

# **Cork Educate Together N.S.**

## **Assessment Policy**



### School Contact Details

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#### **Introduction:**

This policy was originally drafted by the In-school Management Team during regular preparation meetings and using the NCCA Assessment in the Primary School Guidelines to inform us on how best to fulfill Section 22 of the Education Act. A balanced combination of Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning will be used to support assessment of children's progress and achievement and to extend and enrich their learning.

#### **Policy Rationale:**

The core of the policy is that all children should be facilitated to 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 school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

#### **Aims and Objectives:**

The primary aim/objective of the policy is to facilitate improved pupil learning and outcomes by doing the following:

1. Identifying children who are experiencing difficulty and those who are high achievers in learning areas and to put an appropriate response in place for them.
2. Creating a procedure for monitoring and recording achievement.
3. Tracking learning processes to inform teachers' long and short term preparation.
4. Outlining assessment tools, timeframes and expectations for staff.
5. Assisting teachers in the reporting of children's strengths and challenges to parents/guardians.

### **Principles**

1. Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methodologies to reflect the whole curriculum, learning opportunities and styles. The main purpose of assessment must be to facilitate progress in a pupils' learning.
2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.
3. The outcomes of discrete analysis of assessment inform our teaching methods. They provide feedback on effective teaching strategies and help to indicate pupil progress.
4. We recognize the potential for assessment (self-assessment also) in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback.
5. Results of assessment are reported constructively for pupils, teachers, parents/guardians and other interested parties.
6. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should be easily accessible- Aladdin.

### **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 put in place early enough to facilitate progress. These strategies may include pupil self-assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between home and school, modification of teacher programmes and Student Support Plans. See also AEN Policy.

The two principle approaches to assessment are:

### **1. Assessment For Learning (AFL)**

Assessment for learning seeks to identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes into consideration pupils' strengths and challenges. It enables continuous reflection on what pupils know and what they need to learn next. It also promotes immediate intervention and enables teachers to meet the needs of individual children more effectively.

Assessment for Learning may include:

Teacher Observation

Conferencing

Self-assessment,

Concept Mapping, Questioning, KWL (What I Know, what I Want to know, what I have Learned)

Homework assignments

Parental feedback or observations

Teacher designed Tasks and Tests

Standardised Testing and Diagnostic Testing

### **2. Assessment of Learning (AoL).**

Assessment of Learning provides a summary judgement of what has been learned at a particular point in time. Assessment of learning compares children to externally agreed

criteria and standards. It can identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. These interrelated and complementary approaches emphasise two aspects of assessment that are central to the work of teachers in our school. The teacher uses evidence on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning. (AfL). The teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents, teacher and other relevant persons.

Assessment of Learning may include:

The strategies above with the support of

- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Results of Psychological assessments

These assessment methods demonstrate the diversity of assessment methods available and in use in our school. They include methods which are teacher lead (standardised testing) and child- lead (self-assessment). All curricular areas are assessed using the most appropriate methods. Other considerations and elements of assessment:

**(i) Informal Assessment**

Homework and class work 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. will normally be made.

**(ii) Class work**

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

**(iii) Completion of Project work**

The completed project or notes on a topic is collected and marked. The marking focuses on areas of excellence and also indicates areas in need improvement - depending on the purpose of the assignment.

#### **(iv) Transition from Primary to Post-Primary School**

For pupils leaving the school, up to date records are passed on to the principal by the class teacher for forwarding to the new school - following confirmation of enrolment through the Pupil Passport.

### **Standardised Testing:**

In Cork Educate Together NS the following tests are carried out each academic year:

- *1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Class*
  1. *Drumcondra Primary Reading Test*
  2. *Drumcondra Spelling*
  3. *Sigma-T Maths test*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Class NRIT*
- *Senior Infants: Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy*
  1. *Screening for all*
  2. *Diagnostic for some children*

The school administers the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test, Drumcondra Spelling Test and Sigma-T Maths to all classes from 1<sup>st</sup> upwards.

The tests are usually administered in May by class teachers and the Additional Education Team (SET). Standard, sTen and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher on Aladdin. The Additional Education Team (SET), in consultation with the Principal, analyse the results in June to inform the provision of support and resources for the following September.

## **Diagnostic and Screening Assessments:**

Diagnostic tests and screening assessments are administered by the SET 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 provided with test results, advice intervention is sought from NEPS 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.

- *WIAT-III in consultation with NEPS Psychologist*
- *DRA (diagnostic for some, indicators for teaching and learning, good diagnostic checklists)*
- *YARC (no spelling, 20/30mins, online scoring conversion tool)*
- *Dyslexic Screener*
- *BPVSIII- British Picture Vocabulary Scale*
- *A fine and gross motor CETNS screening test is available for Junior Classes*
- *Phonological awareness tests based on Sound Linkage (Peter Hatcher). Can also use YARC Early Reading Test (4-7)*

## **Continuum of Support**

Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per Continuum of Support and department guidelines.

Stage 1: Classroom Support

Stage 2: School Support

Stage 3: School Support Plus

If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver adequate intervention, the Principal will contact the parents/guardians for permission to seek advice and/or intervention from NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service). This advice will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it a differentiated programme, in-class support or a Student Support Plan.

The most common forms of assessment used in our school are teacher observation, teacher designed tests, projects and homework (informal assessment). These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers. Records of tests are stored by the individual teachers in an assessment folder and communicated to parents/guardians at the Parent-teacher meeting. Significant findings are recorded in the Log of Actions on Aladdin. These records inform the school report issued at the end of the academic year. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing.

#### **Recording:**

Files are stored electronically in Aladdin. This file records standardised test results and end of year reports. Access to this information is shared with relevant teachers as the child progresses through the system. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data.

#### **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.
- The Additional Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives.
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

#### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

The Principal has overall responsibility to ensure that all tasks and duties in this policy are delivered and completed in an effective way.

The AENCO (Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator) will co-ordinate standardised testing within the school.

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to begin staged interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Additional Education Team. The Principal is involved at all stages of the continuum of support and assumes a primary role at Stage 3

when a Psychological Assessment may be required. Parents/guardians and the child have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must be always kept open.

### Reporting

Information in relation to the assessment of children will be routinely reported.

Information will be communicated to parents/guardians through:-

1. Parent teacher meetings.
2. End of year reports.
3. Standardised tests sTen scores are reported in the end of year report routinely from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.
4. Suggestion to change from communicating sTen scores to standard scores to parents for standardised tests - explained in table below:

<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>What does this score mean?</i>
<i>130 and above</i>	<i>Very high</i>
<i>120-129</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>110-119</i>	<i>High average</i>
<i>90-109</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>80-89</i>	<i>Low average</i>
<i>70-79</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>Below 70</i>	<i>Very low</i>

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school if any more information is required.

**Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was reviewed by members of the Board of Management, Executive Committee, Parent Teacher Association and staff of CETNS.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2025 and communicated to parents thereafter through the school website. It was shared with staff on Padlet.

**Review Timetable:**

This policy will be reviewed in October 2027 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed:



Date:

21/10/2025

CHAIRPERSON of the BOM

**References:**

DES Circular 0018/2022

NCCA Assessment in the Primary School

DES Circular 02/05 - 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

Special Educational Needs - A Continuum of Support