



Assessment and Recording Policy

St. Patrick's National School

Colgagh

Calry

Co. Sligo

Policy Title	Assessment and Recording Policy
Version	001
Approval Date	24th October 2022
Revision Date	October 2026

Introduction

This policy was originally drafted at a planning meeting during Croke Park hours. The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 23rd October 2022.

Policy Rationale

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a whole school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

Relationship to School Ethos

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective Assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that relative success, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aims / objectives of the policy are to:

- facilitate improved pupil learning
- create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers
- coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.

Principles

1. Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole Curriculum and learning opportunities. The main purpose of assessment must be to facilitate progress in a pupil's learning.

2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.
3. The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organization, which encourages children to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group.
4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the Curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.
5. We recognize the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success, which encourages further study.
6. In addition to normal assessment, opportunities are taken to record significant points in a child's development, such as:
 - a moment of 'breakthrough' in understanding
 - surprises and unusual reactions
 - interesting examples of strategies for mental calculation
 - difficulties encountered and possible reasons for them.
7. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
8. Assessment of behaviour and performance gradually builds up into a profile for each pupil over his school career. This is a working document for the use of teaching staff only. It is not an official school record. The profiles are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the pupil's current classroom or SET room in the event that a child is receiving learning support.
9. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should not be administratively burdensome.

Policy Content

This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils including the exceptionally gifted so that adequate strategies are in place early enough to facilitate remediation. These strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two-way communication between parents and

teachers, modification of teacher programmes, and Student Support Plans. See also SEN Policy.

Formal Assessment

Classes from 1st to 6th are assessed in May/June each year. The Sigma Maths test, MICRA T test and Drumcondra English Tests (3rd class only) are administered in May/June of each year to all children except infant classes. The MIST is administered in senior infants and the NRIT together with the NVRT are administered in 2nd class (See Appendix 1 for testing schedule). Further standardised, diagnostic and screening tests are carried out throughout the year by the Learning Support Team on specific children as need arises.

Informal Assessment

Homework and classwork are marked and comments are made as appropriate. Marks and especially grades are not usually given. Work is ticked to indicate that the teacher has looked at it and a written comment to indicate sources of error, good points etc. may be made. Mistakes are corrected and editing symbols may be used see Appendix 2.

Class work

Informal assessment is ongoing during all lessons in response to oral work, team work, skill development, project work etc.

Homework

Homework is checked both formally and informally in a routine way.

Primary to Secondary

For pupils leaving the school, up to date records are passed on by the 6th class teacher to the new school. In the case of some individuals, the 6th class teacher will liaise informally with the secondary school to discuss or highlight any additional information that may be considered important to aid transition.

Class-based Testing

The school administers Micra T, Sigma T and the New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered towards the end of the third term by the class teacher. STen, Standard and Percentile Rankings scores are recorded on the class Record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the results folder in the SEN filing cabinet. The SET team analyse the results in June to determine allocation of resources to pupils in September.

Pupils in Senior Infants are assessed using the MIST test and some Junior Infant pupils may receive selected tests depending on needs. As part of our early intervention policy, Junior and Senior Infant children are assessed using Standardised and diagnostic tests by the SET team throughout the year. Children in other classes are similarly assessed throughout the year by the SET team when deemed necessary.

Following DES guidelines all standardized test scores will be orally given to parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher meetings and STEN scores will be included in the end of year reports.

Assessment

The school policy on Psychological Assessments lists all diagnostic tests used by the school. Such tests are administered by the Special Education Teachers following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents / guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing /psychological assessment. Parents are advised of the outcome and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a consent form is completed. The Principal will facilitate such an assessment happening. A record will also be kept where parents do not consent to the involvement of outside agencies.

A comprehensive list of assessments/tests can be found at Appendix 4. The following are some of the more commonly used assessments and tests.

- Micra -T
- Drumcondra Reading Test
- Sigma -T
- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)
- Non Verbal Reasoning Test (NVRT)
- Neale Analysis

These tests are administered individually or on a whole class basis. The MIST is administered on a whole class basis after Easter of each year, while other tests are administered individually by SETs when deemed appropriate. Assessment is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per circulars 24/03 and 02/05.

If stages 1 and 2 of the staged approach (See Appendix 3) fail to deliver adequate intervention, the class teacher/Principal will contact the parents for permission to secure a Psychological Assessment for their child (see Psychological Assessment policy). At present there are a limited number of assessments offered each year to the school by NEPS. Following a discussion of the SET caseload with the NEPS Psychologist, the SET team and the principal, an order of priority will be determined and assessments will be requested as deemed necessary. Assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it SET support hours and a School Support Plan. The most common forms of assessment used in the classroom are teacher observation, teacher designed tests, projects and homework. These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers. Records of teacher-designed tests are kept by the individual teachers and communicated to parents at the Parent-teacher meeting/end of year report. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing.

Recording

Each teacher has a class file which is stored in a filing cabinet in their current classroom. Standardised test scores are usually stored on a class record sheet with a copy in the SET results folder and one in the classroom file in the pupils' current classroom. Information is passed on from teacher to teacher. Children receiving extra support in school have a separate SSP (Student Support Plan) file which

contains their IPLP/IEP/Contract/Reports from Outside Agencies. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data (see Data Protection Policy and Appendix 5 for Data Retention Periods).

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if:

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in staged approach
- Procedures are clear and roles and responsibilities are defined
- The Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities

Special Education teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education 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.

Implementation

This policy will be fully implemented by 31st January 2023.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24th October 2022 and communicated to parents thereafter.

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed in 4 years time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed: _____ (Chairperson) **Date:** _____

References

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

www.sess.ie

Working together to make a difference for children - NEPs

Appendix 1

Testing Schedule

Test	Class	Month
NRIT	2 nd	May
MIST	Senior Infants	May
Nfer Nelson	2 nd	May
Nfer Nelson	3 rd	May
Maths Sigma-T	All classes	June 9 th /10 th
English Micra-T	All classes apart from 3 rd	May 25 th , 26 th , 27 th
English Drumcondra	3 rd Class	May 25 th , 26 th , 27 th

Appendix 2
Editing Symbols

Sp.	Spellings
Gr.	Grammar
C.	Capital Letters
No C.	No capital letters
Str.	Structure of sentence
^	Something left out
“”	Speech Marks
?	Think again
*New P.	New Paragraph
*New Ch.	New Chapter
/	Make a space
↪	Join words

Appendix 3

Identification of Needs through the Continuum of Support Process - (Primary Guidelines, p.9-10)

<p>Classroom Support</p> <p>* Checklists are available in the Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers</p>	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Parental consultation· Teacher observation records· Teacher-designed measures /assessments· Basic needs checklist *· Learning environment checklist*· Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist· Literacy and numeracy tests· Screening tests of language skills <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
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School Support

* Checklists are available in the Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers

At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:

- Teacher observation records
- Teacher-designed measures / assessments
- Parent and pupil interviews
- Learning environment checklist
- Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy
- Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures
- Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition. A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review

<p>School Support Plus</p> <p>* Checklists are available in the Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers</p>	<p>This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures· Parent and pupil interviews· Functional assessment· Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc. <p>Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation</p>
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Appendix 4

List of tests	
Standardised	Diagnostic/Checklist
Cognitive	
Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)	
Non-Verbal Intelligence Test (NVIT)	
Literacy & Pre-reading	
Neale Analysis Micra -T Drumcondra Reading Test Diagnostic Spelling Test	Quest MIST Dyslexia Screening Test (DST) PHAB Jackson Phonics Sound Linkage Assessment Sounds Abound Pre/Post Tests Aston Index Aston profiles Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
Language	
Test of Reception of Grammar TROG Peabody Picture Test Renfrew Language Scales	Language for Thinking Drumcondra profiles
Numeracy	
Maths Assessment for Learning and Tracking (MALT) Sigma -T	(Early Number) Maths Recovery Checklist (Robert Wright) Profile of Maths Skills Diagnostic Test. (Norman France).
Behavioural / Emotional	
	'Behavioural, Emotional & Social difficulties' - Assessment Documents

Appendix 5

Data Retention Periods for schools

Pupil Related	Retention Periods
School Register/Roll Books	Indefinitely
Enrolment Forms	Hold until Pupil is 25 Years
Disciplinary notes	Never Destroy
Test Results – Standardised	Hold until pupil is 25 Years
Psychological Assessments etc.	Never Destroy
SEN Files/IEPS	Never Destroy
Accident Reports	Never Destroy
Child Protection Reports/Records	Never Destroy
S.29 Appeals	Never Destroy
Interview Records	
Interview Board	18 months from close of competition plus 6 months in case Equality Tribunal needs to inform school that a claim is being taken
Marking Scheme	
Board of Management notes (for unsuccessful candidates)	

Staff Records	
<p>Contract of Employment</p> <p>Teaching Council Registration</p> <p>Vetting Records</p> <p>Accident/Injury at work Reports</p>	<p>Retention for duration of employment + 7 years</p> <p>(6 years to make a claim against the school plus 1 year for proceedings to be served on school)</p>
BoM Records	
<p>BOM Agenda and Minutes</p> <p>CC TV Recordings</p> <p>Payroll & Taxation</p> <p>Invoices/receipts</p> <p>Audited Accounts</p>	<p>Indefinitely</p> <p>28 days normally. In the event of criminal investigation – as long as is necessary</p> <p>Revenue require a 6-year period after the end of the tax year</p> <p>Retain for 7 Years</p> <p>Indefinitely</p>

Why, in certain circumstances, does the Data Protection Commission recommend the holding of records until the former pupil has attained 25 years of age?

The reasoning is that a pupil reaches the age of majority at 18 years and that there should be a 6-year limitation period in which it would be possible to take a claim against a school, plus 1 year for proceedings to be served on a school. The Statute of Limitations imposes a limit on a right of action so that after a prescribed period any action can be time barred.