



## **Naul National School Assessment Policy**

### **Introductory Statement**

This policy was reviewed in March 2017.

### **Rationale**

Naul N.S staff felt it necessary to formulate a system whereby all teachers are practising and conforming to a set of practices which will ensure effective assessment of children's work and their progress at the school

### **Relationship to characteristic Spirit of the school**

Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by building a picture over time of a child's progress and/or achievement in learning across the Primary School Curriculum. Information about *how* the child learns (the learning process) and *what* the child learns (the products of learning) shapes the picture. The teacher uses this information to identify and celebrate the child's current learning, and to provide him/her with appropriate support for future learning.

### **Aims**

Through the introduction of this policy Naul N.S hopes to achieve the following:

- That all teachers use a system of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- To improve pupil learning through the gathering of information which will help teacher's understand better how each child is learning, and to use this information to further the children's learning
- To generate baseline data which can be used to monitor achievement over time
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- To assist teachers' long and short term planning
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis

- Establish the short-term and long-term needs of the child through assessment in order to plan future work for the child accordingly
- Improve ways in which the teachers can support and extend the children's learning

## **Guidelines (Content of Policy)**

The "Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007" was referred to when creating this policy.

### **What is Assessment ?**

Assessment is the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using, and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes.

#### **a) 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 (Drumcondra Literacy and Numeracy tests and Sigma-t, NRIT tests and MISTS tests.
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/ groups of pupils including the exceptionally able
- To contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- To monitor pupil 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 communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies
- To develop a whole school policy where each teacher engages in a form of assessment which is appropriate to each class level and which has a continuum throughout the school by means of recording and storing of assessment material and resources.

#### **b) Assessment for Learning**

The types of informal assessment methods used in the school include

- Self-assessment
- Conferencing
- Questioning
- Teacher Observation
- Concept mapping

- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Standardised testing

All of the above methods gather information on the pupils for Assessment for Learning (AfL) - evidence used by the teacher on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning), and for use as Assessment of Learning (AOL) whereby the teacher periodically records children's progress and achievement of Curriculum objectives for the purpose of reporting to parents', teachers and other relevant persons.

The teachers use the information gathered to evaluate their teaching, and to support children in their learning, and to make changes to their planning, organisational strategies, and teaching methodologies in order to make learning more successful for the children. This process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using, and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in their development of knowledge skills and attitudes is essential to help teachers construct a comprehensive picture of the short-term and long-term needs of the child and to plan future work accordingly.

The teachers of Naul N.S use the assessment information they gather to support and extend the child's learning

Providing feedback to children is central to AFL and this is based on evidence of how and what the children are learning. This level of involvement by the child in their own learning by relaying back to them feedback based on the learning of a task in hand, can help children identify and celebrate their progress and achievements, pinpoint challenges they experience, and decide what he next steps to be taken should be.

The children are involved in assessing their own work by the use of W.I.L.F (What I have Learned) and W.A.L.T (What we are trying to learn). These logos are prominently displayed in the classroom. After certain lessons the teacher may assess the children on their own evaluation of what they have learned from a lesson using techniques such as the thumbs technique, smiley faces or traffic lights.

Naul N.S values this level of involvement by children in shaping their own learning as this can heighten children's awareness of themselves as learners and encourage them to take more personal responsibility for, and pride in, their learning.

types of informal assessment':

Include: Teacher reflection

Pupil tracking (New English Curriculum)

\*Some other schools go into detail on each title of the informal assessment.

- Diagnostic Testing

Under Circular 02/05

Learning Support Guidelines

Newer tests are being reviewed by the SEN team all the time.

### **c) Standardised tests**

In Naul N.S the Drumcondra standardised test for Reading and the Sigma-t standardised test for Mathematics are used at the end of the year in order to measure a child's literacy and numeracy skills, and to determine children's progress in those areas. The Drumcondra Numeracy Tests and Drumcondra literacy tests are used in all classes from Senior Infants. The NRIT test and the Mist test are used to measure IQ. Information from the results is important given the vital role of literacy and numeracy in enabling children to access the full curriculum.

These tests are normed in the sense that they allow the teacher to compare a child's performance on the test with the performance of children of that class level or age in Irish Primary schools. When used in combination with other assessment methods, standardised test results contribute to the accuracy of the teacher's monitoring, and assist in identifying the needs of individual children. They are important in identifying those children in need of learning support or those who should be referred for Psychological Assessment.

- Assessment begins at the end of Senior Infants. These tests continue to be administered at the end of May every year until the end of sixth class.
- Nichola Kelly is responsible for the purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- If a child is absent for a test they will complete it at a later date with LS/RT.
- Each class teacher administers the test and at times the LS/RT administers tests due to the multi-grade situation of the school.
- All the results of the tests are recorded – raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN score and reading age. These results are recorded on record sheets and kept in a Standardised test folder.

### **d) Screening**

- Through class teacher monitoring and observation, teacher-designed tasks and tests, and the interpretation of standardised tests the class teacher and LSRT in consultation with parents are responsible for facilitating the early identification of learning strengths or difficulties.
- Preliminary screening involves the administration and interpretation of the English and Maths standardised tests.
- The MIST test is administered to senior infants and is followed by an early intervention programme called the Forward Together programme which is implemented by the Learning Support teacher and class teacher.
- Diagnostic testing is carried out in order to ascertain a child's specific learning needs in literacy and numeracy (diagnostic tests)
- Results are communicated to parents through an arranged meeting with the class teacher and LS/RT teacher

- Parents are made aware of the need for diagnostic testing through a meeting with the class or LS/RT teacher.

e) **Diagnostic Assessment** (Ref Learning Support Guidelines)

- The Mist test is used in Senior Infants to diagnose pupils who may have early problems with sounds. The Test 2 R test is currently being considered by the staff as an option in helping to diagnose early literacy problems.
- The class teacher, learning support teacher and parents consult with each other throughout this assessment.
- A standard form to record parents consent is given in advance of testing.
- The tests are administered and interpreted by the learning support teacher.
- The results of the assessments inform the drawing up of plans for learning support learning objectives and targets, and future lesson planning in consultation with the class teacher
- Information from testing is communicated to parents at parent-teacher meetings or if necessary at specially arranged meetings between the class teacher, learning support teacher and the parents.
- Pupils are referred to supplementary teaching when they score is below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile in the Drumcondra and Sigma T tests.
- A programme of intervention is then developed in consultation between the learning support teacher and the class teacher and an IPLP is drawn up to target the individual child's learning needs.

f) **Psychological Assessment**

- The class teacher liaises with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment is required.
- Nichola Kelly is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from the NEPS Psychologist Brenda Lynch. All the relevant information is gathered from standardised tests, diagnostic tests and communicated with the child's parents and Brenda before a referral is made.
- The Assessment is important for identifying whether a child has a specific learning disability and this information can then be used to apply for additional resource hours for the child and to help develop a set of learning targets to meet the child's current priority needs.
- The Principal stores all psychological reports in a filing cabinet and these can be accessed by the class or LSRT teachers when necessary.
- Reports from an intervention team will include the following.
  - Special Educational Needs Assessment:
    - OT reports
    - Speech and Language reports
    - Psychological reports
    - Outside therapists
    - Play Therapy Assessment

g) **Recording the Results of Assessment**

- Assessment results are recorded in written form on record sheets and also in electronic form using the Drumcondra and Sigma-t computerised scoring

system. An analysis of all the scores in the school is also recorded on a spreadsheet

- Individual teachers day-to-day records
- The report card
- Sensitive data is kept in the school filing cabinet.
- Information based on assessments is transferred from :
  - Teacher to pupil (teacher/child conferencing)
  - Parent-teacher conferences – these include scheduled parent/teacher meetings and others are unplanned meetings between the teacher and the child’s parents.
  - Teacher/teacher conferences

### Data Protection

All data held on each pupil regarding assessment is kept under lock and key in the school and is available by relevant persons upon request following all current data protection legislation.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

The success of this policy will be measured by assessing the following indicators;

- The use of an agreed range of formal and informal assessment modes across all class levels to ensure assessment plays an integral part of teaching and learning in Naul N.S.
- Clarity amongst all teachers as to what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects of assessment within the school
- Assessment procedures running smoothly and efficiently
- Transfer of information is transferred from class teacher to class teacher efficiently at the beginning of the school year

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Nichola Kelly is be responsible for coordinating the policy under the supervision of Principal Martina Arthurs

## **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

This policy will be implemented with immediate effect.

## **TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW**

The operation of the policy will be reviewed yearly, or when matters or issues arise which necessitate change to policy and practice within the school.

Nichola Kelly will initiate and co-ordinate the review with the SEN team, Mrs. Siobhan Smith, Mrs. Marie Lord and Ms. Kyna Rushe

## **RATIFICATION & COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be reviewed yearly and amended as necessary by means of a whole-school collaborative process