in Communications and Using Mathematics: (Children in P4 and P7 classes participate in statutory assessment of Communication and Using Mathematics. The results of these assessments are posted to parent(s)/guardian(s) with the pupil's end of year report.

Information on national averages will also be included. As part of the validation process the school submits samples of work each year to CCEA in term 2. Ongoing monitoring of levelling of work is included as part of the staff professional development programme.) This is currently under review

Assessment in Using I.C.T: (Whilst all children carry out tasks using I.C.T children in Primary four and Primary seven produce samples of work in the Cross Curricular Skill Area of Using I.C.T for moderation and levelling. The tasks for these are found in the CCEA task library and are submitted to CCEA for moderation. This is statutory from 2013/2014.) This is currently under review.

Reporting to Parents (Article 18)

Parent/teacher interviews are held in the first term each year. These interviews usually last 10 minutes. At this meeting parents will be informed of their child's progress over the past number years through use of the broadsheet from assessment manager.

Parents receive a written report in term 3 of each year. Both of the former reporting formats include information on their child's progress on all aspects of the NI Curriculum, attendance, behaviour, social skills and attitude.

P7 parent(s)/guardian(s) are invited for interview with the Principal in term 2 to discuss new secondary school arrangements for pupils.

C2k Assessment Manager:

Use of C2k Assessment Manager on SIMS allows teachers and subject co-ordinators to monitor pupil achievement, track lines of progression and they are assisted in setting realistic targets for the coming year on an individual basis. As the module is integrated within the SIMS Software it has the ability to use additional SIMS data fields which provide further analysis such as breakdown of information for Special Educational Needs, Free School Meals, Looked After Children etc.

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These informative records are kept centrally in the school and these are monitored by the Principal and Assessment Co-ordinator and shared with teachers who can use the information for planning and for deciding on focus groups for withdrawal in terms of either Special Educational Needs or a booster groups to reinforce and consolidate work. The information shows a value added aspect to performance. The assessment system itself produces informed targets for each child based on their age and their last performances in the tests. A score which is plus or minus 10 shows that the child is achieving within a range which is expected of them based on their level of progression. This information is shared when passing on class details. Similar material is shared with post primary schools at point of transfer.

The results from the baseline and comet tests used with P1 and P2 children are also stored on Assessment Manager and the results are shown by way of a traffic light system. Green signifying that the child is achieving at a level which would be expected of a child at their age. Amber signifies that the child requires some assistance in achieving the aims and red signifies that the child requires significant help.

SEN
Using information supplied by previous teacher(s) as well as on-going observation, the use of NRIT and PIE and PIM and Group reading tests, the class teacher will identify different ability groups within the class as well as pupils with special educational needs. Objective analysis of standardised scores and the Diagnostic Reading Assessment will also play the major role in identifying pupils for additional support both inside and out of the classroom.

IEP AND EP:
Such pupils with Special Educational Needs will have an Individual Education Plan co-written for them by the class teacher and special needs teacher three times a year. Each IEP will be reviewed and these children will be facilitated within the school's SEN timetable. Child friendly education plans are also developed to ensure that the pupil has a central and critical role in identifying targets which should be met. (Refer SEN policy) DRA assessment and other additional tests are used to identify specific weaknesses a pupil might have.

Record Keeping

Assessment records should have a meaningful purpose indicating various achievements by the pupil as well as recognising legislative requirements.

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Teachers are encouraged to keep clear and concise records of children's progress in a "Pupil Profile". Samples of half termly tasks which are outlined in yeargroup planning are stored and kept
 by the principal

Records of reports and samples of tests and class work should be kept each year in an individual file. These pupil profiles are passed on to each subsequent teacher as well as any other assessment records, which inform the new teacher. It is important, especially for pupils who are receiving additional support that teachers keep up to date the records on Assessment Manager to ensure that lines of progression identified for each child is accurate.

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