



## *Knocknagree National School*

# **Assessment Policy**

### **Title:**

Assessment *of* and *for* Learning in Knocknagree N.S.

### **Introductory Statement:**

This policy was formulated by the staff of Knocknagree N.S.

### **Rationale:**

It was necessary to devise an assessment policy at this time;

- To document existing practices in the school.
- To standardise practices across the classes and all curriculum areas.
- To comply with current legislation, Circular 0138/06 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools, Circular 0013/2017 Mainstream Primary Schools Special Education Teaching Allocation and 'Assessment in the primary school curriculum, guidelines for schools' document as published by the NCCA, 2007.

### **Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school:**

*Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by...*

- Ensuring that all children regardless of ability will be helped to achieve their full potential academically, socially and behaviourally in our school.

## **Aims:**

- *To benefit pupil learning*
- *To monitor learning processes*
- *To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time*
- *To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties*
- *To assist teachers' long and short-term planning*
- *To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis, etc.*
- *To ensure that, through the use of a differentiated curriculum, all children are supported in accessing the curriculum at his/her own level.*

## **Guidelines:**

### **(a) Purposes of assessment:**

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum.
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able.
- To contribute to the school's strategy for assisting learning difficulties.
- To monitor pupil 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 communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs.
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work.
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies.
- To transfer information, re: pupil stages of learning from teacher to teacher to assist in future planning.

### **(b) Assessment for learning:**

The following types of informal assessment methods are used in this school:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Work samples (copybooks), portfolios and projects*
- *Questioning*
- *Peer/self-assessment*
- Different assessment methods are used depending on age level, subject, and pupil ability levels.
- Some apply across the whole school, while others that are at the discretion of individual teachers.

- There are guidelines to co-ordinate what is observed/recorded where assessment is based on teacher observation. The Cúntas Míósúil is a very comprehensive tool used by the teachers in this school to assess learning.
- The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment.
- Teacher-designed tasks/tests are used across curriculum areas to assess the children's progress and plan for future learning.
- Children involved in self-assessment of their own work/progress through strategies such as error analysis, self-correcting, editing and re-drafting, choosing samples for their portfolio/display purposes
- Children are also involved in concept mapping and conferencing.
- Children will be encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own learning and the following peer and self-assessment strategies will be used: Two stars and a wish, thumbs up, thumbs down and KWL charts

**(c) Assessment of learning**  
**Formal Assessment**

**i. Standardised tests**

- Drumcondra (Reading and Comprehension Test and spelling test) and Sigma-T/Drumcondra Maths are used in the school from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class. MIST (Middle Infant Screening test) is used for Senior Infants.
- Drumcondra primary reading tests are normally administered at the end of May / beginning of June.
- Sigma-T tests are normally administered at the end of May / beginning of June.
- MIST is administered in Term 2.
- The NNRIT (New Non-Reading Intelligence Test) is administered in Term 1 for children in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.
- The Deputy Principal is generally responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- Standardised tests are administered and corrected by each Class Teacher.
- International pupils, pupils with language/learning difficulties, members of the Traveller community are dealt with giving due consideration to their individual learning difficulties. Pupils who are not taking a test with their classmates are given the test by the Special Education Teacher and this is corrected by the Class Teacher.
- Pupils may be excluded from the test if in the view of the School Principal they have a learning or a physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the test, or in the case of newcomer pupils, where their level of English is such that attempting such a test would be inappropriate. (Circular 0138/2006) The following procedures are used in the event of a deferral of testing being made or alternative tests being used:
  - The reasons will be discussed by the Special Education Teacher/Class Teacher/Principal
  - Parental support for the decision will be sought in writing
  - Where appropriate testing will be deferred or alternative testing will be used.
- Raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN, reading age will all be recorded.
- Results to be communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings in December and in end-of-year reports.
- The results will inform the level of additional teaching support required by pupils in the school.

ii. **Informal Assessment**

Informal assessment is ongoing during all lessons, homework, classwork, weekly and termly tests are corrected and constructive feedback is given regularly.

iii. **Screening:** *(Refer to Circular 0013/2017 Guidelines)*

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- MIST is used to identify early difficulties.
- MIST is administered to senior infants in February by the Special Education Teacher.
- NEPS 100/200 word and Phonics checklists will also be administered by SET at the end of senior infants/beginning of first class.
- Results are interpreted by the Class Teacher/Special Education Teacher.
- Early intervention is seen as a priority in the school. Screening leads to specific intervention by the Class Teacher *(Circular 0013/2017 Guidelines) (Special Educational Needs: A Continuum Of Support NEPS/DES 2007)*.
- All other screening tests are administered by the Special Education Teacher.

iv. **Diagnostic Assessment:**

- Diagnostic testing is seen as a requirement when pupils have failed to progress adequately through stage 1 and to intervention.
- Need for / results of diagnostic tests are communicated to parents through parent-teacher meetings when appropriate.
- Neale Analysis (Reading) is used to determine the appropriate additional support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes.
- In consultation with NEPS, some children may be assessed using the WIAT (Wechsler Individual Achievement Test) and this will be interpreted by the NEPS psychologist.
- WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test) may also be used for screening and diagnostic testing and interpreted BY THE NEPS psychologist.
- Class teachers/ Special Education Teacher are involved in selecting children for diagnostic assessment.
- Special Education Teacher administers and interprets the diagnostic tests.
- The school ensures that the results of assessments informs subsequent learning plans through the development and implementation of Classroom/School/School Support Plus plans and IEP's. This is done in consultation with the Class Teacher.
- Following testing, parental permission is sought for sharing information between teachers, parents and relevant agencies.
- While most children's needs will be met through classroom-based interventions, some may have difficulties that are more significant and their needs will be met through school support or school support plus and they will receive additional teaching support at the discretion of the Class Teacher and the Special Education Teacher *(Circular 0013/2017, Special Educational Needs: A Continuum Of Support NEPS/DES 2007)*.
- If it is felt necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about diagnostic test results, the Principal in consultation with the Special Education Teacher will do so.

**(d) Psychological Assessment:** *(Refer to Circular 0013/2017)*

- The Principal / Class Teacher & Special Education Teacher will liaise with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required (Circular 0013/2017, *Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support NEPS/DES 2007*).
- Standard letters and consent forms used (consult NEPS folder).
- The Principal Teacher is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from specialist(s). (Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist, Audiologist, other...).
- Assessment plays an integral role in drafting an educational plan for a pupil.
- Psychological reports are stored in individual files in a locked cabinet in the SEN room and remain on school grounds. The Principal/ Special Education Teacher/ Class Teacher controls access to these.

**(e) Recording the results of assessment**

- Assessment results are recorded in pupil files.
- Agreed terminology is used and understood by all teachers.
- Teachers are fully aware of the need to record comments in an objective and instructive manner.
- The implications for other policies and procedures in the school such as Record Keeping, Data Protection, Reports to Parents are documented in those policies.

**Success Criteria:**

- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects.
- Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year.
- Teachers are more aware of procedures and processes around assessment and its implication for pupil learning.

**Roles and Responsibility:**

The Principal, Deputy Principal and Special Education Teacher will assume responsibility for co-ordinating the policy.

**Timetable for Review:** January every other year or as deemed necessary

**Adopted by the Board of Management**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference Section:**

- Circular 0138/06 Supporting Assessment
- Circular 0013/2017 Mainstream Primary Schools Special Education Teaching Allocation
- Special Educational Needs: A Continuum Of Support NEPS/DES 2007
- Primary School Curriculum – Section on Assessment for each subject
- NEPS – Working together to Make a Difference for Children
- Drumcondra English Profiles. G. Shiel & R. Murphy ERC
- Common sense Methods for Children with Special Needs. Peter Westwood. Routledge Falmer
- A range of assessment tests are listed on the SESS website [www.sess.ie](http://www.sess.ie)