

Scoil Náisiúnta Lorcáin Naofa, Tynagh N.S.

Tynagh, Loughrea, Co. Galway. H62 AW74

School Phone: (090) 9745439
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Roll No.: 17490o
CHY 20121846

Assessment Policy

Introduction:

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff of Scoil Náisiúnta Lorcáin Naofa in Autumn 2017 so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. The policy is based on advice from the NCCA Website, NCCA booklet *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum* and Circulars 0138/2006, 56/2011 and 18/2012. This policy was reviewed by staff in September 2019 and June 2022 and brought to the Board of Management to be ratified on 26th September 2019 and 14th June 2022.

Rationale:

In order to ensure that all children in our school achieve to the best of their ability, we believe it is imperative that any learning difficulties are identified at the earliest opportunity and that the school must put in place an appropriate response to their needs. An effective assessment policy ensures quality in education and is central to this process of teaching and learning. Assessment assists communication to all parties involved in the child's education i.e. teacher and child, teacher and parent and teacher to teacher. It is integral to all areas of the curriculum and to the child's growth in self-esteem and acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by gathering relevant information to guide each pupil's further learning (assessment for learning) and by providing information on each pupil's achievement at a particular point in time (assessment of learning).

Relationship To The Characteristic Spirit of The School

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and to the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective policy of assessment will identify the early interventions required to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved.

Aims:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learner outcomes and learner experiences.
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- To assist teachers long and short-term planning
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis and to establish a firm link between assessment and decision making with regard to future strategies, content and methodologies in the classroom
- To describe strategies for assessment of pupils over as many areas of development as possible
- To emphasise the importance of early identification of pupils with specific numeracy and literacy problems through establishing relevant baseline data which in turn can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils including the exceptionally able.

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- To ensure availability of finance to purchase texts and resources
- To outline specific strategies for monitoring the progress of all pupils with particular learning needs
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment.

Purpose of Assessment

- To inform planning for, and coverage of all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups including the exceptionally able if applicable
- To monitor pupils progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work where feasible
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

Assessment For Learning- Formative

Assessment for learning is a method to inform and involve learners in the process of assessment. The following are among some of the methods of Assessment for Learning used in our school.

- Teacher Observation and Questioning
- Checklists
- Standardised Tests
- Individual reading/spelling/phonics records (Jackson Phonics, Schonnell)
- Learning Logs
- Parental/Pupil Feedback
- WALT (We are learning today) WILF (What I am Looking for)
- Think Pair Share, KWL
- Self- assessment- pupils take responsibility for their own learning
- Conferencing
- Mindmaps
- Completed assignments by pupils- projects, copies, work samples (Portfolios)

Assessment of Learning – Summative

Informal Assessment

- The following are among some of the methods of informal assessment that are used in the school -Teacher observation, Teacher designed tasks and tests, Work samples, portfolios & projects, Checklists, Traffic Lights visuals for infants, using the thumbs up or thumbs down method. The above assessment methods are used across the whole school, at the discretion of individual teachers, depending on the requirements of individual pupils, class level or subject. Depending on the subject and the class level and the needs of individual pupils, teachers may assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples, projects etc.

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- The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment
- Examples of teacher designed tasks/tests: weekly spelling test/weekly table test, Monthly SESE review (senior classes), Termly assessment in maths, Assessments in Irish/English/maths designed by teachers
- Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work/progress. Examples include the use of: KWL, Self-editing/drafting/redrafting, comments e.g. good/needs improvement. This data will be stored in assessment folders/children's copies

Standardised Testing:

- The following standardised tests are available for use in our school:
 - MIST (Senior Infants)
 - Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy (Senior Infants)
 - New Drumcondra Primary Reading Test 2018 (1st-6th)
 - New Drumcondra Primary Maths Test 2018 (1st-6th)
 - Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST)
 - NRIT
 - Ballard and Westwood
 - Schonnell/Burt/Rain Reading Test
 - Drumcondra Irish Test
 - GAP Comprehension Test
 - WRAT 4
- The purpose of standardised tests is to allow teachers to make placement and progress decisions based on assessment results to develop appropriate interventions for individual children.
- The class teacher administers the standardised tests. Where there are mixed classes using different tests, the support teacher will take out one class to test.
- Pupils may be excluded from the tests if the Principal feels the child has a learning or physical disability which would prevent them taking the test.
- The Support Teachers are responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- Each child's raw score, standard score and percentile rank is recorded.
- The results will be analysed at whole school level and information gathered will be used to inform teaching and learning. The results will determine the Allocation of Special Education Support hours and the nature of support provided (In Class/withdrawal)
- The STEN score will be given to parents with their yearly report. Parents of First Class pupils will be given a letter to explain STEN scores and how to interpret results.

Screening:

- The first step in identifying pupils who may need Learning Support in Literacy or Numeracy is for the teacher to administer screening tests.

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- Screening Tests as above will be used to assist the staged approach to intervention. Priority will be given to those performing on or below the 10th percentile in English and Mathematics. *A Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers* will be followed.
- The particular screening measures that are administered will depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils. In Infants, Early Intervention Testing which includes the Drumcondra Profiles may be used.

Diagnostic Testing:

Diagnostic Tests are used to assist in determining the appropriate interventions for individuals who present with learning difficulties. The administration of such tests from Senior Infants is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is used by individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing.

The following are some of the diagnostic tests used:

- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
- Aston Index
- Spar Reading/Spelling
- WRAT 4
- Bohem 3 (Language)
- Diagnostic Reading Analysis 2nd Edition
- MALT Stage ½
- Sentence Completion Test (Hedderly)
- Basic Number Diagnostic Test
- Miscue Analysis

The support teacher and class teacher are involved in selecting children for diagnostic testing. Parental permission to carry out these tests is sought on our Enrolment Form. The SEN support teacher administers the diagnostic tests and interprets the results.

Psychological Assessments:

- Each September children will be identified for assessment/observation for that academic year. The class teacher meets parents and a consent form is signed by the parents if the child is targeted for psychological assessment. The Principal/support teacher will organise the assessment.
- Children who present with possible SLT/OT needs will be identified by teachers to the Principal. The Principal and/or the class teacher will advise parents re: getting a medical referral from their G.P.
- The results of assessments will guide the drafting of an IEP.
- Psychological/other professional reports are stored in the pupil's files. Copy is given to parents.
- The Principal will ensure that details of relevant reports are transferred with all 6th class pupils on their transfer to Second Level Education.

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Recording Results Of Assessment:

- Each pupil has a file in a locked cabinet in classroom. Test booklets, end of year reports, copies of assessments etc. are kept here. All data is sensitive to each child and therefore the cabinet must be locked at all times.
- Standardised test results will be given to the relevant second level school on transfer from Primary to Second Level once confirmation of enrolment is received. The NCCA Education Passport templates will be used as outlined in Circular 0045/2014.

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 Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities and Review:

- Mainstream, Special Education Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to introduce 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.
- The policy will be reviewed after two years of implementation. The Principal will initiate and co-ordinate this review.

Ratification & Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management, Tynagh N.S. on 25th September 2017 and reviewed and ratified by the Board on 26th September 2019 and 14th June 2022. The reviewed policy will be made available to the school community through the school website.

The policy was reviewed and ratified by the B.O.M on 14th June 2022.

Signed: Fr. Séamus Bohan

Date: 24th October 2022

Chairperson Board of Management