

St. Safan's N.S

Assessment & Recording Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up in consultation with staff & Board of Management. The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 10th September, 2015.

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.

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.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aims / objectives of the policy are to:

- facilitate improved pupil learning
- create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers
- coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.

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 range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organisation, which encourages children to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group.
4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the Curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.
5. We recognise the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success.
6. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
7. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful & manageable.

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.

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1. Informal Assessment

Homework and class work are marked and comments are made as appropriate. 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. Spelling mistakes are corrected.

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.

Primary to Secondary

For pupils leaving the school, an Education Passport is completed on receipt of an information request from the Secondary School. School reports are also forwarded on request.

Standardised Testing

The school administers Micra T, Sigma T and the Drumcondra profiles. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered towards the end of third term by the class teacher. This year we carried out standardised Science tests & Gaeilge tests for our senior classes. These tests will be rolled out to other classes next year. Standard and Percentile Rankings scores are recorded on the class Record template and held in the Office. Pupils in Senior Infants are assessed using the MIST test and Junior Infants are assessed using the Belfield Infant Screening Test & the BPVS (British Picture Vocabulary Scale).

Assessment methods used with SEN Pupils

Tests are administered by the Learning Support and Resource 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. 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 tests used in the school include:

Literacy

- British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS)
- NRIT (Non reading intelligence test)
- Schonell Reading Test
- Aston Index
- Early literacy checklists
- Neale Analysis (NARA)
- PhAT (phonological awareness test)
- BIAP (Belfield Infant Assessment)
- DEST & DST (Dyslexic Screening test)
- Quest 2 (Diagnostic reading/maths test)

Numeracy

- Aston Index
- Early Numeracy checklists
- Quest 2 (Diagnostic reading/maths test)

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Screening

Standardised testing takes place annually at each class level. This includes Sigma T's and Micra T's. Using the results of these tests the class teacher identifies children that may be in need of further assessment.

The class teacher and the Learning Support Teacher consult with each other to discuss further possible assessment methods. The results of these tests are used to identify child's specific learning needs. The learning support teacher uses these test results and communicates with class teacher to create an individual educational plan for each child.

Psychological Assessment

If the above assessment methods fail to deliver adequate intervention the class teacher / Principal will contact the parents for permission to secure a Psychological Assessment for their child (see Psychological Assessment policy). An assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it Learning Support Resource hours or an Individual Education Plan. 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, spelling tests and quizzes.

Recording

Each pupil's end of year reports are stored in the office. Test scores are usually stored on a class record sheet with a copy in the office. Information is passed on from teacher to teacher on a need to know basis. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data (see Data Protection Policy).

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at St. Safan's N.S

Signed: Michael Fordin
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 10th September 2015

Signed: Breda Mc Connell
Principal of St Safan's N.S

Date: 10th September 2015

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed in 3 year's time and amended as necessary.