Urlingford National School, Kilkenny

Roll Number- 19930D

- Assessment Policy -

Introduction:

This policy was devised during the academic year 2024/2025. A balanced combination of Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning will be used to support assessment of children's progress and achievement and to extend and enrich their learning.

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.

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 co-ordinate assessment procedures on a school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.

Principles

● Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole curriculum and learning opportunities. The main purpose of assessment must be to facilitate progress in a pupil`s learning.

● Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.

● The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organisation, which encourages children to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group.

● The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.

● We recognize the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success, which encourages further study.

● Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.

● Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should be easily accessible.

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 and progress. These strategies may include pupil self-assessment, pupil profiling, two-way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and student support files.

Forms of assessment:

The two principle approaches to assessment are:

1. Assessment for Learning (AFL) Assessment for learning seeks to identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes into consideration pupils' strengths and weaknesses. It enables continuous reflection on what pupils know and what they need to learn next. It also promotes immediate intervention and enables teachers to meet the needs of individual children more effectively. Assessment for Learning include:

- Teacher Observation
- Conferencing
- Self-assessment
- Concept Mapping
- Questioning
- KWL (What I Know, what I Want to know, what I have Learned)
- WALT/WILF
- Homework assignments (Pupils homework is corrected the following school day)
- Parental feedback or observations
- Teacher designed Tasks and Tests,
- Standardised Testing and Diagnostic Testing
- Individual Maths Profiles (Infants)
    - Checklists

2. Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of Learning provides a summary judgement of what has been learned at a particular point in time. Assessment of learning compares children to externally agreed criteria and standards. It identifies gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. These interrelated and complementary approaches emphasise two aspects of assessment that are central to the work of teachers in our school. The teacher uses evidence on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning. (AfL). The teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents, teacher and other relevant persons.

Assessment of learning may include:

- The strategies above
- Weekly Tests
- Termly Tests in Core Subjects of English, Irish and Maths
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Psychological assessments

These assessment methods demonstrate the diversity of assessment methods available and in use in our school. They include methods which are teacher lead (standardised testing) and child-led (self-assessment). All curricular areas are assessed using appropriate methods.

Assessment Folder - Each teacher will keep a record of assessment in their own Assessment Folder.

- <u>Informal Assessment</u>

Homework and class work are marked and comments are made as appropriate. Marks and especially grades are not usually given. Work is ticked or stamped to indicate that the teacher has looked at it and a written comment or verbal comment will be given to indicate sources of error, spelling mistakes, good points etc. will normally be made.

'Informal' assessment is ongoing during all lessons in response to oral work, team work, skill development, project work etc.

- Two Stars and a Wish
- Traffic Lights
- Writing Checklists
- Class work
- Completion of Project work

The completed project or notes on a topic is collected and marked. The marking recognizes excellence and indicates the areas that need improvement.

Standardised Testing:

The school uses the Drumcondra Reading and Spelling & Sigma-T Maths Tests and Micra -T. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered in May by the class teacher. Results are recorded and stored on Aladdin. The SET Team and School SENCO analyses the results in June to aid the allocation of resources to pupils in September. Set Timetables for upcoming School Year are organised and put in place in late June in advance of upcoming School Year.

Diagnostic Assessment:

Such tests are administered by the SET teachers following referral by the class teachers in consultation with the Principal, SENCO and the 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:

1. WRAT Wide Range Achievement Test

2. Drumcondra diagnostic for Literacy (Senior Infants)

3.Belfield Infant Assessment Profile.

Screening:

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

1. Middle Infant Screening Test-MIST administered to Senior Infants- as per Learning Support Policy.

3. Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) administered to 2nd & 4th classes annually

4. Gls dyslexia screener

5.Jackson Phonics

6. Basic skills checklist (ASD Class)

7. Drumcondra Literacy and Numeracy (Senior Infants)

8. Phonics Play assessments

9. British Ability Scale

10. The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills. (ASD Class)

The MIST and BIAP are administered on a class basis each year.

Continuum of Support

Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per Continuum of Support and department guidelines.

Stage 1: Classroom Support

Stage 2: School Support

Stage 3: School Support Plus

If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver adequate intervention, the Principal or SENCO will contact the parents for permission to seek advice and/or intervention from NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service). This advice will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it a differentiated programme, in-class support or a 'Student Support Plan' or psychological assessment if required. 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 tests are kept by the individual teachers in their assessment folder in a secure location in their room and communicated to parents after weekly tests, 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.

Recording:

A hard copy of Files is stored in the SET room. These files record standardised test results and end of year reports. This information is available to teachers, as the child progresses through the system. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data. Test scores are also stored on Aladdin Online School Management System.

Success Criteria:

This policy is considered successful if:

• Early identification and intervention are 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.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The SET Team and SENCO will co-ordinate standardised testing within the school. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in place staged interventions at class level.

At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The principal is involved at all stages of the continuum of support and 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.

Reporting

Information in relation to the assessment of children will be routinely reported.

Information will be communicated to parents through:

- Weekly tests

● Parent teacher meetings.

● End of year reports.

● Standardised tests are reported through the end of year report. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if any more information is required.

Psychological Assessment:

A continuous process of review of all children who are experiencing difficulties will take place annually. As part of this process the prioritization of children with the greatest level of need will take place based on the observations of class and SET teachers, diagnostic assessments and available assessment capacity as informed by NEPs. If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver adequate intervention, the Principal or SENCO will contact the parents to recommend or seek permission to secure a psychological assessment for their child. An assessment will act as an aid in determining the subsequent level of intervention, be it School Support or School Support Plus. Priority for assessment will be given in the following order:

● Children with Emotional and Behavioural Needs

● Children on School Support Plus

● Children on School Support

Ratification & Communication:

This Policy was devised during the 24/25 School Year. A copy of this policy will be posted on the school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management in April 2025.

Review Timetable:

This policy will be 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

NCCA Assessment in the Primary School

NEPS – A Continuum of Support

Signed _____ Chairperson B.O.M Date _____

Signed _____ Principal Date _____