

St. Patrick's SNS, Corduff

Assessment Policy

Rationale

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff of St. Patrick's SNS in Spring 2015 so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. The P.D.S.T guidelines were used to assist in the drafting of this policy.

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 is central to this process of teaching and learning. Through assessment the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the short term and long term needs of the child and plans accordingly. 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 helps the child become more self-aware as a learner and develops powers of self-assessment.

Aims:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor the learning processes
- 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.

Policy Content:

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

Assessment of Learning

(1) 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

(2) 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 and parents are given feedback.

(3) 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.

(4) The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment

(5) Examples of teacher designed tasks / tests

- Weekly spelling test
- Regular end of topic assessment in maths including a revision section
- Assessments in Irish / English / maths designed by teachers

(6) Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work / progress. Examples include the use of

- KWL
- Rubrics
- Self-editing / drafting / redrafting
- Self-evaluation
- Conferencing

This data will be stored in assessment folders / children's copies.

Standardised Testing:

All classes are tested each year. Up to 2013/2014, the school administered the Micra-T Reading Attainment Test and the Sigma-T Group Mathematics Test in May for children in 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th. Now we administer the Drumcondra English and Maths Tests. New admissions after September will be tested shortly after arrival if scores cannot be gained from previous schools. Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher in the assessment folder with a copy held in the administration office.

Results of standardised tests are reported to parents using the end of year report card and at parent / teacher meetings. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents.

Priority for receiving supplementary teaching will be given to children who score a percentile less than 10. These guidelines in test results are flexible and the professional judgement of classroom teachers will be a crucial part of the selection process.

All third class children will be administered the NNRIT in September by the learning support team. These scores, along with their previous standardised test scores, and discussion with previous teachers and learning support team will determine who is eligible for learning support.

On acceptance of LS parents sign a consent form.

The learning support teacher may then administer one or all of the following tests to these children:

Mathematics:

1. Westwood One Minute Basic Number Facts Tests
2. Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT 4) Math Computation subtest; part 1: Oral Computation, part 2: Math Computation

English:

1. New Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)
2. Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA II)
3. Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)
4. WRAT 4 subtests:
 - Word Reading
 - Sentence Comprehension
 - Spelling
5. Non Verbal Reasoning Test
6. YORK Assessment for Reading Comprehension

Special Educational Needs

Outside Therapists

S< Assessments

OT Assessments

Physiotherapy Assessments

Play Therapy Assessments

CAMHS Assessments

We use guidelines from these assessments to set targets for progression of skills in an individual basis.

Psychological Assessments:

Each September a cohort of children will be identified for assessment / observation that academic year. The class teacher and / or Principal meet parents & a consent form is signed by the parents if the child is targeted for psychological assessment.

The Principal 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 for the pupil if appropriate. It determines the level of intervention either LS, General Allocation or an IEP.

The Principal will ensure that details of relevant reports are transferred with all 6th class pupils on their transfer to Second Level Education.

Recording Results of Assessment:

All teachers have an assessment folder with subject specific assessment documents to be completed during the year. Also included in this folder are:

- list of children who attended LS, EAL, Resource
- List of children with psychological reports
- List of children who attended the school counsellor
- Results of standardised tests (Drumcondra Maths and English)
- Report cards
- List of children with Irish exemptions
- Important Information sheet

End of year assessment results along with teacher observation will determine who will receive LS for the following year.

There are separate folders containing NNRIT results, Drumcondra results and York results.

The standardised test results will be given to the BOM to review overall school standards in Literacy / Numeracy. (No individual results will be identifiable)

Assessment of Learning and Assessment for Learning

As a school we are developing good practice in assessing learning. Results are used:

- To select children for necessary interventions if required
- To measure the progress of the children's learning
- To evaluate for planning targets of class teachers and SEN teachers
- As a guide for professional development
- To guide the school to select target areas of various subjects for further school development planning
- To report to parents
- To highlight good practice and school strengths
- To keep a clear focus on good teaching and learning
- To inform the BOM and DES of levels attained in Numeracy & Literacy

Pupils may receive an exemption from the study of Irish according to circular 12/96 if:

- They function intellectually at average or above average level but have a specific learning disability of such a degree of severity that they fail to achieve expected levels of attainment in basic language skills in the mother tongue

- They have been assessed as having a general learning disability due to serious intellectual impairment and are also failing to attain adequate levels in basic language skills in the mother tongue
- They have been assessed as having a general learning disability due to serious sensory impairment, and are also failing to attain adequate levels in basic language skills in the mother tongue.
- Their primary education up to 11 years of age was received in Northern Ireland or outside Ireland, provided that the parent or guardian who had custody of the pupil was permanently resident in Northern Ireland or outside Ireland during the pupil's period of education up to that age
- They were previously enrolled as recognised pupils in national schools who are being re-enrolled after a period spent abroad, provided that at least three years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the State and the pupil is at least 11 years of age on re-enrolment

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
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities:

Mainstream, Special Education Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in place Stage 1 interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team/Learning Support 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.

Ratification & Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management.

Review Timetable:

This policy will be reviewed each year and amended as necessary.

References:

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

www.sess.ie

Working Together to make a Difference for Children – NEPS

Appendix A: Assessment in the Primary School

Appendix B: Circular 02/05