Assessment Policy

Introduction
The staff of Knockloughrim Primary School believe that effective assessment provides information to improve learning and teaching. Assessment is an integral part of the learning, teaching and planning processes within our learning community.

The purpose and principles of assessment
Assessment is how our pupils recognise their achievement and make progress, and how our teachers shape and personalise their teaching. This ensures our school designs a curriculum around the needs, capabilities and aspirations of our pupils, and use assessment to inform planning and strengthen learning. It helps the teacher enhance their skills and judgements.

'Assessment which is explicitly designed to promote learning is the simple, most powerful tool we have for both raising standards and empowering lifelong learners.' Paul Black and Dylan William; Inside the Black Box 1998

The following key principles underpin successful assessment practice and are designed to help our school evaluate assessment practice and consider what the experience of assessment is like for our pupils:

- The learner is at the heart of assessment
- Assessment needs to provide a view of the whole learner
- Assessment is integral to the teaching and learning cycle
- Assessment includes reliable judgments about how learners are doing in relation, where appropriate, to relevant data.

In order to fulfil these principles, it is our aim that:
- The **assessment should be valid** – this ensures that assessment tasks and associated criteria effectively measure pupil attainment of the intended learning outcomes to the appropriate level.
- The **assessment should be reliable and consistent** – this requires clear and consistent processes for the setting, marking and moderation of tasks/tests.
- **Information about assessment should be explicit, accessible and transparent** – clear, accurate, consistent and timely information on assessment tasks and procedures should be made available to pupils, staff, principal, parents and governors.
- **Assessment should be inclusive and equitable** – without compromising academic standards, inclusive and equitable assessment are tailored so as to ensure that tasks and procedures do not disadvantage any group or individual (such as those with Special Educational Needs).
- **Assessment should be an integral part of our curriculum and should relate directly to the learning intentions and outcomes** – assessment tasks should reflect the nature of the curriculum, but should also ensure that pupils have the opportunity to develop a range of generic skills and capabilities.
- **The amount of assessed work should be manageable** - the schedule of tasks and the amount of assessed work required should provide a reliable and valid profile of achievement without overloading the staff or the pupils.
- **Formative and summative assessment should be included -** formative and summative assessment should be incorporated into tasks to ensure that the purposes of assessment are adequately addressed (see glossary of Terms and Abbreviations).
- **Timely feedback that promotes learning and facilitates improvement should be an integral part of the assessment process** – pupils are entitled to feedback on submitted formative assessment tasks, and on summative tasks where appropriate.
- **Staff development and training should include assessment** – all those involved in the assessment of pupils must be competent in undertaking their roles and responsibilities.

Assessment in Knockloughrim Primary School

Assessment **for** learning, which seeks to improve learning as it is occurring, and Assessment **of** learning, which assesses what has been learnt at the end of a block of teaching, forms the basis of our assessment practice.

a) _Assessment for Learning (AfL)_
In our school we seek to integrate the practice of AfL into our daily learning and teaching. The NI Curriculum embraces the principles of 'Assessment for Learning' by placing formative assessment at the heart of the learning and teaching cycle. The emphasis is on improvement, raising achievement in pupils' learning and celebrating success. 'Assessment for Learning' has the potential to make a powerful contribution to the central aim of the NI Curriculum by empowering learners and enabling them to realise their full potential.

Why do we use Assessment for Learning?
Assessment for Learning focuses on the gap between where a learner is in their learning and where they need to be, that is, the desired goal. This can be achieved through processes such as sharing criteria with learners, effective questioning and feedback.

AfL is conducted during day-to-day classroom practice in Knockloughrim and takes place during learning. It also gives pupils an active role in the assessment process. Pupils work with the teacher to determine what is being learned and to identify what the next steps should be. Both parties then use feedback (which includes information on how the pupils are learning, their progress, the nature of their understanding and the difficulties they are having) to improve the learning.
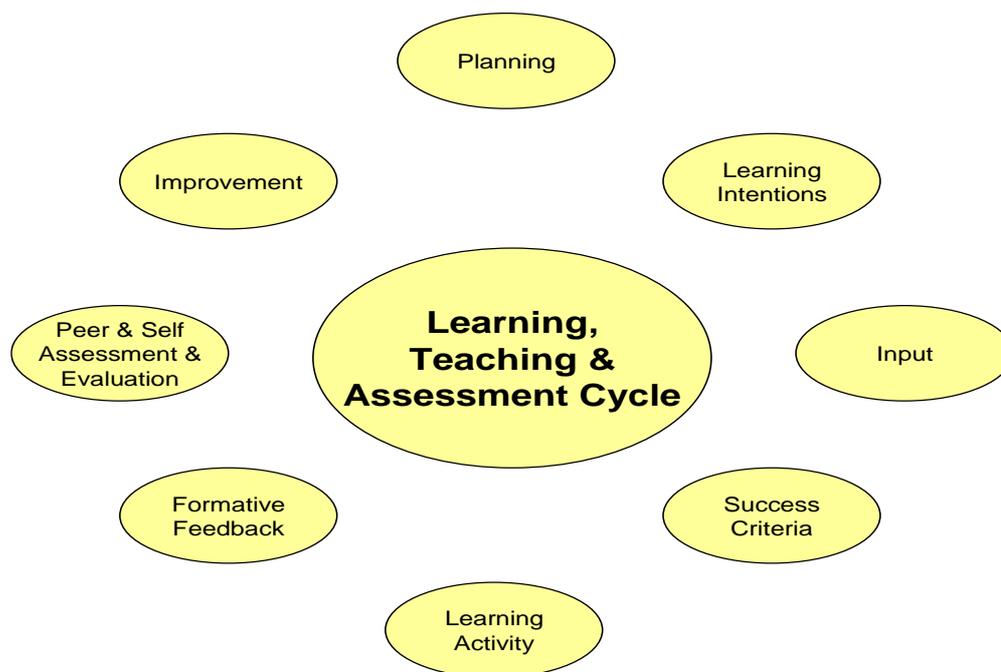
In Assessment for Learning there is a high emphasis on transferable learning; assessment becomes a much more transparent process because it is based on critical information that is shared with learners; and learners are able to take responsibility for their own learning and, eventually, for their own assessment, too. It is not something extra of 'bolted on' that we have to do. Rather, it neatly integrates with our existing classroom practice. AfL involves the following key actions:

- sharing learning intentions (WALT-We Are Learning To)
- sharing and negotiating success criteria (WILF- What I'm Looking For)
- giving feedback to pupils (e.g. verbal or '2 stars and a wish')
- effective questioning
- encouraging pupils to assess and evaluate their own and other's work. (Self and Peer Assessment)

Black and William, 1998, define Assessment for Learning as, "_all those activities undertaken by teachers and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged._"

Learners learn best when:
- they understand clearly what they are trying to learn and what is expected of them
- they are given feedback about the quality of their work and what they can do to make it better
- they are given advice about how to go about making improvements
- they are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next and who can give them help.

Learning, Teaching & Assessment Cycle

- Planning
- Improvement
- Learning Intentions
- Peer & Self Assessment & Evaluation
- Input
- Formative Feedback
- Success Criteria
- Learning Activity

b)Assessment of Learning

Although assessment forms an integral part of learning and teaching on a daily basis, there are times when children are assessed formally in Knockloughrim Primary School. Assessment of learning involves working with the range of available evidence that enables staff and the school assessment committee to measure pupils' progress. The following methods are used to measure pupil progress:

PRE SCHOOL (nursery / playgroup)	Information which is formally received prior to starting Knockloughrim • PRE-SCHOOL TRANSITION ASSESSMENT
YEAR 1	• BPVS – BRITISH PICTURE VOCABULARY SCREENING TEST (where appropriate)
YEAR 2	• Single Word Spelling Test
YEAR 3	• GL Progress Test Maths 7 • GL Progress Test English 7 • New Group Reading Test • Single Word Spelling Test
YEAR 4	• GL Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT) 4 • GL Progress Test Maths 8 • GL Progress Test English 8 • New Group Reading Test • Single Word Spelling Test • END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENT UNITS (LEVELLING)
YEAR 5	• GL Progress Test Maths 9 • GL Progress Test English 9 • New Group Reading Test • Single Word Spelling Test
YEAR 6	• GL Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT) 6 • GL Progress Test Maths 10 • GL Progress Test English 10 • New Group Reading Test • Single Word Spelling Test
YEAR 7	• GL Progress Test Maths 11 • GL Progress Test English 11

	• New Group Reading Test • Single Word Spelling Test • END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENT UNITS (LEVELLING)
BASED ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE ABOVE, THERE WILL BE TIMES WHEN THE SENCO MAY TEST PUPILS INDIVIDUALLY USING THE FOLLOWING FORMAL ASSESSMENT TESTS:	
S.E.N.C.O	• GL Dyslexia & Dyscalculia Screener • York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)

Further information on these tests can be accessed at https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/

Judgements about pupils' learning need to be dependable. This means that:
- they are **valid** (based on sound criteria)
- they are **reliable** (accuracy of assessment and practice)
- they are **comparable** (they stand up when compared to judgements in other aspects of school or other schools).

Assessment at Foundation Stage

The diverse feature of our ongoing assessment in the Foundation Stage will be based mainly on teacher observation and classroom assistant observation which will inform the learning programme for each child. Observations through practical activities are a natural and essential part of good practice for teachers and classroom assistants. Well planned and regular observations help teachers gain information about children's progress over time, which ensures that the needs of the whole child are being met.

Assessment at End of Key Stages 1 & 2

Assessment of pupils in the final years of Key Stages 1 and 2 (Years 4 and 7) is a statutory requirement. Levels will be assigned to pupils' work in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using Information Communication Technology (UICT). P4 and P7 will report these levels to Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Levels are:

Key Stage 1
E (exempt)
W (working towards Level 1)
Level 1
Level 2
Level 3*
Key Stage 2
E (exempt)
W (working towards Level 1)
Level 1
Level 2
Level 3
Level 4
Level 5

End of Key Stage Levels are reported to parents in the end of year report. Further information can be accessed at http://ccea.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/curriculum/assess_progress/assessment_arrangements/KS1_2/KS1%262_Parents_Guide_18-19.pdf

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Key Stage 1 and 2)

Pupils who have statements of special educational needs and who have been assessed as having severe learning difficulties (SLD) are exempt from statutory assessment. Other pupils with statement of special educational needs will be assessed by teacher assessment in the same way as the majority of the pupils. In exceptional cases a pupil may be exempt from all, or part, of the assessment arrangements if this is specifically provided for in the pupil's statement of special educational needs.

Pupils with Dyslexia

For Dyslexia Awareness Week 2014 The British Dyslexia Association's (BDA) defined dyslexia as: *"a learning difference, a combination of strengths and weaknesses which affect the learning process in reading, spelling, writing and sometimes numeracy."*

We at Knockloughrim Primary School recognise the strengths of pupils with dyslexia and aim to use these to help them learn in all areas of the curriculum. We have high expectations of all our children and achievement of our pupils is seen as everybody's responsibility. We achieve this through encouraging partnerships with parents and engaging pupils in their own learning.

Assessment and Target Setting

Each year the end of Key Stage results will be benchmarked against data from similar schools supplied by the Department of Education. The Senior Management Team will use this data along with the outcomes of the PTE and PTM tests to set targets for school improvement.

Pupils on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will have targets evaluated and reviewed twice a year. Older pupils will be involved in the evaluating and reviewing of their own targets. Teachers will discuss the outcomes with the pupils and involve them in the setting of new targets.

Recording of Information

At Knockloughrim Primary School, we recognise various methods of assessment and ways of recording information from subject to subject. Evaluations of teacher's planners are used to inform and improve future learning.

Pupils who fail to meet objectives, or who achieve more than was planned, are noted in evaluations, so their needs can be taken into account for future planning.

Using the child's CAT score, their Progress Test English (PTE) and Progress Test Maths (PTM) scores and teacher judgement, pupils are highlighted as High Achievers >119 (Stanines 8 and 9) (can be marked as HA in teacher's planners), Under Achievers (UA) as highlighted by Schools Information Management System (SIMS), or Low Achievers (LA) i.e. <88, but not SEN. This data is recorded by each class teacher in Class Tracking Grids in June after all tests have been taken and data recorded in SIMS Assessment Manager. This gives the teachers who will be teaching this class the following September, information about each pupil and suggested strategies for dealing with identified issues.

SIMS Assessment Manager is used to create data sheets for each class and Standardised Scores are recorded. Each teacher will have a copy providing relevant data on current attainment and from previous years. Teachers will also have a copy of the GL analysis in PTM, PTE and NGRT alongside data from CAT

where used. The Assessment Leader will provide staff with the necessary documentation.

The Assessment Leader will manage the data on SIMS Assessment Manager. As the information is compiled, data will be tracked each year.

Recording
We employ a range of strategies that keep parents and carers of Knockloughrim Primary School fully informed of their child's progress in school. We encourage all parents and carers to contact the school with any concerns about any aspect of their child's work.
Information is reported through:-
- parental consultations twice a year (including explanation and review of IEPs where necessary)
- Annual reports to parents in Term 3
- Informal meetings initiated by the teacher or parent throughout the year.

Feedback to our Pupils at Knockloughrim
As a school fully embracing aspects of the curriculum such as AfL, we believe it is important to feedback to our pupils. It informs them how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work. Feedback is given in verbal and written forms and is linked to the learning intentions of the work.

Monitoring and Review
The Assessment Leader will monitor this policy and report to the Principal and Board of Governors. It will be reviewed biannually or as assessment arrangements and tests evolve.   This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Inclusion
It is the ethos of Knockloughrim Primary School to remove any barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. We strive to achieve whole school educational inclusion by continually monitoring, evaluating and reviewing what we do, investigating data and by asking ourselves questions about the performance of individuals and groups of pupils. In doing so we judge ourselves on how well we are doing in promoting equality and including pupils with disabilities or special educational needs.

It is important to view learning, teaching and assessment as a continuous cycle, where assessment is not the end point, but should feed back into the process to help to improve learning. Since the purpose of teaching and the main purpose of assessment are to help children to learn, teaching and assessment need to be planned together as complementary aspects of the one activity. In turn, the information obtained from assessments should be used to inform the planning process.

As the Assessment needs of the school will change as more development work is undertaken by staff, this policy will be reviewed: **January 2022**

Explanation of Abbreviations:

AFL –Assessment for Learning

Diagnostic – so that the strengths and weaknesses of pupils may be identified, scrutinized and the appropriate next step taken.

Summative – the overall achievement of pupils may be recorded in a systematic and at a particular time e.g. reporting to parents at the end of each key stage.

Evaluative – the information gained about pupil's achievements may be used by schools to make curriculum planning and resource decisions.

Formative – the positive achievements of pupils may be recognised, discussed and the appropriate next steps planned.

WALT – We Are Learning To

WILF – What I'm looking for

Baseline Assessment – Assessing a child's development level when he/she first comes into school.

Self Assessment – A child makes a judgement on their own work

Peer Assessment – A child makes an assessment of another's work

PTE – Progress Test English

PTM – Progress Test Maths

CAT – Cognitive Abilities Test

NGRT – New Group Reading Test

BPVS – British Picture Vocabulary Screening Test

UICT – Using Information Communication Technologies

IEP –Individual Education Plan

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SIMS – Schools Information Management System

CCEA – Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

This policy was opened for comments by parents/carers from the 9th January 2019 to the 23rd January 2019. No comments were received.