Policy on Assessment

Introduction:
This policy was originally drafted November 2018 by the Principal and teachers of St. Enda's N.S. and was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2019.

Policy Rationale:
The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavors to monitor to all pupil's progress and to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and to put in place a school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

Relationship to School Ethos:
The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child, the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective Assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self esteem are achieved.

Aims and Objectives:
The primary aims/objectives of the policy are;

1. To facilitate improved pupil learning
2. To create a procedure for monitoring achievement
3. To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers
4. To coordinate assessment procedures on a school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses as well as making decisions in relation to content, methodology and acquisition of resources in the future. This policy is designed to support our SEN policy.

Policy Content:
This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally gifted, so that adequate strategies are put in place early enough to facilitate remediation. These strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes, classroom support plans and school support plans. Appendix 1 outlines our yearly schedule for assessments throughout the school.

Class-based Assessment`(AFL and AOL)
The most common forms of assessment used in our school are:
- teacher observation,
- teacher designed tests,
- criterion referenced tests, (textbook assessments)
- portfolios, (Art folders, work samples)
- projects and homework (informal assessment).
- Weekly spelling/tables tests
- WALT and WILF

These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers. Records of teacher-designed tests are kept by the individual teachers and communicated to parents at the Parent-teacher meetings and communication with parents throughout the year.. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing.

Each mainstream teacher must maintain an assessment folder with the following items as a minimum.

- Section A: General class records This section includes results and analysis of standardised tests, class checklists, class test results, etc.

- Section B: Pupil profiles This section can be divided into subsections i.e. one per child. The following information may be included for each child: Child's name, class level Interests, Strengths, learning needs P-T meetings: dates, issues, actions taken Observations regarding subject areas (always dated) Selected samples of child's work* (dated)

NB. A small number of carefully selected samples gathered during the year are more meaningful and useful than having large quantities.

Standardised Testing:
The school uses the standardised tests Micra T for testing literacy and Sigma T for testing numeracy. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are administered in the first week of June by the class teacher. Standard Scores are recorded on the the school's administrative software, Aladdin. The results of these tests are communicated to parents in the end of year school report issued in June. A common approach is used in this communication, STen scores being used for both tests. Class based STens are used in the case of literacy. Drumcondra Spelling Tests are also administered annually from 1st class upwards.
The staff analyse the results in order to help with the allocation of teaching resources to pupils in the new school year.
The overall school scores and individual class performances are analysed by plotting the percentile scores on a series of graphs. The schools performance in comparison to the national average scores in these tests is also examined using this method.
Targets for improving achievement levels in literacy and numeracy for the coming years in the school, are set by the teachers using this data.

Diagnostic Assessment:
Such tests are administered by the Special Education Teachers following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by **Circular 02/05** where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing /psychological assessment. Parents are provided with test results and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a consent form is completed. The Principal will facilitate such an assessment happening where possible, taking into account the allocation provided to the school by the National Educational Psychological Service and the level of need.

Ballycanew National School

The diagnostic tests used in the school include;

<u>Literacy:</u>
- Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment
- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
- Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)
- York
- PhaB
- Test2r
- Quest
- Aston Index
- Primary School Assessment Kit
- RAIN sentence test
- Sayles Non Word Reading Assessment
- Drumcondra English Profiles (oral, reading and writing)

<u>Numeracy:</u>
- Quest 2nd Edition
- Profile of mathematical skills - ~Norman France
- Access Mathematics Test - Colin McCarthy
- The Dyscalculia Assessment

Screening:
The screening tests used to identify learning strengths and weaknesses in the school are;

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Bellfield
- Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)
- Sigma T
- Micra T
- P.M. Benchmarking
- Drumcondra Spelling Test

These tests are administered individually or on a class basis. Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per **Circular 24/03** and **Circular 02/05.**

Recording:
Each pupil has a file which is stored in the administration office. Psychological assessment reports are stored in this file. Diagnostic test scores, records of standardised test results and end of year reports are stored on Aladdin and also stored in the school archive.Front pages of test booklets only are kept on file and the rest are discarded as per Data Protection policy. Procedures are in place to manage such sensitive data (see Data Protection Policy).

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
- The Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is an efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities:
Mainstream, Special Education Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. Parents have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must be always kept open.

Implementation:
This policy becomes effective from February 2019.

Ratification & Communication:
This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2019 and communicated to parents thereafter.

Review Timetable:
This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

References:
DES Circulars 02/05 – 24/03
DES Circular 56/11
DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000
Assessment in the primary School, Guidelines for schools. NCCA 2008

Reporting to Outside Agencies on Individual Pupils
All requests should be notified to the Principal. When the report is complete, it should be sent to the Principal for forwarding to the Outside Agency. The Staff member should keep a copy of the report and a copy should be kept in the school records. A copy of the request should also be kept on file and the reason why the report was sought. The Principal will have the discretion to bring any sensitive reports or requests to the Board of management for their attention, advice or direction.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____
Date

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed--
Principal.

Appendix 1

Ballycanew National School
Assessment/SEN – Yearly Timetable

September	February
● Drumcondra Spelling Form A – 1st class (class teacher) *	● Student Support Plans completed for second instructional period

Ballycanew National School

• Drumcondra Spelling Form A – new pupils to school (support teacher) • PM Benchmarking Senior Infants (support teacher) • PM Benchmarking – new pupils to school (support teacher) • Diagnostic testing eg YARC (support teacher) • *Care plans reviewed by end of month*	(drawn up by support teacher in consultation with C.T. parents, pupil and outside agencies) • Diagnostic testing eg YARC (support teacher)
October • Student Support Plans completed (drawn up by support teacher in consultation with C.T. parents, pupil and outside agencies)	**March**
November	**April** • Class end of term assessments (class teacher)
December • Class end of term assessments (class teacher)	**May** • Micra-T 1st-6th class (class teacher) • SigmaT 1st-6th class (class teacher) • Drumcondra Spelling Form B 1st – 6th (class teacher)
January • PM Benchmarking - Junior Infants (support teacher) • Student Support Plans reviewed formally (drawn up by support teacher in consultation with C.T. parents, pupil and outside agencies)	**June** • Class end of year assessments (class teacher) • PM Benchmarking 1st class • PM Benchmarking 2nd – 6th At request of class teacher (support teachers) **Guided reading levels should be listed and passed on in Assessment folder for next class teacher** • Micra/Sigma T absentees (support teachers) • Analyse standardised tests (support teachers and Management)

Blue = class teacher   Red = support teachers