



Bandonbridge N.S. Assessment Policy

Date of formulation: September 2003

Date of review: September 2018

Date of review: 03/11/2021

Introductory Statement and Rationale

This policy was originally formulated by the teaching staff in Autumn 2003 so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. It has been updated and reviewed regularly.

The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance to teachers, parents and other interested persons on the assessment of pupils in Bandonbridge National School.

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).

Aims of our Assessment 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 identify the SEN and EAL requirements in our school
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis.

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
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes and their teaching methodologies in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupil's 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

Range of Assessment Methods Used Throughout the School:

Both assessment of learning and assessment for learning will be used by teachers to make professional judgements about pupil achievement/progress. The range of assessment methods to be used throughout the school are outlined below. Assessment for each subject is mentioned in the relevant curriculum plans.

Assessment for learning may include:

- Teacher Observation
- Self-assessment
- Concept Mapping
- Questioning
- KWL (What I know, what I want to know, what I have learned)
- WALT (We Are Learning Today) and WILF (What I Am Looking For)
- Homework assignments
- Self-editing/drafting/redrafting
- Parental feedback
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Digital assessments: online apps for learning
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Psychological assessments

Assessment of Learning may include: (Pupils aware of their own learning)

- Teacher designed tasks and tests - weekly spelling test, weekly tables test etc.
 - Termly assessments in Maths (Busy at Maths Assessment Tests), assessments in Irish/English/Maths designed by teachers
 - Self-assessment
 - Work samples, including Word documents, slideshows, documents produced using digital apps i.e. Book Creator
 - Self-editing/drafting/redrafting
 - Digital apps/software to reinforce class learning
 - Projects
 - Checklists
 - Pupils' collaboration with SET on learning needs in preparing a School Support Plan or School Support Plan Plus
 - My Thoughts About School
- The above assessment methods may be used at the discretion of individual teachers, depending on the requirements of individual pupils, class level or subject.
 - Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work/progress.

Further Assessment:

- **Preliminary Screening Tests:** When identifying pupils who may need additional support in Literacy or Numeracy, the class teacher may administer screening tests. The particular screening measures that are administered will depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils. A Classroom Support Plan may be put in place where needs are identified (see also Inclusion of Pupils with SEN Policy)
- In Infants, **Early Intervention Testing** may include the Non-Verbal Reasoning Test, especially where a child has little or no language.
- All pupils with EAL needs who are new to the school will be assessed using the Primary School Assessment Kit Initial Interview. The EAL teacher will use these findings to plan a programme of work for these children (see also English as an Additional Need Policy).
- Additionally, all EAL pupils who have received 3 or fewer years of EAL teaching, will be assessed annually in February using the Primary School Assessment Kit. There are 4 skills to assess using this kit: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. These test results will be used to further plan for their teaching and learning. Pupils who attain level B1.3 on all 4 skills are ready to be fully integrated into their class.
- A staffing appeal for the support/appointment of an EAL teacher is made annually in the spring using these test results.
- **Annual Standardised Tests**
 - The NNRIT will be administered to 1st, 3rd and 5th classes annually at the end of Sept/early October
 - Test 2R is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants in October
 - Drumcondra Spelling Test is administered to 1st – 6th classes in February
 - Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy is administered to Senior Infants in May
 - Drumcondra Maths Screening Test is administered to 1st class in May
 - Drumcondra Maths Test 2nd – 6th is administered in May
 - Drumcondra Reading Test 1st – 6th is administered in May
- **Diagnostic Tests**

The SET may administer a diagnostic test where pupils test scores on the above standardised test are particularly low or show anomalies, where the classroom support plan is insufficient for the needs of the pupils and/or as a requirement for a referral to an outside professional (see list below). Standard referral forms are to be used for these:

- Test2R diagnostic assessment
- YARC – York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (there is a variety of reading assessments for different age groups in this kit)
- Non-Verbal Reasoning Test
- Verbal Reasoning Test
- Single Word Spelling Test

Outside Professional Services may include:

- Primary Care Children's Services (non-complex needs):
 - Speech & Language Assessments
 - Occupational Therapy Assessments
 - Psychological Assessments: NEPS, behavioural assessments, clinical assessments
 - Physiotherapy Services
- Children's Network Disability Team (complex needs)
- Assessment Of Need services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – referrals through family G.P. only

Roles and Responsibilities:

Class teachers, Special Education Teachers, EAL teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility for assessment and referral of pupils in the school. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to carry out regular assessments of and for learning. Class teachers are responsible for administering standardised testing as outlined. SETs may assist with administration of these tests where necessary. Class teachers are responsible for opening a classroom support plan for pupils who require additional classroom interventions. set in train interventions at class level. The EAL teacher, with the support of the Principal, is responsible for regular assessments of the EAL pupils using both the Primary School Assessment Kit and teacher-designed assessments. The SETs are responsible for administering diagnostic assessments (or additional standardised testing, as required). SETs should maintain an assessment folder with copies of the tests administered. SETs are responsible for planning a support programme to address the needs of the pupils arising from the tests, as well as other factors. SETs and class teachers are responsible for uploading test results to Aladdin. The Deputy Principal/SEN co-ordinator is responsible for overseeing testing by the SEN team, ensuring that test materials are accessible, reordering testing resources, keeping informed of updates to testing materials, as well as government requirements on assessment in primary schools. The Principal will have oversight of all aspects of assessment in the school and is consulted where referrals to outside agencies might be necessary. The Principal will liaise with teachers when it is necessary to discuss pupil needs with parents/guardians.

Recording and Storing of Information

- The results of assessments will guide the drafting of a support plans for the pupil if appropriate and determine the level of intervention.
- All scores from standardised tests are recorded on Aladdin from which a class record sheet can be printed and stored by each individual teacher and the Principal.
- Results of these most recent standardised tests are gathered, analysed, correlated and used as an aid in prioritising learning needs each year. The SET team will discuss these results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.
- Pupil Support Files and Pupil Report booklets are kept securely in the relevant classroom.
- SETs keep a record of all diagnostic testing and relay information to relevant teachers and parents/guardians.
- The Principal keeps and files all outside professional reports safely in a locked filing cabinet.

Reporting:

- Results of the most recent Standardised Test results are reported to Parents at Parent/Teacher meeting in November.
- Results of the most recent Standardised Tests are included in the end of year school report which is circulated to parents/guardians 2 weeks before the school holidays, allowing time for parents/guardians to meet with the class teacher to discuss them, if they wish to do so. The results are discussed by the teachers at the end of the year, in preparation for teaching and learning in the following school year. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents.
- Results of the most recent standardised tests are gathered, correlated and used as an aid in prioritising learning needs each year and the identification of SEN grid is drafted.
- The Principal will forward the 6th Class Passport documents to the relevant secondary schools on receipt of a request from those school.
- The overview of standardised test results will be given to the BOM to review overall school standards in Literacy/Numeracy.
- The STEN scores from 2nd, 4th and 6th classes will be uploaded by the principal to the POD system in June.

Review of Policy

A review of this policy will be initiated as the need arises i.e. updated testing materials become available, Department of Education requirements change or where the current practices are deemed insufficient or unsatisfactory.

Ratification and Communication

The original policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2003. It has been amended accordingly and the amended policy given to teachers via the teachers' online Drive.

A copy will be kept on file at the school to enable parents/guardians who wish to review the policy to do so. The policy is available to view on the school website.