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Introductory Statement

The Board of Management recognises that appropriate assessment is integral to successful teaching and learning and impacts on children's progress and achievement. The Board of Management concurs with the NCCA definition of assessment as "a collaborative process involving children and teachers and, at times, parents and other stakeholders, as they gather, record, interpret, use, and report information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, concepts, competencies, skills and dispositions." (Primary Curriculum Framework, NCCA, 2023). Assessment, therefore, involves much more than testing. It is an ongoing process that encompasses many formal and informal activities designed to monitor and improve teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum (NCCA, 2007).

Assessment is recognised as a dual process with two principal approaches -Assessment for Learning (AfL)and Assessment of Learning (AoL). AfL is concerned with using evidence on an ongoing basis to inform teaching and learning. AoL is the process by which the teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents/guardians, teachers and other relevant persons, and the DE.

The Board of Management supports the staff fully in implementing the school's agreed assessment strategy within a collaborative environment. This enables teachers to extend and enrich children's learning across all curriculum areas, as well as facilitate their ongoing holistic development. The Board of Management also recognises the important contribution that parents/guardians can make to the process of school assessment.

This policy was formulated by the staff in 2013, revised and updated in 2018, and has undergone a second revision in 2023.

1 Aims and Purposes of the Assessment Policy

To benefit children's learning and development by stating how we:
- monitor learning processes
- generate data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
- assist teachers' long and short term planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum
- coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis
- assess different dimensions of the child's learning and development including; the cognitive, the creative, the affective, the physical and the social. Also, to identify areas (academic, motor, SEMO) which require more attention and develop strategies to address same
- facilitate the involvement of children in assessment of their own work
- enable teachers to modify their programmes and teaching methodologies to ensure that particular learning needs of individual children/groups are being addressed
- compile records of each individual child's progress and attainment
- facilitate communication between parents/guardians and teachers about children's development, progress and learning needs.

This policy applies to all the teaching staff and children of RETNS

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that this policy is in place and up-to- date, and has been formulated with the full input of staff. It is also responsible for supporting the Principal in the execution of the school's agreed assessment strategy.

2.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that these procedures are enacted and that an agreed assessment strategy is in place. In doing so, the Principal will be supported by the Deputy Principal.

2.3 Teachers

Class teachers are best placed to assess children on a day-to-day basis and therefore have primary responsibility for their routine assessment. The support team will also assess children and have primary responsibility for routine assessment in curricular areas where they are the primary provider of support to a child/children (e.g. Maths). This will be planned in conjunction with the class teacher who retains overall responsibility. The support team has specific responsibility for coordinating standardised and screening testing.

2.4 Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians have a key role to play in supporting their children's learning by providing the school with relevant information about their children, and by cooperating with any individualised strategies put in place to optimise their children's learning and integration in the school community.

All aspects of the school curriculum are assessed and procedures are in accordance with those outlined for each curricular area in the Primary School Curriculum. Assessment is mentioned in each curriculum plan. Two principal approaches to assessment, Assessment for learning (**AfL)** and Assessment of Learning (**AoL**), are used by teachers. Assessment is ongoing, and appropriate to children's needs and available resources. Assessment methods range from child-led assessment to teacher-led assessment, and from informal (such as teacher observation) to formal (such as screening for learning difficulties).

The varying learning styles of children are explicitly acknowledged throughout the learning process.There is a particular focus on early intervention with the intention of preventing and ameliorating learning difficulties.

3 .1 Assessment Methods and Recording of Assessment

When children join the school initially, teachers assess them. They continue to assess them using the following methods:

- Day-to-day observation and evaluation by staff, including talking with children and appraising the work they have produced. Observational assessment can be both formal and informal and can take place in a range of settings e.g. the yard, the classroom, support room etc.
- Use of checklists, tasks and simple tests (for example, blending of letter sounds, dictation and tables- Dolch Lists/Phonics Sound Checks/ PDST Phonological Awareness assessment (Folder of Infant Assessments on the drive)
- Individual Writing Profiles- three samples of writing per child each year. The profiles are passed from class to class and so are a complete record of the child's writing development from Junior Infants to 6th class
- Children are afforded opportunities to present work/projects in a variety of different ways (for example, models, PowerPoint presentations, oral presentations, Mind maps, and videos/blogs).
- Termly Maths Assessments (3 times a year)
- Spellings for Me (Continuous assessment. Record levels 3 times a year)
- Reading Records (Junior Infants- 2nd Class)
- Learning Logs- 1st- 6th Class. Children reflect on their learning once a week and write/draw/mindmap in
- their Learning Log. It may also be used as a place to record learning set by the teacher, for example a tables/spelling quiz, a sample of long multiplication
- Reflection Section of Cuntas Míosúil
- Achievements book record
- Assessment folder/notebook: Information gathered will be kept in a folder by the teacher. There will be a checklist at the front to organise/keep track of data.(Data may include checklists, simple tests, assessment on projects, Spellings for Me records, maths assessments etc.)

- Work completed by children should be marked in some way:
- ➢ This may take the form of teacher correction, self-correction, dated etc for core subjects. Some copies may not be corrected formally (e.g. Free writing, Learn Together)
- ➢ Written feedback or oral conference will be give on one piece of writing (may relate to the genres) per month

Self and Peer Assessment

- Self-assessment and peer assessment are encouraged, especially in the senior classes (Pupils are involved in self-assessment when they look at their own work in a reflective way, identify aspects of it that are good and that could be improved, and then set personal learning targets for themselves). Self _assesment , including Learning Logs, also enables children to assemble a portfolio of learning activities and so can highlight progress

- Pupils have opportunities to discuss and evaluate their work/projects (*Project work/Class presentations/Editing checklists (52-54)**)

Other self-assessment procedures used in the school include:

- ❖ Traffic light card systems
- ❖ Thumbs response system
- ❖ Rubrics
- ❖ WALT/WILF and KWL techniques (pp.14-23, pp.84-85)
- ❖ Two stars and a wish
- ❖ Parental /pupil feedback or observation
- ❖ Completed Assignments (copies/homework etc.)
- ❖ Conferencing (pp.24-27)
- ❖ Exit Stickers

Numbered pages refer to Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum-Guidelines for Schools (NCCA 2007)

3.2 Standardised Assessment Tests/Screening Tests/Recording of Assessment and Testing

Infant Assessment
- Children are monitored through on-going observation and classroom tasks throughout the year. Simple class assessments/reviews are completed in Autumn, January and June of each year. These assessments cover the areas of literacy, numeracy, social and motor skills and samples may be found in the Support Team folder on the drive and a hard copy in the Test Box (Seomra Dearg). Class teachers and the support team will co-operate on these assessments
- All children in the infant classes receive Early Intervention Support at some point
- Some children may start school with identified needs and receive School Support or School Support Plus from the start. Other children may progress along the Continuum of Support (Classroom and School Support) following Early Intervention
- The Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) is administered to all children in Senior Infants If early literacy needs are identified, parents/ guardians are informed as soon as is practicable. School and home then work as partners through the **Forward Together Programme.** On completion of the programme, children are retested. This identifies those children who are eligible for continued early intervention support

- Additionally If an individual child is causing concern, teachers may decide to administer the BIAP test or Test2R.
- The review in June of each year is passed on to the following year's teacher and contains the following headings:
  - ❖ Literacy (Sight words/Phonological Awareness/Phonics)
  - ❖ Gross Motor

❖ Fine Motor (including handwriting)
❖ Maths/Early Mathematical Activity
❖ Social Emotional/Communication Skills.

1st - 6th Class

● All children are formally **screened** from to 1st - 6th class spelling, (literacy, spelling and maths). If the school deems that the standardised test is not appropriate for an individual child (for example, one for whom English is an additional language), other forms of assessment and screening are used

● The Drumcondra Primary Tests are used for testing children in maths, reading and spelling Assessment takes place in May for children from 1st - 6th class. The class teachers administer the tests, with the help of the support team where necessary. These results are used to identify if there are any significant changes in a child's performance and are also a means of identifying children eligible for additional support. In the case of a significant decline, **15 or more percentile poin**ts, in a child's performance, parents/guardians are notified as soon as is practicable to discuss the implications of the results. The aggregated results are reported to the Department of Education in 2nd, 4th and 6th classes.

● The New Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT) is administered during the first term of 2nd class. If discrepancies between general reading/maths attainment and the NRIT score are identified, parents and guardians are informed as soon as is practicable and appropriate supports are provided where necessary

● The Boxall Profile is used to assess children's social, emotional and behavioural development. It can be used at any stage if deemed appropriate by the nurture team.

● Plans/targets, created as part of the Continuum of Support, and external reports, are also used to assess and review the success of classroom, school and/or school plus interventions

3.3 Further Screening Tests and Diagnostic Assessment

Where a child's progress is continuing to cause concern, the school can use a range of further screening tests to pinpoint difficulties (e.g. dyslexia screening test). External diagnostic tests/assessments by professionals, such as psychologists or speech and language therapists, may also be necessary. The Principal and support/class teachers will liaise with parents/guardians and outside agencies if further assessment is considered necessary. Class/support teachers assist parents/guardians with the process of applying for referral through the appropriate pathway.

A complete list of our further tests is itemised in **Appendix 2**

4 Management, storing and archiving of records

The school maintains an individual file for each child. These files are kept in a locked class filing cabinet. End of year reports and progress meeting notes are filed for each year alongside Infant records and standardised test results (1st-6th). Standardised Tests for the previous two years are kept in the bottom of the filing cabinet and shredded on year 3. These files are passed to the child's class teacher at the beginning of each school year and staff work in partnership, at all times, to share

relevant information about children.

Standardised test results are also stored on *Aladdin.* All information on *Aladdin* is password protected, with restricted access.

Support teachers follow the Continuum of Support Guidelines and appropriate plans and records are maintained. These are stored on *Aladdin.* Reports from outside agencies are stored centrally in the Principal's Office and the Support Team filing cabinet.

Teachers are made aware of the need to make and record comments in school reports and support plans in an objective and constructive manner.

Children's files (hard and soft copies) are safely archived and retained for as long as is necessary under the terms of the school's Data Protection policy and Data Retention Schedule.

5 Reporting and interpreting the results of assessments

5.1 Interpreting Assessments

Teachers interpret assessments and use them for planning and setting targets (differentiated work /revision of topic etc). Assessment results are never interpreted in isolation, and are instead understood in the wider context of the child's development. Staff take a collaborative approach to planning and assessment and share all relevant information.

5.2 Reporting to children

Teachers give appropriate assessment feedback to children on an ongoing and informal basis. Children are also encouraged to self-evaluate and engage in constructive peer assessment by means of rubrics, learning logs, editing checklists, presentations etc.

5.3 Reporting to parents/ guardians

The school strengthens the capacity of parents/guardians to support their children's learning by sharing meaningful information about their progress, which draws from the full range of evidence used by teachers. They share information in the following ways:
- Teachers communicate with parents/guardians on an ongoing basis around assessment issues as the need and opportunity to do so arise
- Formal progress meetings for parents/guardians of all children are held each November and written report cards are issued on *Aladdin* each June. The results of standardised tests for Reading and Maths are given as STen scores and are also released through *Aladdin*. STen scores are a ten-point scale derived from standard scores, with 1 representing the lowest category and 10 the highest. Report cards are issued two weeks before the end of the school year to give any parents/guardians, who may have queries, sufficient opportunities to contact teachers before the summer holidays.
- The parents/guardians of children receiving support have phone calls /meetings with the Support Team in September/October and review meetings are held in the spring. The Support Team contributes to the end of year class reports. Parents/Guardians of children receiving School Support Plus are also invited to   fill out a learning review form in June. These are used to assess how the year has gone and inform future planning.

5.4 Role of the Principal

The Principal monitors, on *Aladdin*, the assessment information for all classes and uses this to track the general achievement of all children, the achievement of particular groups and to identify trends over time. The Principal is also made aware, at staff and support team meetings, of any concerns regarding individual children that may arise from screening or ongoing assessment.

In this way, assessment data can be used to highlight priorities for development; for example, changes to teaching approaches, need for staff training, or acquisition of resources. These are then incorporated into school planning or the self-evaluation process as areas for improvement.

5.5 Reporting to the Board of Management

Every year, the Principal reports to the Board of Management the aggregated assessment data from standardised tests. The BOM will allow sufficient time to reflect on any issues arising out of this, with a view to supporting the staff to maximise positive learning outcomes for all children.

6 Reporting to the Department of Education

The school will report aggregated standardised Maths and Reading test results to the Department of Education in line with guidelines issued by the Department (2nd, 4th and 6th Classes).

7 Reporting to other schools

Parents/Guardians of children due to leave the school are asked in writing if the school may pass on information about their children to the new schools where they will be enrolling. Since 1 June 2012, principals are legally required to send a copy of the most recent report card, including information from standardised tests, to the primary or secondary school to which the child transfers. This information will be transferred to the new school following the child's enrolment in that school. Similarly, additional documentation concerning children with additional needs is forwarded, if requested, to new/secondary schools, following consultation with parents/guardians.

8 Relevant Documentation

Relevant school policies, whether already in place and being reviewed, or being developed, shall be examined with reference to this policy to ensure consistency and to take account of any points arising that may need to be addressed.

RETNS Policies:

- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Data Protection

Department of Education Policies:
- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum-Guidelines for Schools (NCCA - 2007)
- The Primary School Curriculum (1999)
- School Self-Evaluation Guidelines (2016-2022)
- Special Educational Needs- A Continuum of support (NEPS - 2007)
- Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools Special Education Teaching Allocation 013/2017
- Circular 138/2006
- New Primary Language Curriculum (NCCA - 2017)
- Preparation for Teaching and Learning -Primary and Special Schools (DES-2019)
- Looking at our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools and Special Schools (DE-2022)
- Primary Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2023)

9 Success Criteria

- Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL) strategies and procedures will be used, as outlined in the policy, and will inform teachers' planning and benefit children's learning
- Communication between parents/guardians and teachers regarding assessment will promote a partnership in addressing learning needs and empowering the parents to help their children
- The implementation of Department of Education School Self Evaluation Circular 0039/16 and 0056/2022 will support our success criteria

10 Ratification, Implementation and Review

This policy was ratified by the BOM in Oct 02nd 2023. It will be reviewed regularly, and if necessary updated, to take account of changing circumstances – for example updated guidelines from the Department of Education.

11 Communication

This policy will be made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents/guardians on the RETNS website

12 Contact Details

Queries about this policy should be addressed to the Principal in the first instance:

The Principal
Rathfarnham Educate Together National School
Loreto Avenue ,
Rathfarnham ,
Dublin 14,
D14V5W4

Appendix 1:   Guidelines of Assessment by class

Class	Assessment Type	Schedule
Junior Infants	- Assessment in autumn and spring (Sample assessments are available in the Support Team Folder on the drive and in the Test/Assessment Box in the Seomra Dearg -Room 29) - Checklists numeracy, literacy, SEMO, communication and motor skills - Writing profile - ORT reading record/other reading records - Achievements Book	Autumn and spring End of year 1 sample per term Continuous (Passed on at the end of the year) Every child is included at least once during the year
Senior Infants	- Assessment in autumn and spring (Sample assessments are available in the Support Team Folder and in the Test/Assessment Box in the Seomra Dearg -Room 29) - Checklists numeracy, literacy, SEMO, communication and motor skills - Writing profile - ORT reading record/other reading records - MIST - Achievements Book	Autumn and spring End of year 1 sample per term Continuous (Passed on at the end of the year) Term 2 Every child is included at least once during the year
1st Class	- Maths assessment - Writing profile - Spelling/Phonics - ORT reading record/other reading records - Learning Log - DPRT- Screening - DPMT - Screening - DPST - Achievements Book	1 per term 1 sample per term Continuous assessment Continuous (Passed on at the end of the year) Weekly May May May Every child is included at least once during the year
2nd Class	- Maths assessment - Writing profile	1 per term 1 sample per term

	● ORT reading record ● Spelling/Phonics ● Learning Log ● NNRIT ● DPRT ● DPMT ● DPST ● Achievements Book	Continuous (Passed on) Continuous assessment Weekly Term 2 May May May Every child is included at least once during the year
3rd to 6th Class	● Maths assessment ● Writing profile ● Spellings for me ● Gaeilge spellings ● Learning log ● DPRT ● DPMT ● DPST ● Achievements Book	1 per term 1 sample per term Continuous assessment. Record levels 3 times a year Continuous assessment Weekly May May May Every child is included at least once during the year

Appendix 2: Screening Tests used by the Support TEAM (Seomra Dearg or under the stairs)

Literacy	Maths and Early Intervention
BOX 1-Tests_Literacy ● **Aston Index (Schonell Spelling Test)** ● **Diagnostic Reading Analysis (Crumpler and McCarty)** ● **Diagnostic Spelling Analysis (Crumpler and Mc Carty)** ● **Dyslexia Screening Test (black bag)** ● **NARA II Neale Analysis Reading Ability** ● **MICRA T Reading Tests** ● **Drumcondra Spelling Tests (B for AEN usage)** ● **Renfrew Language Scale**	**BOX 2 Tests Maths and Early Intervention** **MATHS** ● **Sigma T Maths tests** ● **Maths Assessment for Learning and Teaching (MALT 8-11)** ● **Basic Number Diagnostic Test (Bill Gillham)** ● **Mathmagic Tests** ● **Maths Mastery Tests** ● **Maths Matters Tests** **EARLY INTERVENTION:** ● **MIST (other material in SEOMRA CORCRA) _ Senior Infants** ● **BIAP** ● **Assessment folder of literacy/motor/maths tests** ● **Test2R (Blackrock Education Centre)** *Some Teachers have done online training for Test2R*
Drumcondra tests, NRIT and WIAT are stored under the stairs	