

# **St. Patrick's SNS, Corduff**

## **Assessment Policy**

**(Reviewed: May 2025)**

### **1. Rationale**

This policy outlines a consistent, transparent approach to assessment across St. Patrick's SNS. Originally developed in 2015, it is reviewed annually in line with the Department of Education (DoE) guidelines and PDST support materials.

Assessment plays a key role in supporting high-quality teaching and learning. It allows for early identification of learning needs, informs teaching approaches, and facilitates communication between teachers, pupils, and parents. It also enables pupils to take ownership of their learning and fosters skills in self-assessment and reflection.

### **2. Aims**

- To enhance and support pupil learning
- To inform short-term and long-term teacher planning
- To ensure consistency and coordination of assessment practices school-wide
- To guide effective differentiation and targeted support
- To support early identification of learning difficulties and monitor progress over time

### **3. Purpose of Assessment**

Assessment in St. Patrick's SNS serves the following purposes:

- To inform curriculum planning at individual, class and whole-school level
- To gather data to monitor progress and track attainment at class, whole school and in relation to national norms.
- To identify learning strengths and needs, including those of exceptionally able pupils
- To inform the selection and implementation of support interventions

- To maintain up-to-date records of individual pupil progress
- To support pupil engagement in their own learning

## **4. Assessment Methods**

### **4.1 Assessment of Learning (AoL)**

Assessment of learning is used to evaluate pupil achievement at a particular point in time and includes:

- **Teacher observation and questioning**
- **Teacher-designed tests and tasks**
- **Work samples and portfolios**
- **Pupil self-assessment tools** (e.g., KWL charts, checklists and rubrics, self-editing, conferencing, traffic lights)

Each curricular area includes subject-specific assessment strategies. Teachers retain assessment records in individual assessment folders, which are passed on annually.

### **4.2 Assessment for Learning (AfL)**

AfL is embedded in daily teaching practice and includes:

- Setting learning intentions/objectives and success criteria
- Using feedback to improve learning
- Promoting pupil reflection and self-evaluation
- Differentiation and flexible grouping

## **5. Standardised Testing**

Standardised tests are administered annually (3rd–6th class) using the **Drumcondra Online Tests in English and Maths**.

- New entrants with no prior results are assessed within one month of enrolment.
- STEN scores are communicated to parents in written reports and at parent-teacher meetings.

- Pupils scoring below the 10th percentile are prioritised for supplementary teaching. However, this guideline is flexible and the professional judgement of teachers is critical in decision making around supplementary teaching.
- **Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests (NVRT)** are administered to all 3rd class pupils.

Supplementary diagnostic testing may include:

- **Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA II)**
- **Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)**
- **Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT 4)**
- **YORK Reading Comprehension**
- **Each class will also administer the Westwood Basic Number Facts Tests twice yearly**

## **6. Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

### **6.1 Additional Assessments**

Where appropriate, external reports (e.g., SLT, OT, CAMHS, Psychological) are used to inform **Student Support Plans (SSPs)** or **Personal Pupil Plans (PPPs)**. Targets are collaboratively set and reviewed regularly.

### **6.2 Psychological Assessments**

Pupils requiring further diagnostic evaluation may be referred for **NEPS assessments or other agencies for diagnostic assessments**, with parental consent. Assessment outcomes inform decisions regarding staged interventions (in line with the **Continuum of Support Framework**).

The Principal ensures that all relevant reports accompany pupils transferring to post-primary schools.

## **7. Irish Exemption Policy**

In line with **Circular 0054/2022**, an exemption from the study of Irish may be granted under the following conditions:

- Pupils with no previous exposure to Irish who are over 12 years of age upon enrolment
- Pupils with significant and persistent literacy difficulties scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised reading/spelling assessments, despite differentiated and

targeted support over time

- Pupils with a high level of multiple and persistent needs, supported by two years of monitored and reviewed **individualised support plans**, and for whom exemption is in their best interest
- Pupils previously enrolled in or eligible for enrolment in a **special class or special school**
- Pupils whose parent(s)/guardian(s) are **diplomatic or consular representatives**
- Pupils have at least reached 2nd class
- The Principal and teachers are satisfied that the granting of an exemption is appropriate

All exemptions are subject to proper documentation and are formally approved by the Principal in accordance with DoE procedures.

## 8. Recording and Reporting

Each teacher maintains an **Assessment Folder** including:

- Standardised test results (Drumcondra English and Maths)
- LS, EAL, and Learning Support records
- Irish exemptions (also on Google Drive)
- End-of-year report cards
- Pupil notes and teacher observations on an 'Important Information' sheet

Whole-school standardised test data is shared in aggregate form with the **Board of Management (BoM)** to inform school improvement planning.

## 9. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Class Teachers:** Implement classroom-based assessments and Stage 1 interventions
- **Special Education Teachers:** Collaborate on Stages 2 and 3 of the Continuum of Support
- **Principal:** Oversees policy implementation, referrals, exemptions, and liaises with external services
- **Parents/Guardians:** Are actively involved at each stage of the assessment and support process

## 10. Success Criteria

This policy will be deemed effective if:

- Early identification and intervention occurs consistently
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood
- Assessment data informs planning and teaching
- Information transfers smoothly between teachers and across class levels
- Pupils are actively involved in their own learning

## 11. Review and Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ . It is reviewed annually, or as necessary, in response to changes in national guidance. A copy is available on the school website or on request from the Principal.

**Signed:**

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Chairperson, Board of Management

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## References

- Department of Education Circular 0054/2022
- Assessment Guidelines: NCCA ([www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie))
- Special Educational Needs – A Continuum of Support (NEPS)
- Learning Support Guidelines (DES, 2000)
- [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)