

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa Junior School



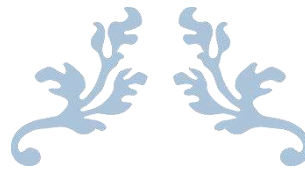
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ASSESSMENT POLICY



Introductory Statement and Rationale

This policy on Teacher Assessment Strategies was formulated by the staff of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa. The policy is based on advice and information provided in the Primary Curriculum, the NCCA Website, the NCCA booklet *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools* and Circular 0138/2006. It also takes account of the National Strategy for Literacy and Numeracy.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

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). This links with our aim/mission "to enable children to develop to their full potential physically, intellectually, linguistically, emotionally and socially through a child centred curriculum"

Aims of our Teacher Assessment Strategies Policy

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.

To encourage increasing skills of self-assessment.

Purposes of assessment:

- To inform planning for 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 of pupils including the exceptionally able (NCCA "Exceptionally able students: Draft guidelines for Teachers)
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes and their teaching methodologies in order to ensure that the particular 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 active involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work

Definition of Assessment

In line with the NCCA, our staff believe that assessment is integral to teaching and learning and is concerned with children's progress and achievement. It involves gathering information to understand how each child is progressing at school and using that information to further a child's learning. We concur with their definition of classroom assessment as **"the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes."**

Assessment, therefore, involves much more than testing. It is an ongoing process that concerns the daily interactions between the teacher and the child that include moment-by-moment conversations, observations and actions. (NCCA, *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools*. November 2007 p.7).

Range of Assessment Methods used Throughout the School:

Both *assessment of learning* and *assessment for learning* are used by teachers to make professional judgements about pupil achievement/progress. Deciding what to assess will be based on the curriculum objectives in each curriculum area/subject and on what the teacher intends to help the children to learn. Pupils' progress is assessed on a continuous basis. The range of assessment methods that are used are outlined below ***but are not limited to these***.

Assessment For Learning Strategies (AFL):

At its heart, assessment for learning is a way of informing and involving the learners themselves in the process of assessment.

The methods of Assessment for Learning (AFL) include:

- **Teacher-designed tasks and tests.**
 - Designed at the teachers' discretion with samples stored in children's scrapbooks and class teachers' assessment folder. There should be one sample per term of evidence of assessment in Literacy, Numeracy, Gaeilge, the Arts subjects, SESE, PE, SPHE (which can be stored either in the children's scrapbook or the teacher's assessment folder).
- **Scrapbooks**
 - Each child will have a scrap book.
These scrapbooks allow children to select work they are particularly proud to keep in their scrapbook. It may be something they worked very hard on, has excellent presentation, something they learnt a lot from or something that they found difficult throughout the year but eventually succeeded at. The selection process is individual to the child and self-reflection should be encouraged throughout the year.
- **Sharing the learning intention/objective and devising success criteria**
 - Telling children what they are going to learn by using the WALT approach (We Are Learning To...) and agreeing the criteria for judging to what extent the outcomes have been achieved by using the WILF approach (What I am Looking For...)
 - We are learning to..... We will know when we've achieved this because.....
 - The learning objective(s) and the success criteria may be displayed on a chart/whiteboard/post-it etc).
 - Teacher/peer/self-evaluation in terms of these by identifying successes and improvement needs against the criteria.
- **Increase wait time**
 - Improving quality of answers through increasing thinking/waiting time. Allow at least five seconds for a response. This allows learners to answer open questions and not those simply based on recall facts. Another technique involves learners recording their ideas on mini whiteboards or paper before displaying their answers.

- **Effective teacher questioning**

- Teachers use lower and higher order questioning to provoke fruitful discussion

(a) Questions that seek clarification

Question Frame	Type of Question
Can you explain that...?	Explaining
What do you mean by...?	Defining
Can you give me an example of...?	Giving examples
How does that help...?	Supporting
Does anyone have a question to ask...?	Enquiring

(b) Questions that probe reason and evidence

Question Frame	Type of Question
Why do you think that...?	Forming an argument
How do we know that...?	Assumptions
What are your reasons...?	Reason
Do you have any evidence...?	Evidence
Can you give me an example...?	Counter example

(c) Questions that explore alternate views

Question Frame	Type of Question
Can you put it a different way...?	Re-stating a view
Is there a different point of view...?	Speculation
What if someone were to suggest...?	Alternative views
What would someone who disagreed with you say...?	Counter argument
What is the difference between those ideas/views...?	Distinctions

(d) Questions that test implications and consequences

Question Frame	Type of Question
From your ideas, can we work out if...?	Implications
Does it agree with what was said earlier...?	Consistency
What would be the consequences of that...?	Consequences
Is there a general rule for that...?	Generalising
How could you test to see that...?	Testing for the truth

Exploring incorrect answers

- Wrong answers allow us to identify and challenge a learner's misconceptions. Develop an atmosphere in which wrong answers are valued as a significant contribution to the learning of the class

Peer Discussion

- Think-Pair-Share activities
- Group response.
- Active involvement of all pupils (e.g. use of whiteboards).

Individual oral feedback – to include enabling children identify the next steps in their learning.

- Give feedback using comments to children on their work/effort. Learning happens when the learner has strengths and needs identified, and is given clear advice on how to improve. This technique could be combined with peer assessments so that learners feedback to peers about how improvements could be made.
- Include target setting in their activities through: Learners are given targets but more importantly are shown how to reach those targets. Teachers then check that targets have been reached.
- Feedback should be as immediate to the task as possible, particularly in relation to homework. It should also be related to the learning intention, otherwise learners' expectations will be that the learning intention is of secondary importance to other issues e.g. spelling & presentation.

Positive marking by teacher

- Occasional pieces of work should be marked focusing on pointing out *success* and *improvement* rather than to mark every error in existence. However, on occasion 'test' marking will be undertaken whereby all aspects of the work will be marked e.g. a story where comments are made regarding spelling, grammar, punctuation, handwriting and the overall quality of the work.

Positive marking by children

- Children gradually trained to identify their own successes and improvement needs, with control gradually handed over from the teacher to the child.
- Peer Marking: Learners mark or comment on other people's work. This can be very effective after group or individual presentation, especially if the assessment criteria are clear and have been discussed before the work begins.

Oral responses of pupils

Observations

- Early Years Observation
- Aistear Observations (Infants)

Pupil Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is the means by which pupils take responsibility for their own learning. However, we need to train pupils to self-assess and this is something that requires intense focus during the month of September. This will begin in Term 2 for Junior Infants.

- **Teachers can select from the following strategies to aid self-assessment as appropriate;**
 - **KWL**
 - **Five W's and a H (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?)**
 - **Concept maps**
 - **Self-Evaluation Questions to facilitate reflection**
 - **Pupil Questionnaires/Interviews**
 - **Pupil Logs:** e.g. spelling log, reading log etc.
 - **Graphic Organisers** – include KWL charts, mind maps, brainstorming maps and concept maps. Also include: PMI charts (Plus, Minus, Interesting);
 - **Reflection; Representation; Reporting** - Children think about what they have been learning. They then represent what they have learned and report on it.
 - **Emoji symbols** for children to assess their work at the end of an activity
 - **Traffic lights** to assess how they found particular activities. This is a good addition to a lesson's conclusion.
 - **Thumbs up/thumbs down** to show understanding.
 - **Conferencing where appropriate/necessary**
 - **Completed assignments by pupils** – projects, copybooks, work samples, homework
 - **Parental guidance to inform self-assessment of homework**

Assessment of Learning (AoL):

Teachers will use a variety of weekly, monthly and termly tests and checklists to formally assess children's progress.

- **Standardised tests-** The following tests are used;
 - BIAP – in Junior Infants (select children)
 - Drumcondra Early Literacy Screening (Senior Infants)
 - Drumcondra Early Numeracy Screening (Senior Infants)
 - Drumcondra English 1st and 2nd classes
 - Sigma T (Maths) 1st and 2nd Class
 - Drumcondra Maths 1st and 2nd (Supplementary)
 - MicraT English – 1st and 2nd (Supplementary)

Loughcrew (Where appropriate)

- PEP 3
 - ABLLS
 - VB-MAPP
- The purpose of the standardised tests is to allow teachers to make decisions based on placement and progress from these assessment results and to develop appropriate interventions for certain children.
 - Standardised tests are administered on a class basis by the class teacher. **In the event that a pupil is absent on the day of the test the Support Teacher will administer the test at a later date. Any new pupils that join the school throughout the year must be tested as soon as possible when their previous test results are unobtainable.** Except in exceptional circumstances all children, including children with SEN must attempt to complete these standardised tests without any additional support. The class teacher can make a note of this in their assessment folder when uploading their results, however the final results must reflect the child's true ability at completing a standardised assessment. Pupils may be excluded from the tests if in the view of the principal the child's level of English is such that attempting test would be inappropriate.
 - The child's raw score, standard score, percentile rank and STEN is recorded. The percentile rank and STEN score is recorded on the tracking score sheets, and on the school's Databiz computer system.
 - The results are communicated to parents in their school report and/or follow-up parent teacher meeting if required. The STEN score will be given to parents with the end of term report.
 - The results will determine the allocation of learning support/resource hours in the school and the nature of the support provided (in-class or withdrawal). See Learning Support policy.
 - September is used largely as an assessment month by teachers in the SEN and EAL team. The SEN teachers will use a variety of assessments depending on the child's needs and recommendations. EAL teachers will use the PSAK. Any Continuum of Support plans will be written up where necessary.

Subject Specific Assessment

Literacy:

In Junior Infants we periodically assess:

- Oral Language
- The 30 sounds
- Jolly Phonics wordbox lists 1-9 (1a-9a for more able students)
- Sight words – Dolch lists 1,2,3

- PM Benchmark readers
- Dictation of CVC words: Jolly phonics section 12. Pages 1 & 2
- Jolly Phonics Tricky words 1-30

Checklists

- Initial Checklists: :Number (count 1-10, count out a number of objects)
Shapes
Colours
Write own name
Cutting with scissors
Pencil Grip and Control
- Letter Sounds
- Letter Formation

In Senior Infants we assess:

- Oral Language
- Sight word – Dolch lists 4,5,6
- Tricky words 1-30 J.I.
- Tricky words 30 -60 S.I. List
- Jolly Phonics Lists 10-18 (10a-18a for more able students)
- PM Benchmark readers
- Dictation
- Writing sample at the end of the year
- Jolly Phonics tricky words 30-60

Checklists

- 42 Letter Sounds
- Letter Names
- Letter Formation

1st Class

- PM Benchmark readers
- Writing Sample per term
- Dolch Lists 7,8,9
- Weekly Spelling Tests
- Dictation

2nd Class

- PM Benchmark readers
- Writing Sample per term
- Dolch Lists 10,11
- Weekly Spelling Tests
- Dictation

- Oral language assessment will be reviewed on implementation of the new language curriculum.

Numeracy:

Junior Infants	Senior Infants
<p>See initial checklists for Junior Infants.</p> <p>Maths Stations Assessments Notes and observations record sheet filled out and returned to class teacher at end of each session.</p> <p>Class Assessments: Halloween Christmas Easter Summer</p> <p>Teacher designed tasks throughout the year.</p> <p>Mental Maths Activities.</p>	<p>Maths Stations Assessments Grids are used as checklists for learning outcomes of each game</p> <p>Class Assessments: September assessment of number, counting, shapes, colours and writing of numbers Halloween Christmas Easter Summer</p> <p>Teacher designed tasks throughout the year.</p> <p>Mental Maths Activities.</p>
First Class	Second Class
<p>Maths Stations Assessment. Observations from maths games/maths activities</p> <p>Weekly Tables Tests.</p> <p>Class Assessments: Halloween Christmas Easter Summer</p> <p>Teacher designed tasks throughout the year.</p> <p>Mental Maths Activities.</p>	<p>Weekly Tables Tests.</p> <p>Class Assessments: Halloween Christmas Easter Summer</p> <p>Teacher designed tasks throughout the year.</p> <p>Mental Maths Activities.</p>

Gaeilge:

- Is feidir leis an múinteoir measunú a dhéanamh go leanúnach ar chumas tuisceana agus cumarside an dalta agus an cúrsa á theagasc. Is féidir an liosta eiseamláirí comh maith leis na ceachtanna ina ndéantar daingniú ar na feidhmeanna teanga a úsáid mar uirlisí measúnaithe freisin.
- Dírbhreachnú an mhúinteora – nuair atá siad ag obair agus ag caint, cluichí a imirt.

- Ag baint úsáid as taisc
- Pictiúr agus abairt amháin i rang a haon agus a dó.

S.E.S.E:

- Assessment is based on teacher observation of the child's interest, participation and knowledge of topics explored. Samples of each child's work are kept by the class teacher. Photographs may be kept as a means of assessment/record keeping. Question and answer sessions are used to encourage participation. K.W.L charts are used to assess what the children already know, what they want to know and what they have learned.

Art

- Junior and Senior Infants: One piece of art work per term for self-assessment in the self-assessment scrapbooks
- **1st & 2nd classes:** Children will self-assess a specific piece of art work, which will be kept in the teacher's assessment folder.

Music and Drama

- Checklists are in progress for different strands.

P.E

- Assessment is based primarily on teacher observation and teacher designed tasks and participation.
- Checklists in progress, focusing on skills taught in each strand.

S.P.H.E

- Work samples and teacher observation during circle time are used to assess the child's understanding and gain an insight into the child's social development.

Storage of standardised assessments:

- All standardised assessments are stored in the Storage room at end of 2nd class corridor.

Screening:

(Refer to Learning Support Guidelines and Circular 02/05)

- SEN Co-ordinator organises assessments and provides each class teacher with an assessment timetable before testing in Term 3 (i.e. ensures there is a sufficient quantity of booklets, places orders, ensures teachers are prepared and understand testing procedures).
- Class teachers are responsible for the administration and correcting of all of their own class standardised tests with the assistance of their allocated support teacher.
- Class teachers upload the results to Databiz and the school's intranet for analysis and interpretation.
- A meeting will be arranged with parents of the children who are a source of concern.
- The results of Screening Tests are used to provide early intervention.

- The results of screening tests, teacher observations and parental concerns are used as criteria for indication that diagnostic testing is needed.
- If diagnostic testing is considered necessary, a meeting is organised with Parents, Class teacher and Learning Support Teacher. The SEN Co-ordinator will be kept informed and will attend when practical.

Tests that are used in the school for an initial indicator prior to obtaining a diagnosis from an outside agency are:

- Early Literacy Test (ELT)
- Dyslexia Screening Test Junior (DST-J) (Ages 6 yrs 6 mths – 11 yrs 5 mths)
- Dyslexia Early Screening Test (DEST 2) (Ages 4 yrs 6mths – 6yrs 5 mths)
- Non-Reading Intelligent Test (NRIT)
- Listening and Literacy Index
- Schonell Spelling Test
- Schonell Reading Test
- Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
- GL Assessment: Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning Test
- MALT test (maths)
- Bracken Basic concept scale complete kit (verbal reasoning)
- GL ACE test assessment of comprehension
- Appropriate different learning interventions are initiated to ensure that the results of the assessments inform subsequent learning plans. This is evident in teachers' plans e.g. differentiation and additional supports.
- A member of the SEN team will schedule an SEN meeting with parents and relevant agencies following testing to share information about screening results.
- If it is felt necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about screening test results the Principal will organise a consultation meeting.

Diagnostic Assessment:

(Refer to Learning Support Guidelines, Chapter 4)

- Class teacher, SEN Team and parents are involved in selecting children for diagnostic assessment.
- When a child is selected for diagnostic testing a meeting is held with parents. At this meeting concerns are discussed and recommendations for further testing are made. Parents' permission is sought.
- Written permission is always sought if an outside agency is involved.

- For children born after June 1st 2002 a referral may be made through the Assessment of Needs process for further assessment in conjunction with parents.
- If it is felt necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about diagnostic test results the Principal will organise a consultation meeting.

Psychological Assessment:

(Refer to Circular 02/05)

- The principal, SEN team and class teacher liaise with parents if a psychological assessment is deemed necessary. Standard consent forms are used.
- The principal, in consultation with class teacher, SEN Team and parents will usually arrange an assessment from specialists i.e. psychologist, OT, speech & language etc.
- SEN Team will use assessment results in drafting an IEP/Support Plans for the pupil.
- Psychological reports are stored in locked cabinets in the office. Class teachers and relevant SEN personnel are given access to reports to enable them to plan to meet the needs of the child.

Analysing, Recording and Reporting the results of assessment

- All assessments are analysed according to their instructions and recorded on a class sheet which is placed in the teacher's assessment folder and passed on to the next teacher. Results are also stored on the school's Databiz database, which is password protected.
- Hard copies of all standardised assessments and diagnostic tests are stored in the Storage Room upstairs which is kept locked.
- Children keep records of spelling tests and mental maths in their copies/books. Class teacher keeps Class profile sheet/record in assessment folder.
- Parent teacher meetings are usually held in November. Other parent teacher meetings will be convened as required. Individual teachers can keep a brief record of issues discussed at the parent-teacher meeting. Feedback from parents may also be recorded.
- Pupils' reports are sent home annually. Written reports should be clear, concise and factual, signed by Principal and dated. A copy of each report is kept in the pupil file on Databiz and a hard copy is stored in the record storage room.

Success Criteria

- A range of informal and formal assessment modes is used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- All teachers have responsibility for the assessment of learning and assessment for learning of pupils.
- All teachers must keep a specific Assessment Folder which includes class checklists i.e. Literacy, Numeracy, P.E., Irish as well as individual sections for each child in their class.
- The Assessment Folder will include at least one sample of work / means of assessment of each subject area per child each term.
- All teachers are given an Assessment Calendar at the beginning of each school year.
- SEN co-ordinator ensures there are ample standardised testing materials and diagnostic testing materials in the school. SEN co-ordinator ensures teachers feel confident in the administration of tests and provides support as required.
- Principal has overall responsibility to ensure that the assessment policy is implemented successfully.

Review

- The policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary. The principal will initiate and co -ordinate this review.

Ratification & Communication

This assessment policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

Appendix A: Assessment Toolkit and Calendar: Overview

Screening Test administered to facilitate early identification of pupil's learning	Screening Tests are from the following cases	Screen of these tests occur in	Administered by
PSAK	All EAL pupils	New Pupils: to the school September Previous Pupils: March/April	EAL Teacher
Assessment of children's IEP targets (where necessary)	Pupils with identified needs and IEP's	September January June	Resource Teachers
BIAP – Belfield Infant Assessment Profile	Selected Junior Infant pupils	March/April	Junior Infant Learning Support Teacher
Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment	Pupils with below average attainments	On-going throughout the year.	SEN Team
Drumcondra Early Literacy Test	Senior Infants	May	Class Teacher/SEN Team
PM Benchmark Readers	Junior Infants – 2 nd Class	Tracking occurs in June, December, March. Junior Infants - June	Class Teacher/SEN Team
Drumcondra Reading Test	Senior Infants, 1 st & 2 nd Class	May	Class Teacher with SEN Team
Sigma T	1 st – 2 nd Class	May	Class Teacher with SEN Team
Maths Assessments	Junior Infants – 2 nd Class	October, December, March/April and June	Class Teacher
Ready Set Go Maths Assessments	Senior Infants	As required	SEN team to pupils performing below average
Dolch words	Junior Infants lists 1,2,3 Senior Infants 4,5,6 First class 7,8,9 Second Class 10,11	May/June for Junior Infants Senior Infants to 2 nd Class each term	Class teacher SEN team
Tables	1 st -2 nd Class	Weekly	Class Teacher
Spellings	1 st -2 nd Class	Weekly	Class Teacher
NRIT	1 st Class Children and new children in 2 nd Class	March	Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher
Other Screening Tests	See Appendix C		

Appendix B: Assessment Calendar by Class Level

Junior Infants	PSAK (New EAL students) by EAL Teacher
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	<p>Assessment of children's IEP targets (where necessary) (January/June), all pupils with identified needs and IEP's Administered by Resource Teacher</p> <p>BIAP- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile- Selected Junior Infant pupils (March/April): Administered by Learning Support Teacher</p> <p>Dolch Words-Lists 1,2,3 – May/June: Administered by Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher</p> <p>PM Benchmark readers- June: Administered and tracking by SEN Team</p> <p>Maths Assessments- October, December, April, June: Administered by Class Teacher</p>
Senior Infants	<p>PSAK (New EAL pupils to the school), previous EAL pupils (March/April): Administered by EAL Teacher</p> <p>Assessment of children's IEP targets (where necessary) September, January, June. Pupils with identified needs and IEP's. Administered by Resource Teacher</p> <p>Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment. Administered by Class Teacher/SEN Team</p> <p>Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy-May. Administered by Class Teacher/SEN Team</p> <p>Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy-May. Administered by Class Teacher/SEN Team</p> <p>Ready Set Go Maths-as required by SEN Team</p> <p>Maths Assessment- October, December, March/April, June Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>Dolch Words- Lists 4,5,6 each Term. Administered by Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher</p> <p>PM Benchmark readers-December, March, June. Administered and tracking by SEN Team</p>
First Class	<p>PSAK (New pupils to the school) Administered by EAL Teacher</p> <p>Assessment of children's IEP targets (where necessary) September, January, June. Pupils with identified needs and IEP's. Administered by Resource Teacher</p> <p>Drumcondra Reading Test-May Administered by Class Teacher with SEN Team</p> <p>Sigma-T. May Administered by Class Teacher with SEN Team</p> <p>Maths Assessment-October, December, March/April, June</p>

	<p>Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>PM Benchmark readers-December, March, June. Administered and tracking by SEN Team</p> <p>Spelling-Weekly Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>Tables-Weekly Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>Dolch Words- Lists 7,8,9 each Term. Administered by Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher</p> <p>NRIT 1st class children and new children that arrived in 2nd Class-March Administered by Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher</p>
Second Class	<p>PSAK (New pupils to the school) Administered by EAL Teacher</p> <p>Assessment of children's IEP targets (where necessary) September, January, June all pupils with identified needs and IEP's Administered by Resource Teacher</p> <p>Drumcondra Reading Test-May Administered by Class Teacher with SEN Team</p> <p>Sigma-T. May Administered by Class Teacher with SEN Team</p> <p>Maths Assessment-October, December, March/April, June Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>PM Benchmark readers-December, March, June. Administered and tracking by SEN Team</p> <p>Spelling-Weekly Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>Tables-Weekly Administered by Class Teacher</p> <p>Dolch Words- Lists 10,11 each Term. Administered by Learning Support Teacher/Class Teacher</p>