

St. Patrick's SNS, Corduff

Assessment Policy

Rationale

This policy was originally formulated by the teaching staff of St. Patrick's SNS in Spring 2015 and has been updated yearly so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. The P.D.S.T guidelines were used to assist in the drafting of this policy.

In order to ensure that all children in our school achieve to the best of their ability we believe it is imperative that any learning difficulties are identified at the earliest opportunity and that the school must put in place an appropriate response to their needs. An effective assessment policy ensures quality in education is central to this process of teaching and learning. Through assessment the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the short term and long term needs of the child and plans accordingly. Assessment assists communication to all parties involved in the child's education i.e. teacher and child, teacher and parent and teacher to teacher. It helps the child become more self-aware as a learner and develops the powers of self-assessment.

Aims:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor the learning processes
- To assist teachers long and short term planning
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis and to establish a firm link between assessment and decision making with regard to future strategies, content and methodologies in the classroom
- To describe strategies for assessment of pupils over as many areas of development as possible
- To emphasise the importance of early identification of pupils with specific numeracy and literacy problems through establishing relevant baseline data which in turn can be used to monitor achievement over time.

Policy Content:

Purpose of Assessment

- To inform planning for, and coverage of all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class / whole school level and in relation to national norms
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils / groups including the exceptionally able if applicable
- To monitor pupils progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils / groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work where feasible

Assessment of Learning

(1) The following are among some of the methods of informal assessment that are used in the school

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios & projects
- Checklists

(2) The above assessment methods are used across the whole school, at the discretion of individual teachers, depending on the requirements of individual pupils, class level or subject and parents are given feedback.

(3) Depending on the subject and the class level and the needs of individual pupils, teachers may assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples, projects etc.

(4) The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment

(5) Examples of teacher designed tasks / tests

- Weekly spelling test
- Regular end of topic assessment in maths including a revision section
- Assessments in Irish / English / maths designed by teachers

(6) Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work / progress. Examples include the use of

- KWL
- Rubrics
- Self-editing / drafting / redrafting
- Self-evaluation
- Conferencing

This data will be stored in teacher's assessment folders / children's copies.

Standardised Testing:

All classes are tested each year. Up to Spring 2021, we administered the Drumcondra English and Maths Tests. We changed in Spring 2022 to the online Drumcondra English and Maths Tests for all class levels (3rd - 6th). New admissions after September will be tested

shortly after arrival if scores cannot be gained from previous schools. Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher in the assessment folder with a copy held in the administration office.

Results of standardised tests are reported to parents using the end of year report card and at parent / teacher meetings. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents.

Priority for receiving supplementary teaching will be given to children who score a percentile less than 10. These guidelines in test results are flexible and the professional judgement of classroom teachers will be a crucial part of the selection process.

All third class children will be administered the NVRT in September by the learning support team. These scores, along with their previous standardised test scores, and discussion with previous teachers and learning support team will determine who is eligible for learning support.

On acceptance of LS parents sign a consent form.

The learning support teacher may then administer one or all of the following tests to these children:

Mathematics:

1. Westwood One Minute Basic Number Facts Tests
2. Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT 4) Math Computation subtest; part 1: Oral Computation, part 2: Math Computation

English:

1. Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA II)
2. Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)
3. WRAT 4 subtests:
 - Word Reading
 - Sentence Comprehension
 - Spelling
4. Non Verbal Reasoning Test
5. YORK Assessment for Reading Comprehension

Special Educational Needs

Outside Therapists

S< Assessments

OT Assessments

Physiotherapy Assessments

Play Therapy Assessments

CAMHS Assessments

We use guidelines from these assessments to set targets for progression of skills on an individual basis.

Psychological Assessments:

Each September a cohort of children will be identified for assessment / observation that academic year. The class teacher and / or Principal meet parents & a consent form is signed by the parents if the child is targeted for psychological assessment.

The Principal will organise the assessment.

Children who present with possible SLT / OT needs will be identified by teachers to the Principal. The Principal and / or the class teacher will advise parents re: getting a medical referral from their G.P.

The results of assessments will guide the drafting of a SSF for the pupil if appropriate. It determines the level of intervention required.

The Principal will ensure that details of relevant reports are transferred with all 6th class pupils on their transfer to Second Level Education.

Recording Results of Assessment:

All teachers have an assessment folder with subject specific assessment documents to be completed during the year. Information will be passed from teacher to teacher. Also included in this folder are:

- list of children who attended LS, EAL, Resource
- List of children with psychological reports
- List of children who attended the school counsellor
- Results of standardised tests (Drumcondra Maths and English)
- Report cards
- List of children with Irish exemptions
- Important Information sheet

End of year assessment results along with teacher observation will determine who will receive LS for the following year.

The standardised test results will be given to the BOM to review overall school standards in Literacy / Numeracy. (No individual results will be identifiable)

Assessment of Learning and Assessment for Learning:

As a school we are developing good practice in assessing learning. Results are used:

- To select children for necessary interventions if required
- To measure the progress of the children's learning

- To evaluate for planning targets of class teachers and SEN teachers
- As a guide for professional development
- To guide the school to select target areas of various subjects for further school development planning
- To report to parents
- To highlight good practice and school strengths
- To keep a clear focus on good teaching and learning
- To inform the BOM and DES of levels attained in Numeracy & Literacy

Pupils may receive an exemption from the study of Irish according to circular 0054/2022 if:

- **they have moved from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language and** who is not less than 12 years of age on the day of their enrolment¹ or re-enrolment or who is enrolling following the completion of the full course of primary education recognised by another state.
- they present with significant literacy difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in all subjects/across the curriculum and over time **AND** who, at the time of the application for exemption presents with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile. Normally, pupils availing of an exemption under this category should be encouraged to engage with the study of oral Irish language for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the *Primary Language Curriculum* and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time.
- **A pupil who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life**
- It is recognised that there is a small cohort of pupils who have a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to their participation and engagement in their learning and school life. In the case of these pupils, consideration may need to be given to adjusting the range of learning experiences to ensure that their needs are met and that they may engage purposefully in their learning in school. In very exceptional circumstances, this means that consideration may need to be given to exempting them from the study of Irish.

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil:

- **they** have at least reached second class
AND
- **they** experience a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a very significant and continuing barrier to his/her participation and engagement in his/her learning and school life
AND
- **(iii)** whose school has substantial written evidence that these needs persist despite targeted and individualised Student Support Plans to address those needs
AND
- **(iv)** whose school has substantial written evidence that these individualised Student Support Plans have been implemented over not less than two school years, and

¹ For the purposes of this Circular where pupils enrol in the final 2 months of an academic year, their enrolment/re-enrolment will be considered to take place on the first day of the following academic year.

have been monitored and reviewed by the school in collaboration with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil

- **AND**
- **(v)** who has been given every reasonable opportunity to participate in the learning of Irish in mainstream classes for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the *Primary Language Curriculum* and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time
- **AND**
- **(vi)** the principal is satisfied that the granting of an exemption is in the overall best interests of the pupil concerned.
- Normally, this will mean that the pupil will be expected to engage with the study of Irish at least to the end of fifth class. However, in very exceptional circumstances, where the principal is satisfied that an exemption is warranted to address the high level of multiple and persistent needs of the pupil, and certifies that all of the conditions in **(i)** to **(vi)** above have been met, it may be granted at an earlier stage, but in no case may this be earlier than second class.

- **A pupil in a recognised² special school or class or who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class or who has a recommendation³ and has been deemed eligible⁴ for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school**
- **(i)** Where a pupil is currently enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school or who has previously been enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school and who is transitioning to mainstream provision, that pupil is automatically entitled to an exemption from the study of Irish without an application.
- **OR**
- **(ii)** Where a pupil has a recommendation and has been deemed eligible for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school an application for an exemption from the study of Irish will be required.

- Normally, pupils availing of an exemption under **(i) OR (ii)** of this category should be encouraged to engage with the study of oral Irish language for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the *Primary Language Curriculum* and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time.

- **A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history**
- An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history.

² A recognised special school/class is a primary or post-primary level class sanctioned and resourced by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). See <https://ncse.ie/> for a list of such schools/classes

³ The recommendation for the pupil to be placed in a special school or special class meets the specifications for such placement as determined by the NCSE and the pupil has been deemed eligible and/or is awaiting the recommended placement.

⁴ See Exemptions from the Study of Irish: Guidelines for Primary Schools (English-medium), DE (2022).

Success Criteria:

This policy is considered successful if;

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in a staged approach
- Procedures are clear, with roles and responsibilities defined
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities:

Mainstream, Special Education Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in place Stage 1 interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team/Learning Support Team. The Principal assumes a primary role at Stage 3 when a Psychological Assessment may be required. Parents have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must be always kept open.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Patrick's S.N.S. at its meeting on _____. Parents may view this policy on the school website or by appointment with the Principal.

_____ Date:_____

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Review Timetable:

This policy will be reviewed each year and amended as necessary.

References:

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

www.sess.ie

Working Together to make a Difference for Children – NEPS