Scoil Ghráinne Community National School
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etbi
Education & Training Boards Ireland
Bóird Oideachais & Oiliúna Éireann

Scoil Ghráinne CNS - Assessment and Recording Policy

Introduction:

This policy complies with the requirement of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (circular 0056/2011). It has been drafted following extensive teacher reflection on current practices and ongoing professional development in our knowledge of AFL (Assessment for Learning) and AOL (Assessment of Learning). Our aim is to enrich teaching and learning and to report pupil progress to the relevant personnel. In formulating and operating this policy, Scoil Ghráinne CNS understands Assessment to be 'the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes'. (Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum - Guidelines for Schools NCCA, 2007)

In the formation of this policy we take guidance from the following:

- Primary School Curriculum (NCCA,1999)
- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for schools (NCCA, 2007)
- Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People, 2011-2020
- The Aistear Toolkit (NCCA, 2009)

This policy has been guided by the legislative requirements contained within the following:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Data Protection Amendment Act (2003)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

Policy Rationale

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. We value each child as an individual learner and as such place a lot of emphasis on Self-Assessment so that children can reflect on their own learning. Here in Scoil Ghráinne CNS we endeavour to develop a sense of responsibility in the children, in relation to their teaching and learning. This policy endeavours to identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a whole school response to address their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective. In Scoil Ghráinne we also believe that parents play a central role in the education and development of their children and as such will be included and involved in all stages of the assessment process.

Relationship to School Ethos

Scoil Ghráinne CNS seeks to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the child; intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual. Scoil Ghráinne seeks to provide a high standard of education where each child is encouraged to reach his/her full potential. The school is committed to a spirit of inclusion, equality and harmony, where each child is valued and treated with respect. Children attending our school are taught and encouraged to view diversity as something to be proud of and which is reflective of the wider community. At all times we try to ensure a positive school environment and a welcoming teaching and learning atmosphere which is child centered and seeks to address the needs of each individual child. This assessment policy seeks to support our ethos and

identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that academic success, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved by all pupils in our school.

Vision:

Scoil Ghráinne CNS is a learning community where children's learning is paramount. Staff, parents and community members share in the teaching and learning process in ways which are stimulating and appropriate to the children's needs and enhance the children's overall education. Our school seeks to ensure that all members of the school community work in partnership, having the best interest of the pupils at heart.

Through this policy, we will endeavour to help our children to use higher order thinking skills in justifying self-assessment of their own work and in reflecting on their individual learning. It is hoped that through this self-reflection, children will have the opportunity to consolidate their own learning and become more independent and responsible learners.

General Aims:

The general aims of our assessment policy are as follows:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To use standardised test results to monitor and interpret progress at an individual, class and whole school level in relation to national norms
- 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

Principles:

- Teachers can use assessment to make learning more enjoyable, more motivating and more successful for each child
- Assessment is a valuable and formative tool and is part of what a teacher does on a daily basis in his/her classroom
- The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organisation, which encourages children to work independently
- We recognise that assessment may assist in developing positive attitudes towards learning. Affirmative and constructive feedback enhances feelings of success, which in turn encourages self-motivation and responsibility in the pupil for his/her own learning
- Results of assessment are reported in a way that is useful for pupils, teachers, parents and relevant educational agencies such as NEPS. In accordance with Data Protection Guidelines, permission will be sought from parents before sharing personalised information in relation to any child in our school.
- Assessment of behaviour and performance are recorded in school reports, which gradually build up and create a profile for each pupil over his/her school career. They are official school documents. The school reports are stored securely on the school administration system 'Aladdin' which only the teaching staff have access to. A copy of school reports is given to parents.

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Policy Content:

This policy is outlined under the following headings:

a) Purposes of Assessment
b) Assessment Methods
c) Interpreting, recording, using and reporting of assessment information

a) **Purposes of Assessment:**

- To facilitate improved pupil learning
- To assist children to become critical thinkers and to self-assess in order to become more aware of their learning needs
- To effectively use various assessment methods as outlined in the *NCCA Continuum of Assessment Methods* P13 and *The Aistear Toolkit* P80
- To compare and contrast standardised test results for individual children from year to year and to monitor their progress accordingly
- To compare and contrast year group standardised test results against previous year groups results and to analyse the findings to inform teaching and learning going forward.
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able (Centre for Talented Youth) and to contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- To enable teachers to modify their planning and teaching in order to ensure that the particular needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies.

b) **Assessment Methods**

- Scoil Ghráinne recognises the four functions of assessment as being formative, summative, evaluative and diagnostic. Our approach focuses on two principles, both interrelated and complementary approached to assessment; Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL)

AfL:

AfL helps teachers and children to focus on 3 key questions:

- Where are the children now in their learning?
- Where are the children going in their learning?
- How will the children get to the next point in their learning?

Providing feedback to children is central to AfL as the child has an active role in their own learning.

AoL:

In contrast, assessment of learning (AoL) focuses more on the medium and long-term assessment. AoL involves the teacher assessing a child's learning at the end of a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term or a year. The emphasis in AoL is on measuring a child's cumulative progress towards curriculum objectives *(Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007, p8-9)*

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Scoil Ghráinne CNS acknowledges the importance of:

- The sharing of learning intentions with pupils (WALT: We Are Learning To)
- The involvement of the pupils in self-assessment and peer assessment
- Providing pupils with feedback which will lead them to recognise the next step required in their learning e.g. Conferencing
- The involvement of teacher and pupil in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information. It is envisaged that once a term from 1st class onwards that teachers will discuss with each individual child a result from a class assessment e.g. Easter Maths test.

A continuum of assessment methods is used in the school. These range from child-lead to teacher-led. Through the use of class charts/IWB charts, pupil attention is routinely drawn to learning intentions, success criteria and various self-assessment practices. Learning and Assessment Portfolios are kept by the teacher. Throughout the year children may choose work samples to add to their portfolio which helps to provide motivation and support to them as learners. The teacher will also choose specific work samples for the purpose of AoL.

With a view to our pupils taking more responsibility for their own learning, teachers strive to ensure that pupils know:

- What they are going to learn
- How they will recognise when they have succeeded

To this end, the school teaching approach is one where learning intentions are shared with pupils and success criteria are established with pupils. Each teacher will use WALT to reinforce this approach.

The following are a range of assessment methods which each teacher will implement in their classroom.

Assessment Practice	Purpose: To enable the pupil	Operation in Scoil Ghráinne CNS
Self-assessment	To reflect on his/her performance; to document the *What* and *How* of learning	Awareness of the learning intention (**WALT** - We Are Learning To) and establishment of success criteria (stars and wishes) Rubrics (intro 3rd class) KWL Charts (intro 2nd class)
Learning and Assessment Portfolios	To enable the child to develop self-assessment skills, gradually taking more responsibility for the quality of their own work.	Learning and Assessment Portfolios are used in all classes, to develop self-assessment and personal reflection on their learning
Conferencing	To enable the pupil, with assistance of the teacher, to reflect on his/her own work.	Discussion on work through directed teacher questioning /

		discussion with each individual child Conferencing provides an opportunity to share information in order to increase understanding about the child's learning The teacher talks to the child about his/her strengths and achievements and makes suggestions about where and how learning can be improved
Concept Mapping	To enable the pupil to graphically present his/her prior knowledge and understanding about a particular topic and to later amend and extend the map to reflect his/her new learning.	A variety of concept maps are used periodically at the start and end of lessons as agreed by class groups www.mindmeister.com is a very useful tool for creating concept maps
Questioning	To enable pupils to use higher order thinking skills to aid their own learning and through the modelling of good questioning. Children will become more skilful at asking their own questions.	A variety of questions are used to assess children's understanding of new learning. These range from closed questions in which the teacher anticipates a single factual answer to open-ended questions which encourage a more critical, analytical response and facilitates multiple solution paths The Aistear toolkit has a list of questions (p81) which are suitable for use for junior/senior infants
Assessment Practice	**Purpose: To enable the teacher**	**Operation in Scoil Ghráinne CNS**
Teacher Observation	To observe pupil play (Aistear; Jun Infants), pupil's activities, pupil's written work, pupli's discussion and questioning during class or group work and record specific strengths or challenges.	Anecdotal notes to note pupil learning needs. Teacher Observation is part of classroom work. It includes listening and watching, and requires the teacher to notice, recognise and respond to the child's thinking and actions. Observation may focus on an individual child or on a group, but not all children will need the same level of observation at all times.

		Teacher observations occurs spontaneously as children engage in learning activities and those observations may be recorded.
Teacher -designed tasks and tests	To enable the teacher to assess pupil learning, knowledge and understanding through specific set tasks and tests as required.	Frequent oral and written tasks to determine pupil knowledge of the concepts and skills being taught Tasks and tests can take the form of oral or written assessments or practical assignments developed by the teacher to assess children's learning. They can be used throughout the year as a basis for continuous assessment (AFL) Tasks and tests can also be used at the end of an academic year or at the end of a period of learning about a certain topic for the purpose of AoL
Standardised Tests	To establish a standardised measurement of pupil achievement in English reading and Mathematics compared to other children throughout the country at the same class level or age level.	Standardised tests are administered in accordance with the requirements of Circular 56/2011 to all classes from 1st-6th. Sigma-T mathematics assessment and Micra-T reading attainment tests are administered during May of each year. The results of these tests are shared with the parents in the end of year report card. Teachers need to be familiar with key concepts such as raw scores, standard scores, percentile ranks and STEN scores when interpreting and recording test results. All results are recorded on Aladdin under each child's profile.

Test2r

The Trinity Early Screening Test (TEST2r) will be used by the class teacher as a formative assessment tool, with a view to modifying teaching, so that the child can learn a particular emergent literacy skill. It seeks to guide teachers as to what a 5 or 6 yr old child needs to be taught in order that s/he may become a flexible reader.

This test is an Irish early screening and diagnostic test to indicate which children may develop literacy difficulties. It indicates how a child is progressing in the sub skills of literacy acquisition and what interventions, if any, need to be put in place. Scoil Ghráinne will administer TEST2r (5 screener tasks) for the first time in April 2017 to all Senior Infant

pupils. All tests are administered 1:1. If a child has difficulty with any of the five tasks, then the pupil will do the diagnostic section (13 tasks).

Running Records

Running Records are administered on a termly basis by the Special Educational Needs Team (SEN Team) on all pupils from Senior Infants - 2nd Class. These assessments are used to place the student at an instructional reading level using the PM Toolkit for Assessment. Using the CAFE programme, a priority target is chosen for each pupil from the following headings; Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency and Expanding Vocabulary. Each pupil will be given feedback and will work towards progressing in that target area over the coming term.

Running Records are also administered from 3rd - 6th Class at the beginning of each school year to find their instructional level.

Non Verbal Reasoning Test (NVRT)

Scoil Ghráinne CNS administers the NVRT to children in 2nd and 5th class each academic year. This test is administered in conjunction with the class teacher and the Learning Support Resource Team. The NVRT involves no reading which can provide insight into the abilities of pupils who think more easily in images than words and those who have limited reading skills, for example dyslexic children, poorly motivated pupils who haven't learned to read, or those who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL). Results from the NVRT are recorded and stored securely on the Aladdin system.

EAL Assessment - Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK)

This is an English language proficiency test which assesses the four separate skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are 3 levels of proficiency; A1, A2 and B1. The lowest level is A1 and the children scoring between A1.1 and B1.2 are considered for English Language Support. These levels are further subdivided into 3 sub levels. When a child reaches a proficiency level of B1.3, they are then considered proficient in the particular skill area. This test is not administered to native English speakers / indigenous Irish children.

Psychological Assessment

Class teachers will use the 'Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support' (NEPS 2007) and 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties: A Continuum of Support' (NEPS, 2010) to identify and cater for the special educational needs of individual pupils. These guidelines outline a 3 stage approach if you have concerns about individual children in your class. If Stage 1 (classroom support) and Stage 2 (School Support) on the Continuum fail to deliver adequate intervention the class teacher will consult the Deputy Principal and LSRT Team to discuss potential appropriate diagnostic assessments. Further to this the class teacher, in conjunction with the school principal, will contact the parents for permission to begin the process of potentially securing a Psychological Assessment for their child. If secures the Psychological Assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention e.g. Resource hours or further interventions from an outside agency.

Success Criteria

This policy is considered to be successful if:

- Early identification of children's learning needs and appropriate interventions are achieved

- Clarity is achieved by all teaching staff regarding procedures involved in the staged approach
- Procedures regarding all areas of assessment are clear and defined
- The principal, LS/RT team and classroom teachers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Teachers are clear on how and where to access recent and previous assessment on children in their class
- In addition to assessment information, there is an effective transfer of information between teachers as regards children's learning and behavioural needs

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of the class teacher to become familiar with and use the assessment methods as outlined in this document. If the classroom teacher has specific concerns about an individual child, it is their responsibility to set in place staged interventions at class level (Stage 1). At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared by both the LSRT Team and the class teacher. The Deputy principal/Principal assumes a primary role as Stage 3 when a psychological assessment may be required. Parents have a role at all 3 stages and the lines of communication will always be kept open. Outside of the staged intervention approach parents will work collaboratively with the teacher on any recommendations made. This will ensure the highest levels of learning are achieved for the child both in school and at home. In addition the LSRT Team have primary responsibility for ordering, administering and scoring all standardised tests, screening and diagnostic tests. They also have responsibility for recording all tests.

Implementation

This policy will be fully implemented.

Ratification & Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management Scoil Ghráinne CNS. This policy is subject to regular review.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Date: September 2025 Date: September 2025