



Knocknacarra Educate Together
National School

Assessment Policy

This policy has been written by Knocknacarra ETNS to provide guidelines on practice and procedures to teaching staff related to all forms of assessment.

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Introduction:

This policy on assessment was written through a consultative process with the teaching staff and approved by the Board of Management of Knocknacarra Educate Together NS.

Background and Rationale:

The Introduction to the Primary School Curriculum (1999) identifies assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning and emphasises the importance of assessing the process of learning as well as the product. The curriculum includes general guidelines on assessment for each subject and suggests a range of assessment tools that can be used for specific purposes. The school recognises its obligations under Article 22 of the Education Act “to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents”.

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. There are two main types of assessment:

Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning focuses more on medium- and long-term assessment. Assessment of learning generally involves assessing a child’s learning at the end of a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term or a year. This assessment often takes the form of The emphasis in assessment of learning is on measuring a child’s cumulative progress towards curriculum objectives.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning is an on-going process of recognising and responding to a child’s learning in order to enhance it. This involves engaging children in their own learning through questioning and discussion and involving children in peer and self-assessment. The child’s response to rich questions and his/her dialogue with the teacher and peers provide evidence of the child’s learning which can be used to direct future learning.

Relationship to School Ethos:

Knocknacarra Educate Together NS seeks to enable the full development of every child, endeavouring to ensure the pupils of the school are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment enables teachers to know at what level to pitch work and how to move forward in teaching. It allows parents and children to have feedback and to understand what they can improve upon and how they can do this.

If assessment is to be meaningful, it must be developed alongside learning activities so that it can reflect how pupils are learning, what pupils are learning and where the learning is taking them. The school has identified the following benefits of meaningful assessment:

- Facilitating improved pupil learning.
- Tracking learning processes, which assists long- and short-term planning;
- Identifying areas of difficulty and indicating a course of action to overcome these;
- Highlighting pupil needs which will inform future targets and learning outcomes;
- Informing individual teacher plans as well as whole-school planning;

- Guiding pupils in reflecting on and planning for their own learning;
- Supporting the creation of a personal learning record;
- Generating base-line data that can be used to monitor achievement over time; and
- Involving parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties.

Aims and Objectives:

This policy has the following aims:

- To establish whole-school procedures for assessment.
- To specify expectations for personal learning records in the form of portfolios.
- To identify key forms of other assessment, including standardized tests, to be implemented.
- To provide clarity regarding roles and responsibilities related to assessment.

Policies and Procedures:

Portfolios

The core component of assessment in the school are individual portfolios that gather together evidence demonstrating learning progression and individual achievement over time. A key component of this form of assessment is self-evaluation in an age-appropriate, developmental manner. Portfolios are maintained over two-year periods. They are shared with parents in the spring during portfolio sharing meetings. These meetings are student-led and provide a chance for children to share their learning experience in a formal manner.

The following items are added to the portfolios:

- Work samples from any subject on a monthly basis chosen by each individual child;
- Reading records and logs;
- Examples of process writing, both in English and Irish;
- Memorable school events; and
- Other items selected by pupils and teachers.

In an age-appropriate manner, self-reflection will take the following forms in addition to the oral presentation to parents as part of the portfolio meetings:

- Infants: Each child will select items for their portfolios on a monthly basis, with the teacher acting as a scribe noting the reason why an item is selected.
- 1st and 2nd Class: As appropriate, children will write a one-sentence statement about why they are selecting items for their portfolios.
- 3rd and 4th Class: A short paragraph will accompany a child's selection for their portfolio.
- 5th and 6th Class: While continuing the practice of short written reflections for self-selected items, pupils will use digital technology to create a table of contents for their hard-copy portfolio as well as establish a simple digital portfolio. At the end of 6th Class, it is envisioned that children will write a summative review of their learning over their 8 years of primary school as a capstone project for self-assessment.

Ongoing Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of teaching and to inform teachers' future planning.

- Ongoing teacher observation
- Reading checks (fluency, accuracy and oral comprehension)
- Weekly spelling tests (English from 1st-6th classes and Irish from 2nd-6th classes)
- Termly tests in numeracy and literacy
- Mental maths assessments
- Teacher-created assessment in other subject areas
- Regular open-ended reading comprehension tasks

Standardised Tests

Standardised tests are administered in the spring. These tests are useful for informing planning and teaching as well as to assist in determining which pupils will receive targeted learning support. Results are reviewed on a class-basis by the Board of Management. As explained in Department circulars, results of standardized tests are reported to the Department. Likewise, in compliance with these circulars, standardized test results are included on the End-of-Year Reports.

Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)	Junior Infants
Middle Infants Screening Test (MIST)	Senior Infants
Drumcondra Reading	1 st – 6 th Classes
Drumcondra Spelling	1 st – 6 th Classes
Drumcondra Maths	1 st – 6 th Classes
Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach	2 nd – 6 th Classes
Non-Reading Intelligence Test	1 st , 3 rd and 5 th Class (autumn administration)

Diagnostic Tests

Learning support teachers use a variety of diagnostics assessments to gather data regarding children’s learning needs such as, but not limited to, Jackson Phonics, Single-Word Spelling Test, Dolch list assessments, Expressive Language Skills Assessment and the Reading A to Z assessments.

Record Keeping and Communication

Data from assessment is stored in accordance with the school’s Data Management and Data Protection Policy. Data is maintained using the Aladdin student management system, with paper files stored securely. Portfolios are kept and developed in the school and then sent home at the end of each two-year curriculum cycle.

Under the Education Act (1998), parents have a right to be informed of their child’s progress. It is important, therefore, that assessment information is readily communicable to such a varied audience. Parents are informed of their children’s progress in the following ways:

Formal:

- Annual Parent-Teacher Meetings (November)
- Pupil Portfolio Sharing Meetings (May)
- Written end-of-year report including standardised test results (June)
- Other meetings may be arranged throughout the year, should the need arise

Informal:

- Notes/letters home

- Informal chats in morning and at collection time
- Project work and class work sent home to show progress

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities:

Board of Management

- To review this policy on a regular basis.
- To review learning and teaching, using a variety of assessment criteria.

Principal

- To ensure this policy is applied on a consistent and universal basis in the school.
- To report standardised test results, as required, to the Department of Education and Skills.

Teachers

- To administer a variety of assessments.
- To maintain data carefully and confidentially, in accordance with the school's Data Management and Data Protection Policy.
- To use assessment to plan for future teaching and to review previous learning.
- To maintain pupil portfolios.
- To share assessment data with parents and pupils.

Parents

- To review assessment results and work with teachers in order to support learning.
- To attend annual portfolio-sharing meetings.
- To contribute, when possible, to ongoing assessment.

Children

- To carry out and complete assessments to the best of their ability.
- To select items and help maintain personal pupil portfolios as well as reflect on learning experiences and communicate these experiences to parents.

Implementation and Review:

The policy will be reviewed as required and formally in 2021.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the date below. It will be posted on the school website in due course, and a hard copy may be requested. The policy will be a key part of the induction process for new teachers.

Louise Shields, chairperson

Date of ratification: 19/04/2018