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Assessment Policy

Introduction: This policy sets out our approach to assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It sets out guidance on assessment in order to assist us in identifying children with various learning needs, particularly in literacy and numeracy, in order to facilitate planning for teaching in these areas.

Policy Rationale: The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. Teaching staff at Clara N.S. endeavour 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 and the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be implemented to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved by our pupils.

Aims and Objectives: The primary aims/objectives of this 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-term 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.

Policy Content: This policy outlines the use of assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally able so that adequate strategies are put in to facilitate appropriate educational development. These strategies may include the following:

- Pupil self-assessment
- Pupil profiling
- Communication between parents and teachers
- The Continuum of Support
- Conferencing
- Portfolio Assessment
- Concept Mapping
- Questioning
- Teacher Observation
- Teacher Designed Tasks
- Standardised Tests.

Standardised Testing: Clara N.S. administers the Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) with Second Class and Fifth Class each year. The school uses the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test-(DPRT) from First Class through to Sixth Class. The Drumcondra Primary Maths test is administered to all children from First Class to Sixth Class. All tests are usually administered during the month of May by class teachers and the Special Education Teacher (SET) team where appropriate. All scores including standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on our Aladdin Schools account (the student management software system in a secure, encrypted site). Each class teacher holds a print out of these scores in their Assessment Folder. The SET team collate and analyse these results in June to support the effective allocation of teaching resources in the next academic year.

In line with Circular 56/2011, the results from Second Class, Fourth Class and Sixth Class are returned to the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Equally, the parents of children from First Class through to Sixth Class will receive their child's results on the end of year school report in June. Clara NS provides the results in the format of a STEN score. Time is available after the issue of reports, should parents wish to consult with class teachers to discuss their child's results.

Diagnostic Assessment: Depending on the nature of the test, tests may be administered by the SET team or the class teacher. In some cases, tests are administered by the SET team following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians.

Screening: The following screening tests are in use (but not exhaustive);

- Dyslexia Screening Test

- Standardised tests as above

- Non-reading intelligence test (N.R.I.T.)

- Free Writing samples

• Running records (Write to Read format) 3rd to 6th Class

• Teacher Observation

• Teacher designed tasks and tests

• Sight Word tests- PM high-frequency words

Enlisting the support of outside agencies: If there are serious concerns expressed by the parents, Special Education Teachers and class teacher, support from an outside agency will be sought which may include a formal assessment.

Recording: Each pupil has a file which is stored on our Aladdin Schools account. This account contains Standardised Test Results and End of Year Reports. This file can be accessed by the class teacher which allows for the effective tracking and monitoring of pupil's progress. Hard copies of test sheets are available in the Principal's office. They are stored in a secure location. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data. Student records will be kept on file in a locked filing cabinet in a secure room until the child has reached the age of 25 (see Data Protection Policy).

Roles and Responsibilities: The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for each child (Learning Support Guidelines, 2000). It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to establish staged interventions at class level, following consultation with the Principal/Deputy Principal/SET assigned to their class. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal and Deputy Principal in her role as SEN (Special Educational Needs) Coordinator, 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 will be always kept open.

Success Criteria: This policy is considered successful if:

● Early identification and intervention are achieved

● Procedures, roles and responsibilities regarding all assessment outlined in this policy are clear to all relevant parties

● Class Teachers and Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives in the assessment process

● There is an efficient transfer of information, from teacher to teacher and from parent to teacher.

Implementation and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 26th September 2022.

Signed: *Damien Treanor*, Chairperson, BOM:

Signed: *Matthew McArdle,* Principal:

Appendix 1

Clara N.S.

Building your Assessment Folder

Your Assessment Folder supports your assessment practice by providing a dedicated place for you to gather and record relevant information on the progress and achievement of your whole class and individual pupil learning. This information or evidence of learning is gathered using a variety of assessment methods over the course of the year.

Gathering the information in the Assessment Folder is not an end in itself. The use you make of the information is more important. The information can be used to support you when…

➢ Reporting on the child's learning progress and achievement to parents and other relevant people such as the SET team, the principal or the school psychologist. This use of the assessment information is called Assessment of Learning (AoL).

➢ Identifying the next steps to be taken by the teacher and the child to improve the learning. For example, you might think about what does this sample of the child's work tell me about what I now need to do to help him improve? This approach to assessment is called Assessment for Learning (AfL).

It is important to remember the purpose of the Assessment Folder when making decisions about what you might include in it.

Your Assessment Folder can be divided into two sections:

Section A: General class records (Assessment of Learning)

➢ This section may include results and analysis of standardised tests, class checklists, class test results, monthly/end of topic revision, spelling test scores, project results or any other assessment of the class as a whole.

Section B: Pupil profiles (Assessment for Learning)

➢ This section can be divided into subsections i.e. one per child. The following information may be included for each child:
• Child's name, class level
• Interests
• Strengths, learning needs (include continuum of support checklists and plans as appropriate)
• P-T meetings: dates, issues, actions taken
• Observations regarding subject areas (always dated)
• Selected samples of child's work* (dated)
Self-Assessment (children keep favourite pieces of work in a portfolio)

Selecting samples of children's work should be guided by their use:

• Reporting learning progress to parents and others (AoL)

 • Identifying next steps needed to improve the child's learning (AfL)

Important to Remember:

• Psychological assessment reports are not normally included in your Assessment Folder.

• Enter facts only when recording your observations. Date the observations.

• Store the assessment folders in a secure place in your classroom.

NB. A small number of carefully selected samples gathered during the year are more meaningful and useful than having large quantities.

Teacher Observation

As a teacher you are constantly observing the children in your class – Did they understand the new maths concept? Has their behaviour changed? Can they answer comprehension questions? Are they reading with fluency and expression? etc. etc. By the end of the day it can be hard to remember about each individual child – here are some tips;

• Have a teacher clipboard with individual labels for each child (with their initials/number). If you notice something, jot it down. You can write it up properly later.

• Use a refill pad page – and jot things down on it.

• Make sure to include the date

At the end of each academic year the class teacher should hand the assessment folder over to the teacher in the class level above. Folders should be kept as a reference point for one year after they have been compiled and then destroyed.

Informative Video on Building your Assessment Folder

 http://teacherinduction.ie/en/supports/nqt-planning-support/assessment-folder