



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Assessment 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 whole school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective. Our interpretation of assessment is any activity which evaluates the teaching and learning which occurs within the school. The results of assessment should advise both teacher and pupil of area of teaching and learning that remain to be completed. Assessments should be viewed positively and provide a learning experience for all involved. It should take into account the viability of individual pupils in relation to their learning and of the skills of individual teachers. Assessment may be formal or informal.

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 relative success, increased confidence and raised self- esteem is achieved. Early detection of learning problems will help all pupils reach their true potential as individuals and as members of the wider community. The ability to read and write and accurate numeric skills are a basic requirement of our curriculum. To help all children achieve their full potential and identify areas of weakness a comprehensive assessment policy is required.

Aims:

The primary aims / objectives of the policy are to:

- facilitate improved pupil learning
- find out where a child is at in terms of Literacy and Numeracy skills
- identify children who need learning support
- inform teachers of children's progress in other curricular areas

It should be noted that

- Assessment can be used as a diagnostic tool
- Assessment can measure progress
- Assessment can be used to identify children who need learning support
- Assessment can be used to measure and check specific objectives
- Assessment to be both formal and informal
- Assessment can be used to inform teachers planning
- Teachers should keep records of assessment in their individual classes



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Principles

1. 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.
2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.
3. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the Curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.
4. 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.
5. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
6. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should not be administratively burdensome.

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 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.

Guidelines:

Assessment is an activity which measures the progress of children. It may be formal or informal and include:

- Teacher based tests and tasks
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Assessment by professionals in the area of education
- Completed assignments by pupil, projects, copybooks, activities, work samples
- Parental/pupil feedback and observation
- Teacher observation, visual and auditory
- Homework diary, copies
- Portfolios where children are perceived to be experiencing learning difficulties



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Standardised Tests used at present in Killoughteen N.S.

MIST administered in term 2 to seniors

Drumcondra early maths screening administered in May to seniors

Drumcondra early numeracy screening administered in May to seniors

Drumcondra Primary Maths administered in May (1st – 6th Class)

Drumcondra Primary Reading administered in May (1st – 6th Class)

Diagnostic Spelling test administered in September (2nd - 6th class)

CAT4 digital administered in term 2 to all 2nd class

Classroom Assessment

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 / end of year report. 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 Maths tests and spelling tests.

1. Informal Assessment

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

2. Class work

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

3. Homework

Homework is checked both formally and informally in a routine way.

4. Workbook Copies for Irish, English, SESE

Written activities will be completed and will be passed on from class to class. The completed work within will show continuity and progression.



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Primary to Secondary

For pupils leaving the school, up to date records are passed on to the principal by the class teacher for forwarding to the new school. The school passport form will be completed and forwarded to the new school.

Standardised Testing

The school administers the Drumcondra maths and English tests each May. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered towards the end of the month of May by the class teacher. Standard and Percentile Rankings scores are recorded on the class Record template and stored on the Aladdin system. The SET Teachers analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

Pupils in Senior Infants are informally assessed using the MIST test in February and Drumcondra Literacy and Numeracy Screening Test in May/June.

Following DES guidelines a STEN score for all standardised tests will be written in the end of year reports.

Screening

The screening tests used to identify learning strengths and weaknesses in our school are –

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Drumcondra Early Numeracy Test
- Drumcondra Early Literacy Test
- Drumcondra primary maths
- Drumcondra primary reading
- Diagnostic spelling test
- CAT4
- Lexplore assessment
- Pm Benchmark

These tests are administered individually or on a whole class basis. Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per continuum of support.



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Diagnostic Assessment

All diagnostic tests used by the school are administered by the SEN 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.

Diagnostic Tests used by SET Teachers include:

- Yarc assessment of reading comprehension (YARC)
- Yarc early reading
- Lexplore
- Phonological awareness assessment
- Drumcondra early literacy- diagnostic
- Drumcondra early numeracy-diagnostic
- Words their way
- Talkboost KS1 and KS 2

Parents are advised of the outcome 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 psychologist may also deem it necessary for the SEN Teacher to assess children using two tests. The psychologist will use these results obtained by the SEN Teacher to formulate their own report. The CAT4 test of ability and the Woodcock Johnson III Test will sometimes be administered upon recommendation by the school psychologist.

Psychological Assessment

If all stages fail to deliver adequate intervention 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 access to SEN hours or an Individual Education Plan.



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Recording

Standardised Test scores are stored electronically on Aladdin.

Children receiving extra support in school have a separate file in SET room which contains their diagnostic tests and samples of work. Pupil support files are on google drive and are reviewed termly.

Teacher Observation:

Teachers will observe and evaluate children under the following headings:

- Behaviour in classroom/playground
- Presentation of work copies
- Pupil attendance
- Homework
- Social interaction with other children

When children are experiencing difficulties in any of these areas the classroom teacher will complete the classroom support checklist.

All such records as well as pupil support plans are stored on google drive.

Progress of children experiencing learning difficulties may be assessed using the following:

- Teacher's tests
- Diagnostic tests
- Criterion reference tests

These assessments are used to inform the SEN teacher, Principal and parents and other teachers in the school of the level of difficulty a child is experiencing. Only teaching staff have access to these records.

Annual Report Cards

Annual Report Cards are issued to parents at the end of the school year

The NCCA recommended template is used and duplicates of all reports are sent to parents in June before the end of the school year. The NCCA template was agreed on by the staff and a duplicate will be kept on file.

It is proposed to keep these reports in the school records until the children reach 21 years of age.



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Completing Report Cards:

Under personal and social development the following areas will be graded:

- Self-confidence
- Attitude to school
- General behaviour
- Attitude to other pupils
- Involvement in school activities
- Homework
- Attendance
- Punctuality

These will be grade by ticking boxes indicating:

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair

Subject areas can be marked by ticking boxes marked:

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair

The Principal signs all report cards before they are issued to parents via Aladdin Connect. Reports may be discussed with parents if problems arise. To facilitate this, reports will be given to parents two weeks prior to summer holidays.

It has been agreed by the staff to use the following general comments in filling our report cards:

- Making satisfactory progress
- Doing well
- Very pleased with his/her progress
- Works well but more attention needed with homework
- Excellent student
- Very satisfactory
- Making excellent progress
- Should do well in Secondary School
- Methodical in approach to work
- Diligent student
- Motivated/ competitive/ enthusiastic/love of learning



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

- Articulate/artistic/creative/sporty
- Not reaching full potential
- Not focused
- Easily distracted/disorganised
- Is not working well
- Could do much better
- Room for improvement
- Needs to read more
- Not working to the best of his/her ability

Individual teachers reserve the right to use more detailed comments than these if they feel the individual situation merits it.

Where at all possible children are praised and this is reflected in written report. Where a percentage mark is used to indicate performance on the report cards the following structure shall apply:

Excellent shall be awarded to pupils who average a score of 85% or more over the year or at the end of year exams. This mark is assigned to pupils who display high competency in the subject area, having a natural ability or application. These pupils would grasp new knowledge and skills easily or would be exceptionally diligent in work and tasks completed.

Very good shall be awarded to pupils who average a score between 70%-85% over the year or at the end of year exams. This mark is assigned to pupils who are above average, learn easily, are competent or/and work diligently in subject area. No evident problems are apparent.

Good shall be awarded to pupils who average a score between 55%-70% over the year or at the end of year exams. This mark is assigned to pupils who are above average, consistent, keeping up with the class and work completed and who are progressing.

Fair shall be awarded to pupils who average a score between 41%-55% over the year or at the end of year exams. This mark is assigned to pupils who are below average, may be struggling with relevant knowledge and skills, may not be applying themselves and who need to work harder or put in more effort.

It should be remembered for some pupils, that the mark awarded is a reflection of hard work and application and reflects the maximum that that pupil can attain in a particular subject area given their innate intelligence and individual circumstances. This can be reflected in the teacher's comments.

Where pupils are receiving additional help, the report will be filled in by class teacher in consultation with the SET teacher for the relevant subjects.



Killoughteen National School Assessment Policy

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if –

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in staged approach
- Procedures are clear and roles and responsibilities are defined
- The Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Implementation

This policy will be fully implemented by all staff and reviewed as required.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting 11/11/2022.

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed in 2025 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Sheilagh O' Mahoney Kennedy

Willie Curtin

Chairperson BOM

Principal