

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated at staff meetings in the school year 2006-2007. All teaching staff participated in this process.

Rationale

It was necessary to devise an assessment policy at this time in order to set out school practice with regard to assessment and to carry out a review of that practice in order to ensure that the guidelines set out in circular 0138/2006 were implemented.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

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

- monitoring the progress of the child in the different subjects so that the school will be able to provide the relevant support services
- assessing the involvement and the full attainment of pupils in curricular areas.

Aim

The school wishes to achieve the following 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.

Guidelines

A Purposes of assessment:

The purposes of assessment in Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin are as follows:

- 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 prevention of 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

B Assessment for learning: *(See the plans for curriculum subjects)*

- The following methods of informal assessment are used in the school:
 - Teacher observation
 - Teacher-designed tasks and tests
 - Work samples, portfolios and projects.
- The assessment methods are adapted to the age level and to the subject.
- The assessment methods apply across the whole school. Other methods of assessment are at the discretion of individual teachers.
- Where assessment is based on teacher observation checklists and profiles are used as recording tools.
- Teachers assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples, projects, etc.
- The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment.

- In the school year 2014-2015, Junior Infants will begin 'Scrapbooks'. Two pieces of work will be collected each year from every student and presented in the scrapbook.
- Teacher-designed tasks / tests are used in: Gaeilge, English, Maths, SESS, SPHE and Visual Arts. These tasks / tests are used at the end of a work unit.
- Pupils are involved in assessment of their own work/progress in the following ways:
 - Discussion about homework / class-work
 - Doing corrections
 - What would you like to change the next time?
 - Speaking about work done
 - Discussion with a partner
 - Drafting
 - Proof-reading
 - System – stars and wishes. Stars – things which were good; wishes – things to improve.

C Standardised tests

- The following standardised tests are used in the school:
English – Micra-T (First Class to Sixth Class)
Maths –Sigma T (First Class to Sixth Class)
Gaeilge – Drom Chonrach (Second Class to Sixth Class)
- The deputy principal is responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- The staff administer the standardised tests.
- Testing occurs at the end of the school year – summer.
- If the tests are not appropriate for all pupils – e.g. International pupils, pupils with language/learning difficulties, members of the Traveller community...- individual tests will be used with those children. The learning support teacher or the resource teacher will facilitate those pupils who are not tested with their colleagues.
- The following results are recorded from the English tests – raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN and reading age. There is a uniform approach across all classes.
- The class teacher analyses the result for their own class. The results are discussed with the learning support teacher and with the principal. The whole school results will be discussed at a staff meeting.
- The results are communicated with parents in accordance with Circular 0138/2006.
- The staff will devise a template giving directions to teachers on how to communicate results effectively in accordance with Circular 0138/2006.

D Screening: *(See Learning Support Guidelines and Circular 02/05)*

- M.I.S.T is used to facilitate the early identification of learning strengths / difficulties.
- The class teacher and the support team administer the tests.
- The class teacher and the support team analyse the results.
- The class teacher makes specific intervention as a result of screening *(Stage 1 Circular 02/05)*.
- If it is felt that there is a need for specific early intervention from the support team in that class a meeting is held between the class teacher and a member of the support team to plan this.
- If it is clear then at the end of the year that certain pupils have specific difficulties in literacy or in numeracy and that there is need for diagnostic testing the class teacher has a meeting with the parents. With the permission of the parents diagnostic assessment is carried out early in first class.
- The following diagnostic tests are used with different classes or groups as appropriate
 - Non-Reading Intelligence Tests, Levels 1-3, D. Young, Hodder & Stoughton, 1989
 - Dyslexia Screening Test
 - Neal Analysis of Reading Ability
 - Aston Index
- The learning support teacher or the class teacher meet with the parents to communicate the results.
- If it is thought that diagnostic testing is necessary the class teacher consults with the parents.
- The support team will do diagnostic testing at the beginning of the school-year. Four weeks at the start of the year will be set aside in the timetable for this work. Diagnostic testing is done during the year as

necessary. The support team will inform the principal and the class teachers that this testing is taking place and the ordinary groups will not be taken for this period.

e Diagnostic Assessment:

(See Learning Support Guidelines, Chapter 4)

- The following formal diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties
 - Aston Index – Revised, Dr. Margaret Newton & Michael Thomson, LDA
 - Neale Analysis of Reading Ability – Revised, Marie D. Neale, nferNelson, 1997
 - Graded Word Reading Test, Dr. Bridie Raban, nferNelson, 1985
- The class teacher and the learning support teacher are involved in selecting pupils for diagnostic assessment.
- The class teacher consults with the parents beforehand. There will be a standard form to record parental consent.
- The learning support teacher administers the diagnostic tests
- The learning support teacher interprets the results
- The school ensures that the results of the assessments inform subsequent learning plans by
 - Keeping a copy in the learning support room, where they will be available to the support staff
- After testing informal meetings are organised to share information between teachers, parents.
- The following criteria are used when deciding which children should receive supplementary teaching (Stage 2, Circular 02/05):
 - pupils who are eligible for learning-support teaching; In determining eligibility for learning-support teaching, priority should be given to pupils whose achievement is at or below the 10th percentile on standardised tests of reading or mathematics.
 - pupils with learning difficulties, including pupils with mild speech and language difficulties, pupils with mild social or emotional difficulties and pupils with mild co-ordination or attention control difficulties associated with identified conditions such as dyspraxia, ADD, ADHD
 - pupils who have special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities (borderline mild general learning disability, mild general learning disability and specific learning disability) (Circular 02/05)
- The support team, in consultation with the principal and with the class teacher, decides on which form of support will best suit individual pupils, one-to-one teaching, group teaching, or a mixture of both, the decision being dependant on the kind of needs.
- If it is thought that it is necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about diagnostic test results, the principal arranges that consultation.

F Psychological Assessment: *(See Circular 02/05)*

- The class teacher liaises with parents if it is felt that a psychological or other is required (Stage 3, Circular 02/05). Forms from NEPS are used for psychological assessments.
- The principal is responsible for requesting and organising psychological assessments. Parents are responsible for assessments from Speech and Language Therapists, Audiologists, etc. ...
- The assessment is used in drafting an individual educational plan.
- Psychological assessments are kept in a filing cabinet in the office and the principal controls access to these.

G Recording results of assessment

- An account is kept of informal assessment methodologies in the pupil's file or in the class folder in the classroom. An account is kept of the standardised tests and of the screening tests in the office. An account of diagnostic assessment is kept in the learning support room. Psychological assessments are kept in a filing cabinet in the office.
- Teachers are aware of the need to record opinions in an objective and professional manner.
- Sensitive details are communicated to the principal and an account of this is kept in the office.
- Appropriate information on assessments is transferred from teacher to teacher at informal meetings.

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.

Roles and Responsibilities

The principal, the class teachers and the support team are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

Review

Created	March 2007
Reviewed	November 2014
Due to be reviewed	November 2014

