

## Assessment Policy

### Introductory Statement and Rationale

This policy was formulated by the Principal and ISM staff of Breaffy NS. The policy is based on advice and information provided in the Primary Curriculum, the NCCA Website, the NCCA booklet *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools* and Circular 0138/2006.

### Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Assessment activities used in this school will contribute to pupil learning and development by gathering relevant information to guide each pupil's further learning (assessment for learning) and by providing information on each pupils achievement at a particular point in time (assessment of learning).

### Aims of our Assessment Policy

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To generate baseline data that 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.

### Purposes of Assessment

- To inform teaching and learning of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes and their teaching methodologies 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 active involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work

### Definition of Assessment

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In line with the NCCA, our staff believe that assessment is integral to teaching and learning and is concerned with children's progress and achievement. It involves gathering information to understand how each child is progressing at school and using that information to further a child's learning to inform practice. Teaching practice is informed by teachers' assessment folder documents and samples. We concur with their definition of classroom assessment as "*the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes.*" Assessment, therefore, involves much more than testing. It is an ongoing process that concerns the daily interactions between the teacher and the child that include moment-by-moment conversations, observations and actions. (NCCA, *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools*. November 2007 p.7). Pupils work is reviewed by class teacher and feedback given.

## **Range of Assessment Methods used throughout the School**

Both *assessment of learning* and *assessment for learning* will be used by teachers to make professional judgements about pupil achievement/progress. Deciding what to assess will be based on the curriculum objectives in each curriculum area/subject and on what the teacher intends to help the children to learn. Each teacher will use the most appropriate assessment method to measure the extent to which children have achieved these objectives. The range of assessment methods to be used throughout the school to target DEIS , SEN ,EAL pupils and indeed all pupils to inform teaching and learning.

### ***Assessment for Learning***

At its heart, assessment for learning is a way of informing and involving the learners themselves in the process of assessment. The following methods of Assessment for Learning (AfL) are used in the school?

- **Teacher observation**

Each teacher will have an observation sheet for each child where significant observations of children's progress will be recorded. This may be as a result of target child observation, event samples, anecdotal observation and/or shadow study. New Guidelines for Schools p.46 – 52

- **Teacher-designed tasks and tests**

Teachers will refer to the Guidelines pp.54- 59 for suggestions. Also reference will be made to pp 89 – 90 where an excellent range of sample test questions is outlined.

- **Pupil Self-Assessment**

Self-assessment is the means by which pupils take responsibility for their own learning. However, we need to train pupils to self-assess. It does not just happen!

Teachers can refer to Guidelines for Schools, pp14 – 23.

Our Assessment Strategies include:

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- **Completed assignments by pupils** – projects, copybooks, activities, work samples, homework with feedback.
- **Parental, pupil feedback or observation**
- **Standardised tests**
- **Diagnostic tests**
- **Assessment by psychologist**

## *Assessment of Learning*

### **Standardised Tests. A list of assessments used in our school to inform teaching and learning**

The following list of assessments are used for all pupils in our school making provision for all pupils including SEN, EAL and Deis.

List of Assessments Available in Breaffy National School

| <b>Assessment</b>            | <b>When</b>                                               | <b>Objective</b>                                                                                  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BIAF                         | Junior Infants                                            | To record the progress of Junior Infants after their 1 <sup>st</sup> year of instruction          |
| Infant Checklists            | Infants                                                   | To record the progress of Junior Classes                                                          |
| BRIMAR/ RABAN Reading Tests  | Infants – 1 <sup>st</sup>                                 | To record the progress of Junior Classes                                                          |
| Jolly Phonics Assessment Kit | Infants                                                   | To record the progress of Junior Classes                                                          |
| MIST                         | Senior Infants – Term 2                                   | To Record the progress of Senior Infants after their 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of instruction          |
| SWST                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | To differentiate spelling groups, 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> classes                       |
| Sigma T Maths Test           | May, 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                    | To discover the individual child's attainment in Maths 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> class    |
| Drumcondra Reading Test      | May, 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                    | To discover the individual child's attainment in Literacy 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> class |
| NRIT                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> Term<br>1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> | To measure ability levels                                                                         |
| NVRT                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> Term<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> | To measure ability levels                                                                         |
| CAT                          | 1 <sup>st</sup> Term<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> | To measure ability levels                                                                         |
| Quest Reading Test           | 1 <sup>st</sup> Class                                     | To inform the IEP/IPLP of children struggling with literacy skills                                |
| Neale Analysis               | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | To inform IEP/IPLP of children at or below the 16 <sup>th</sup> per                               |
| Bangor Dyslexia Test         | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | Screening Test                                                                                    |
| MALT                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | Diagnostic Maths Test                                                                             |
| Young, Cloze Reading Tests   | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | Comprehension Test                                                                                |

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|                                              |                                   |                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jackson Phonics                              | All Classes                       | Test of Phonic ability                                                     |
| Norman France Profile of Mathematical Skills | 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> | Diagnostic Maths Test                                                      |
| Dolch Sight words                            | All Classes                       | Reading Test                                                               |
| Marino Reading Test                          | All Classes                       | Reading Test                                                               |
| Schonnell Spelling Test                      | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> | To differentiate spelling groups, 1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> classes |
| Ted Ames                                     | All Classes                       | Reading Test                                                               |
| ABLLS-R                                      | SEN                               | Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills                           |
| VB-MAPP                                      | SEN                               | Verbal Behaviour Milestones assessment                                     |
| PEP-R                                        | SEN                               | Behaviour Milestones assessment                                            |
| TOWRE2                                       | All Classes                       | Test of word reading efficiency                                            |
| CTOPP2                                       | All Classes                       | Test of phonological processing                                            |
| Reading Recovery Tests                       | Senior<br>Infs/1st                | Reading Test                                                               |

- The purpose of the standardised tests is to allow teachers to make placement and progress decisions based on assessment results and to develop appropriate interventions for certain children.
- The Principal is responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing.
- The class teacher administers the standardised tests. The opposite class teacher administers and corrects the test.
- Pupils may be excluded from the tests if in the view of the Principal they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them taking test or in the case of newcomer pupils, where their level of English is such that attempting the test would be inappropriate.
- Each child's raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN and reading age is recorded on Aladdin.
- The results will be analysed at whole school level in our Deis Plan and at individual class level, and the information gathered from the tests will be used to inform teaching and learning.
- The STEN score will be given to parents and an explanation/descriptor will be provided with each result in the end-of-year report.
- The results will determine the allocation of learning support/resource hours in the school and the nature of the support provided (in-class or withdrawal). See our SEN (Additional Support Policy)

### Screening

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Priority will be given to pupils who are performing at or below the 10th percentile in English and Mathematics. The Continuum of Support as outlined in *Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers (DES 2007)* will be followed. The criteria for selection is set out in our SEN Additional Support Policy.

## Diagnostic Assessment

- Diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties. A list of diagnostic tests used in the school is attached as an appendix to this document.
- The learning support teacher and the class teacher are involved in selecting children for diagnostic assessment.
- The learning support teacher and class teacher administer the diagnostic tests and interprets the results.

If the diagnostic assessment indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial this will be arranged in line with consultation with the classroom teacher, a learning programme will be drawn up.

## Psychological Assessment

- The class teacher and learning support teacher liaise with parents if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required. Standard consent forms are used.
- The Principal in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator, Sen Staff & Class Teachers is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist, Audiologist etc.
- The assessment is consulted in drafting School Support Plan for the pupil
- Psychological reports are stored in the pupil files in the Secretary's office.
- It has been agreed (December 2018) for GDPR reasons that new reports will be uploaded on to Aladdin for class teacher and SEN teacher access.

## Recording the results of assessment (See guidelines p70, 71 and 79)

- Test results are recorded Aladdin.
- Teachers have agreed terminology for reporting on children's progress and achievement based on STEN scores. Comments and observations will be recorded in an objective and instructive manner. Parents will be informed at parent teacher meetings and through the school report.
- Assessment information will be safely stored to facilitate access to it by former pupils at any stage until their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## Success Criteria

- A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects.
- Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year.

## Timetable for Review

The policy will be reviewed at the end of the first year of implementation. The Principal will initiate this review.

## Ratification

This assessment policy was officially ratified by the BoM on the

**Signed**                      Chairperson B.O.M.

Signed                      Principal                      Date :

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## Reference Section

- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007
- Special Educational Needs – a Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers and Resource Pack for Teachers, NEPS, 2007
- Learning Support Guidelines, DES, 2000
- Circular 0138/2006 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools
- Circular 02/05 Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools
- Primary School Curriculum – section on assessment for each subject
- Working together to Make a Difference for Children, NEPS
- Drumcondra English Profiles. G. Shiel & R. Murphy, ERC, 2000
- Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Needs, Peter Westwood, Routledge Falmer, 1997
- A range of assessment tests are listed on the SESS website [www.sess.ie](http://www.sess.ie)
- **Draft Report Cards Templates.** [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)
- **info@ncca, September 2005.** Issue 1, p. 8. Assessment for Learning