



*Ballycullane National School New Ross, Co Wexford.*

*Phone: 051 562542*

*E-mail: [ballycullanens.ias@eircom.net](mailto:ballycullanens.ias@eircom.net)*

*Web: [ballycullanens.com](http://ballycullanens.com)*

## **Policy on Assessment**

**This policy was reviewed by the whole school staff at a meeting in January 2015. Changes reflect new tests available or new assessment requirements/recommendations by the Department of Education and Skills. NCCA Guidelines for Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum 2007 were adhered to.**

### **Policy Rationale:**

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective. 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. It is integral to all areas of the curriculum and to the child's growth in self-esteem and acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

### **Relationship to School Ethos:**

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and 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 is achieved.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

The primary aims/objectives of the policy are;

- To facilitate improved pupil learning
- To create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers.
  
- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- 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.
- To outline specific strategies for monitoring the progress of all pupils with particular learning needs

### **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 and individual education plans.

### **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
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

## **Assessment of Learning and Assessment For Learning**

### **Informal Assessment**

(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 on a regular basis.

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

- KWL
- Self-editing / drafting / redrafting
- Comments good / needs improvement
- Self-evaluation using symbol e.g. Traffic Light System/Thumbs up

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

### **Standardised Testing:**

The school uses Micra-T and Sigma-T tests. All classes from First class upwards are tested annually. The Micra T test is usually administered in May and the Sigma T in early June. Results of standardized tests including sTen, Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held by the Principal. The SET analyse the results in June with a view to allocation of resources to pupils in September. The whole school staff will together review the needs of such pupils during pre-term meeting in August.

In our school we choose to screen Senior Infants using the Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) during the last term each year.

Results of assessment tests will sometimes act as a basis for School Self Evaluation and as a tool in assessing progress in attaining our targets.

### **Diagnostic Assessment:**

Diagnostic tests used by the school are administered by the Learning Support and Resource 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.

The diagnostic tests used in the school include;

- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
- Bangor Dyslexia Test
- Non Reading Intelligence Test

### **Screening:**

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

- SPAR / Parallel Spelling Test
- Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)
- MIST
- Micra-T
- Sigma-T
- Basic Number Screening Test

These tests are administered individually or on a class basis. The MIST is administered on a class basis around Easter of each year, while others are administered individually by the Learning Support Teacher when deemed appropriate.

Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per **Circular 24/03** and **Circular 02/05**.

## **Psychological Assessment: A Staged Approach**

**Stage 1** – Class teacher puts in place interventions to help child in question and assess on a continual basis.

**Stage 2** – Special Education Teachers and Class Teacher work together in a learning support role and in assessing and monitoring child's development and difficulties and administer diagnostic test having received parental permission. Where these two stages have been put in place and difficulties are still evident for a child the class teacher/Principal will contact the parents for permission to secure a psychological assessment for their child. An assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it 'Learning Support Resource' hours or an 'Individual Education Plan'. The most common form of assessment used in our school is teacher observation, teacher designed tests, projects and homework (informal assessment). 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 meeting and the school report issued at the end of the school year. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing. The most common types of informal teacher designed testing in our school are math's tests, spelling tests and quizzes.

Our Learning Support Policy highlights the order and priority in which Learning Support help is given.

## **Psychological Assessment**

Our school is helped by NEPS (National Educational Psychological Services) who provide us with a psychologist who administers psychological assessments. Priority is given to those children who are deemed to be in most need of these assessments following adequate intervention at class level.

### **Recording and Reporting:**

Standardised test results are kept by the Principal and in a file in Learning Support Filing Cabinet. Each teacher should receive a copy of the class sheets relevant to their classes. It is a requirement that results are communicated to parents on the NCCA approved School Report Card at the end of each school year.

**Education (Welfare) Act (2000)** Section 28 of the **Education (Welfare) Act (2000)** places a responsibility on the principal to pass on information regarding the welfare of a child to other professionals involved in supporting his/her education. The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (Section 28) (Prescribed Bodies) Regulations 2005 ensures that information can be shared in the following instances when the purpose of sharing the information is to monitor and further the child's learning:

- between schools when a child transfers (primary to primary and primary to post-primary)
- between a school and the National Council for Special Education when seeking the Council's assistance
- between a school and the National Education Welfare Board, the DES Inspectorate and the National Educational Psychological Service.

### **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 efficient transfer of information between teachers and to parents.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level and to record evidence of same. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Teachers. 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.

**Implementation:**

This policy is effective immediately.

**Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2011 initially and communicated to parents thereafter. This review and update in January 2015

**Review Timetable:**

This policy will be again reviewed in 2 years time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

**References:**

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03  
 DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000  
[www.sess.ie](http://www.sess.ie)

Working Together to make a Difference for Children – NEPS  
 Assessment in the Primary School Guidelines for Schools –NCCA 2007

**Ratification and Review**

This policy was presented to the Board of Management in Term 2 2015

It was ratified by the Board of Management on      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, BoM

**Review Date: 2017/2018**