

St. Laurence O' Toole's Special School

Assessment Policy

Scope of Assessment Policy

The term 'Assessment refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

Aims and Objectives:

The primary aims of the policy are;

- 1. To facilitate improved pupil learning**
- 2. To create a procedure for monitoring achievement**
- 3. To track learning processes which assist the long and short- term planning of teachers**
- 4. To explain the rationale and importance of assessment**
- 5. To list the different types of assessment**

Policy Rationale:

The core of this policy is that all children should experience success at school Assessments enable the teacher to monitor a student's progress and make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify and adapt teaching strategies and learning activities as appropriate. To gather as much information as possible, this school combines information obtained from Psychological Reports which accompany the students and from assessments, both formal and informal, that are carried out in the school.

Assessments help to identify appropriate subject levels for students in the Junior Cycle

Assessments help to identify students who may be in need of extra supports to sit exam subjects in the Junior Cycle.

Assessments give feedback to students about their learning.

Relationship to School Ethos:

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each student. An effective Assessment Policy identifies the learning needs of each student so that adequate strategies are put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved.

Policy Content:

This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all students so that adequate strategies are put in place for each student. These strategies may include pupil self-assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and individual education plans.

Types of Assessment

Standardised Testing:

Because of the age profile of the students, the school does not use standardised testing to obtain Standard Scores or Sten Scores. The school uses the MiCTA-T Reading Test as an initial test to obtain a reading age, when the student first enrolls in the school.

The School uses the WRAT IV, a test recognized and accepted by the State Examinations Commission, in the application of Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Examinations

Diagnostic Assessment:

Because of the extreme negative attitude to testing the school does not formally use diagnostic testing. The school obtains relevant information from educational psychological assessments to inform the student profile.

The school uses different checklists which summarize the various skills that would be expected to be covered in primary education, to ascertain what the student knows and where the gaps are in basic literacy and numeracy.

The checklists in literacy are based around Pre- reading, Reading and Writing.

The checklists in numeracy are a summary of the strands from Early Mathematical Activities up to Data.

Psychological Assessment:

Most of our students have had psychological assessments carried out prior to enrolling in the school. Some of these assessments have been psycho educational assessments carried out by NEPS. Some have been carried out privately by educational psychologists. Many students have been clinically assessed in the Child And Mental Health Services. The school uses information from these assessments for the students' profiles.

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

Formative assessment refers to a wide variety of methods that the teachers use to conduct in process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs and progress. Formative assessment is ongoing and involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding on the next steps to ensure successful outcomes. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to the students and students' feedback to the teachers.

Examples of Assessment for Learning (AFL) Strategies used for Formative Learning in St. Laurence O' Toole's are:

Target setting

Peer/ Self Assessments

Group Work

In-Class information

Observations

Effective Question

Reflection

Recording:

Summative Assessment (Assessment of learning)

Summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition and academic achievement at the end of an instructional period. It aims to provide a summary of the achievement to the learner.

Examples of Summative Assessments used in St. Laurence O' Toole's are:

Reviews

Mock Junior Cert Exams

Junior Cert Exams

J.C.S.P. Statements

Classroom -Based Assessments in subjects for Junior Cycle.

Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses the student using the specific tasks set out in the subject specification. The tasks are clearly described, as are the criteria for assessment, to support the teacher's judgement. The criteria are found in the Features of Quality linked to each Classroom-Based Assessment. Although the assessment is similar to the formative assessment that occurs every day in class, in the case of Classroom-Based Assessment the teacher's judgement is recorded for Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR), and is used in the school's reporting to parents and students.

Assessment Task

The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time, which is not marked by the class teacher, but is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based

State Exams.

The school will support students in preparation for the Junior Cycle State Exams. We will ensure that the students are fully informed of the practices and procedures necessary for these exams. The school will post an individual exam timetable to each student's home. The school will make sure that every student receives any supports to which they are entitled through the Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Examinations section of the Department of Education and Skills.

Junior Certificate for Schools Programme.(JCSP)

All students in St. Laurence O' Toole's Special School participate in JCSP. The learning targets are used for planning for each student. Profiling is used for each student and each student has an individual JCSP Folder where they will keep examples of their best work. Each student receives a final Profile in their final year of school.

Profiling is the process of gathering positive information about what the student has achieved and recording what the student can do. Through profiling a student can gain recognition for subject work completed in preparation for the Junior Certificate exam and also for skills and abilities which they may have developed and which may not be directly examinable in that exam. The Student Profile Handbook contains a bank of learning targets arranged into statements that reflect areas of the syllabi of the Junior Certificate. The profile system consists of over 100 statements. There are two types of statements: subject-based statements and cross-curricular statements.

Subject-based statements reflect many of the aims and objectives of the Junior Certificate subject syllabi. Cross-curricular statements usually refer to knowledge, ability or skills required by students to be successful learners but not directly examined in the Junior Certificate Examinations. Through cross-curricular statements students receive certification for a wide range of their achievements at Junior Cycle in addition to certification for their academic success.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

Date: _____

It will be reviewed in 2022