

POLICY OF SCOIL MHUIRE, MARINO

Document Title:

Assessment Policy

Effective Date:

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First Edition

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1. Purpose

Scoil Mhuire, Marino is an Edmund Rice school that seeks to foster and maintain a school environment characterised by high-quality teaching and learning. Integral to the development of such an environment is the use of effective and meaningful assessment practices.

The purpose of this Assessment Policy is to identify all assessment practices within mainstream and support settings here in Scoil Mhuire, and to outline the guiding principles which underpin our whole-school approach to assessment. These assessment practices, and how we use the information garnered from these assessments, play a vital role in providing high-quality education and improving the learning experiences of all our pupils.

Through the implementation of this Assessment Policy the staff of Scoil Mhuire seek to:

- evaluate pupils' attitude towards learning
- evaluate and assess pupils' learning across the Primary School Curriculum
- identify the learning needs of pupils, including those who may be experiencing difficulties and those who are exceptionally able (*see AEN Policy*)
- identify and establish appropriate learning targets, and plan developmentally appropriate programmes of learning for pupils
- gather assessment data at the class level which can be interpreted against national norms and monitored over time
- help pupils to feel empowered to discuss their strengths and successes as learners, as well as identifying areas in which they would like to develop
- involve pupils and their families in identifying individual learning targets and in supporting the pupil's learning and development at home (*see AEN Policy*)

2. Scope

This Assessment Policy seeks to articulate and formalise our whole-school approach to assessment. The policy – formulated with cognisance of and reference to *The Education Act* (1998), the NCCA's *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum* (2007), the Department of Education's *Preparation for Teaching and Learning* (2021), and the *Primary Curriculum Framework* (2023) – applies to all pupils and staff of Scoil Mhuire in both the mainstream class setting and in support settings.

3. Principles

Here in Scoil Mhuire, staff and management alike appreciate the significant importance of developing and implementing whole-school assessment practices that can capture, and are responsive to, the needs of our pupils.

These underlying principles help guide our approach to assessment:

- Assessment is an integral component of effective teaching and learning.
- To develop a holistic profile of learners, it is important that a broad range of assessment practices, encompassing both Assessment for Learning (A/L) and Assessment of Learning (AoL), be utilised.

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- Assessment is viewed on a continuum from pupil-led to teacher-led.
- Pupils should be provided with opportunities to discuss their strengths and successes as learners, and to advocate for themselves as learners.
- In order to support pupils in mainstream classrooms, and in order to track their learning and their attitude towards learning over time, an effective whole-school approach to assessment is important. Assessment events that take place across all year groups, and that are administered by the Class Teacher, include: a variety of grade-specific Beginning of Year assessments; summative maths assessments; showcase portfolios of pupil learning; project rubrics (*see Homework Policy*); and standardised assessments. In addition to these formal assessment events, assessment is embedded in each lesson, in each classroom, each day.
- Assessment practices that are embedded in teachers' daily professional practice include: teacher observation; questioning; teacher-designed tests and tasks; conferencing; peer-assessment; and self-assessment.
- For assessment data to be useful, it must be used to plan for pupil progression.
- Additional assessments – including standardised tests, diagnostic tests, screening tests, and running records – may be administered to some pupils by a member of the SET Team. These assessments are used to identify the priority learning needs of pupils and plan effectively for learner progression (*see AEN Policy*).
- For pupils in receipt of additional support it is critical that the nature of that support is linked to their identified learning needs. The SET, supported by the Class Teacher, must monitor pupils' responses to various interventions carefully, and amend their teaching approaches in response to pupil progression. In embarking on the delivery of additional supports or particular interventions, the starting point is assessment. This is to ensure that the level and type of support that pupils with AEN receive is aligned with their identified needs.
- Assessment information is shared with both the pupil and their family. Formal mechanisms for the sharing of such information include: parent-teacher meetings; pupils' showcase portfolios; end-of-year reports; and in the case of pupils in receipt of additional support, in School Support Plans.

4. Key Terms

In the context of this Assessment Policy these key terms will be defined and understood as follows:

Assessment	the process of gathering, recording, and interpreting information about a pupil's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes
Assessment of Learning (AoL)	an assessment administered at the end of a unit of work which evaluates the pupil's understanding of the topic

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Assessment for Learning (AfL)	assessments that evaluate a pupil's comprehension and understanding of the skill or topic during teaching and learning activities
WALT	we are learning to
WILF	what I'm looking for
Learning Intentions	a statement, created by the teacher, that describes clearly what the teacher wants the pupils to know, understand, or be able to do as a result of teaching and learning activities
Success Criteria	a statement or series of statements – developed by the teacher and/or the pupil – to describe what success looks like. They help the teacher and pupil to make judgements about the quality of pupils' learning
Portfolio	a carefully curated showcase of the pupil's best work, achievements, and experiences, selected and presented by the pupil themselves
Conferencing	a concentrated one-one conversation between a pupil and their teacher to discuss the pupil's learning and progress
Self-Assessment	when pupils assess their own performance and learn to reflect on, and critically evaluate, their own learning
Peer-Assessment	when pupils reflect on, and provide structured feedback to, the work of their peers
Rubric	a type of scoring guide that assesses and articulates specific components and expectations for assignments

5. Policy

Meaningful assessment is collaborative and integral to high-quality teaching and learning. Involving teachers, pupils, families, and sometimes others, assessment provides information which enhances teaching and informs and supports progression in pupils' learning across the curriculum. Our whole-school approach to assessment – to the collection and interpretation of assessment data, to the storage and sharing of assessment information, to the roles and responsibilities of staff – is outlined below.

DIMENSIONS OF PUPILS' LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT ASSESSED

The Primary School Curriculum seeks to equip pupils with the essential knowledge, skills, concepts, dispositions, attitudes, and values which enable them to adapt to and deal with a range of situations, challenges, and contexts. These capabilities are presented as seven

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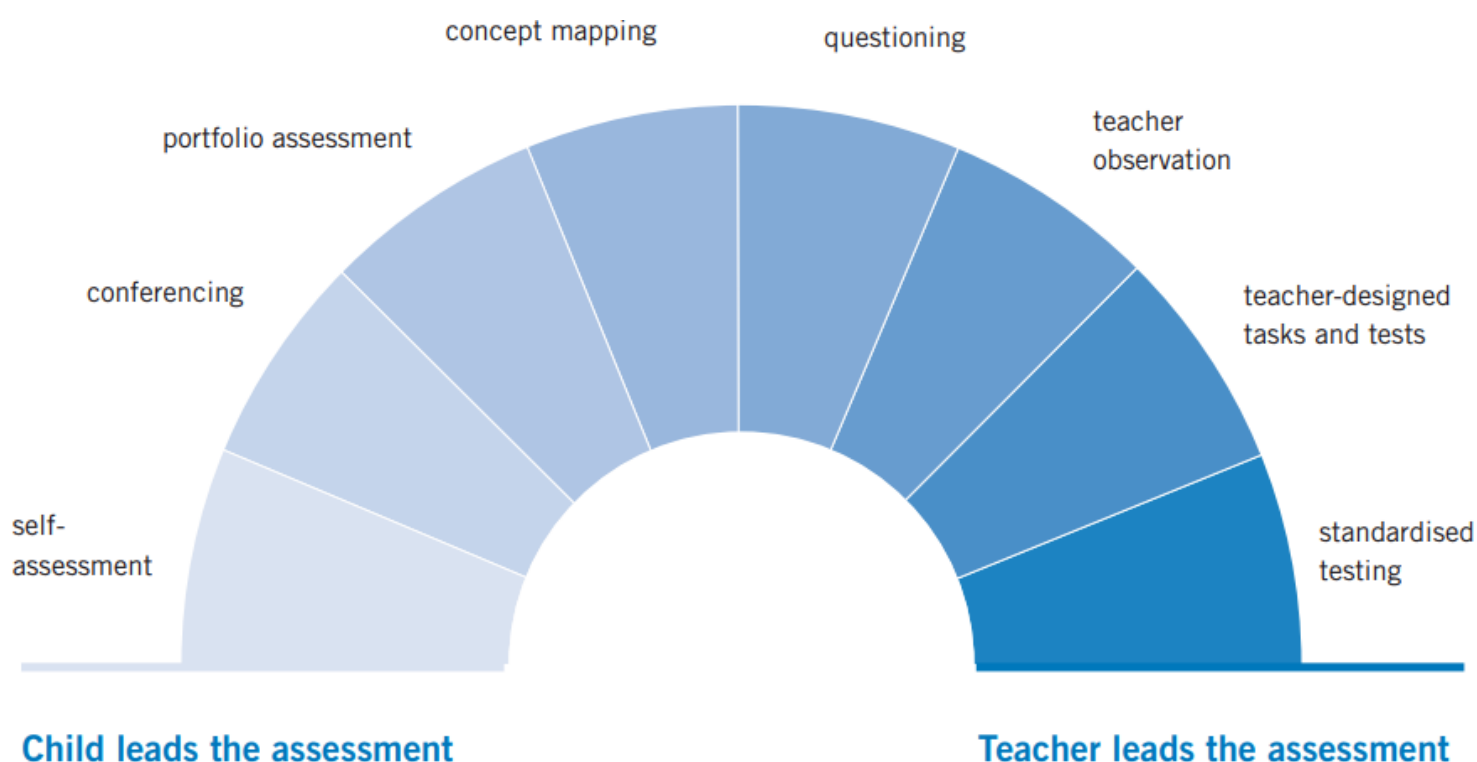
inextricably linked key competencies, namely: being well; being a digital learner; being mathematical; being a communicator and using language; being creative; being an active learner; and being an active citizen.

In developing a holistic view of each pupil not alone is their learning, progress, and achievement in the various subject areas across the Primary School Curriculum assessed, but so too is their attitude towards and participation in school-based learning activities. Similarly, pupils' social and emotional development, and their contribution to their classroom and school community are monitored over time.

Pupil progression in these domains is formally reported to families in both Parent-Teacher Meetings and in End-of-Year Reports.

ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

In each class in Scoil Mhuire a selection of assessment methods, chosen at the discretion of the teacher, will be used to help develop a holistic picture of learners at the individual and whole-class level. These assessments are ongoing, occurring before and during learning activities so that teaching enables and facilitates pupil progression. Some assessments, however, are used to capture pupils' knowledge and understanding of a particular topic which has been completed, or their mastery of a particular skill which has been taught. As such, assessment approaches used by teachers in Scoil Mhuire encompass both AfL and AoL, and range from pupil-led to teacher-led assessment events. These assessments enable the teacher to make professional judgements about pupils' learning and to effectively plan for pupils' progression.



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The assessment approaches outlined in the non-exhaustive list below are among those utilised in Scoil Mhuire. Established approaches are used frequently in all classrooms in Scoil Mhuire, while those approaches characterised as emerging are used with less consistency throughout the school. While there may be some variance in the specific approaches used, the underlying philosophy – that assessment is an ongoing, collaborative process which facilitates pupil progression – is consistent throughout the school.

	Established	Emerging
Learning Intentions & Success Criteria	<p>Learning intentions are shared with pupils in accessible language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WALT (junior) • learning intention (senior) <p>Success criteria is linked to learning intentions.</p> <p>Success criteria are shared with pupils in accessible language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WILF (junior) • success criteria (senior) <p>Success criteria are differentiated as appropriate.</p> <p>Where applicable, pupils are involved in identifying success criteria.</p> <p>Checklists and rubrics allow pupils to understand expectations for work completed independently.</p>	<p>Pupils are reminded of learning intentions throughout the lesson.</p> <p>Pupils are provided with opportunities to internalise learning intentions by being invited to restate them in their own words.</p> <p>Work samples are used to enable pupils develop a nose for quality.</p>
Questioning & Discussion	<p>Teacher questioning is used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elicit pupils’ prior knowledge • monitor pupils’ understanding of the topic <p>Open-ended questions are used to encourage critical thinking and facilitate discussion.</p> <p>Pupils are given thinking time before answering a question.</p>	<p>Incorrect responses are used to guide teaching and learning.</p> <p>Pupil-generated concept-maps, completed collaboratively or individually, give pupils the opportunity to explore their ideas and knowledge with peers.</p>

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	<p>Pupils are given the opportunity to explore their ideas with peers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think, Pair, Share • Brainstorming <p>Pupils are given the opportunity to explain their thinking, reasoning, and learning.</p> <p>Pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate a peer's responses to questions, as appropriate.</p>	
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>Feedback given to pupils by their teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is focused on the original learning intention(s) and success criteria • focuses only on one or two specified areas for improvement at any one time <p>Praise of pupils' work specifies the areas of strength within the work and the progress made.</p>	<p>Descriptive close-the-gap feedback is used to focus pupils' attention on the next step in their learning.</p> <p>Pupils are provided with information on their learning on a frequent basis rather than at the end of the week, unit of learning, month, or term.</p>
<p>Peer- & Self-Assessment</p>	<p>Lessons on new topics begin with pupils being invited to reflect on their prior learning and previous related knowledge.</p> <p>The following strategies and approaches allow pupils to monitor and assess their own learning and that of their peers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thumbs • Traffic lights • Two stars and a wish • Rubrics • KWL charts • WALT & learning intentions • WILF & success criteria 	<p>Pupils use each other as resources for learning, commenting on each other's work and discussing how it can be improved.</p> <p>Pupils have access to exemplar materials or mentor texts against which they can assess their learning.</p>

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	In compiling their Showcase Portfolios, pupils are formally involved in providing information about their learning successes to their families.	
Summative Assessment	<p>The following summative assessments are used to evaluate pupils' learning and plan for learner progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • end-of-unit maths assessments • teacher-designed tasks & tests • projects 	
Standardised Assessment	<p>Whole-class standardised testing occurs in Stages 2, 3, and 4 of primary school. Standardised assessment data allows us to monitor a pupil's achievement in literacy and numeracy relative to a national sample of their peers. The whole-class standardised assessments administered in Scoil Mhuire are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literacy (DPRT) • numeracy (DPMT) 	<p>Some internationally normed standardised assessments administered in Scoil Mhuire include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIST • BIAP • NVRT • YARC

ASSESSMENT FOLDER

In each classroom in Scoil Mhuire assessment folders are used as a dedicated place to gather, record, and store information on pupil learning, both at the individual and class level. The use of an assessment folder ensures that assessment data is easily accessible to teachers, families, and other relevant professionals.

At the discretion of the teacher, items – for example anecdotal records, work-samples, teacher-designed tests, and checklists – are added to the folder throughout the year. While some of these items need only be retained for the school year in question, others remain in the folder and comprise part of the handover information provided to the next teacher:

- Parent-Teacher Interview Sheets
- Standardised Assessment Data
- Classroom Support Plans
- My Thoughts About School (from Stages 3 and 4)

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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Assessment is an ongoing and collaborative process that facilitates pupils' progression throughout their time in Scoil Mhuire, consequently all members of the school's teaching staff share responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

While assessment for learner progression occurs in each classroom each day, in developing class and learner profiles at the start of the academic year the following specific duties are undertaken by staff. The assessments administered can help to identify pupils who might benefit from additional support in line with the *Continuum of Support* framework (2007).

CLASS TEACHER

At the beginning of the year Class Teachers administer a battery of assessments in the whole-class setting that are specifically selected for the year group. These assessments may include:

- My Thoughts About School
- Beginning of Year Maths Test
- One Minute Maths Test
- Spelling assessment

Data gathered through these assessments are interpreted alongside teacher observation, standardised assessment data, and handover information provided by the previous Class Teacher. These assessments help the Class Teacher to: develop an overview of the class; develop a profile of potential needs within the class; and plan effectively for learner progression. Where this assessment data indicates that a pupil may require additional support, they will be further assessed by a member of the SET Team (*see AEN Policy*).

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER (SET)

Guided by data generated in the classroom, and information passed along by the pupil's previous teacher(s) or their family, the SET will select and administer specific assessments in order to identify areas in which the pupil may require targeted support.

The nature of the pupil's need will indicate whether they access support at the level of Classroom Support, School Support, or School Support Plus. Similarly, the nature of the pupil's identified learning needs will determine the duration of support. The assessment data gathered is used to plan for learner progression and set appropriate targets for the pupil's support plan (*see AEN policy*).

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION FROM EXTERNAL PROFESSIONALS

Where families have engaged with external agencies or professionals, they may wish to provide a copy of the assessment or report to the school. Such information can be helpful in developing a programme of support for pupil progression. Where assessment data generated by external agencies or professionals is shared with the school, it is stored in the individual pupil's file in a locked filing cabinet.

STORING ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

While a pupils' End-of-Year Report Cards and standardised assessment data are stored electronically on Aladdin, other assessment data (such as that generated throughout the year and stored in a teacher's Assessment Folder) are kept only for a short period and destroyed or returned to the pupil at the end of the academic year (*see Scoil Mhuire Privacy Notice*).

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6. Appendices

APPENDIX A: INVENTORY OF ASSESSMENTS

Name of Assessment	Generates Information on:
Drumcondra Primary Reading Test	Literacy: vocabulary, reading comprehension
Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test	Literacy: spelling
YARC	Literacy: reading accuracy, reading rate, comprehension
WIAT-III	Literacy: comprehension, reading age, fluency
MIST	Literacy: early reading & writing
Alpha to Omega	Literacy: reading & spelling
Daniels & Diack	Literacy: spelling
Words Their Way	Literacy: spelling
Schonell Spelling	Literacy: spelling
Schonell Word Reading	Literacy: word-reading, word-attack, decoding
Non-Word Reading Test	Literacy: word-attack, decoding (phonological recoding)
Phonological Assessment Battery	Literacy: phonological processing
Jackson Phonics	Literacy: phonics
Dyslexia Portfolio	Literacy
ACE	Literacy: speech & language Sentence comprehension, inferential comprehension, naming, syntactic formulation, semantic decisions, non-literal comprehension, narrative propositions,
Primary School Assessment Kit	English as an Additional Language
NVRT	Reasoning: non-verbal reasoning, reasoning skills
The Dyscalculia Assessment	Numeracy: Diagnostic
Drumcondra Primary Maths Test	Numeracy
Westwood One Minute Number Facts	Numeracy: Tables
Graded Arithmetic-Math Test	Numeracy
My Thoughts About School	BESD

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7. Approval & Review

This policy was brought to the Board of Management for review and ratification in May 2025.

Initial Approval

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date

_____ 27th August, 2025 _____

Effective Date

_____ December 2028 _____

Review Date

