

Assessment Policy

Oylegate N.S. Assessment Policy

Policy Rationale:

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavors to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and exceptionally able children, 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, the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that increased confidence and raised self-esteem are achieved.

Aims and Objectives: The primary aims/objectives of the policy are; To facilitate improved pupil learning To create a procedure for monitoring achievement To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses

Policy

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 put in place early enough to facilitate IEPs, remediation and enrichment. These strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and individual education plans.

Content:

Standardised

The school uses Micra T and Sigma T tests. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered in May and June by the class teacher. Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the Learning Support room. The SENT analyses the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

Testing:

Screening:

The screening tests used to identify learning strengths and weaknesses in the school are;

Belfield Infant Assessment Programme (Junior Infants)

Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) (Senior Infants)
Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) (2 nd and 4 th)
Quest

These tests are administered individually or on a class basis. The MIST is administered on a class basis around February of each year, while the BIAP is administered individually by the Learning Support Teacher early in the second term. Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per **Circular 24/03** and **Circular 02/05**.

Diagnostic Assessment:

Diagnostic 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 provided with test results and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a consent form is completed.

The diagnostic tests used in the school include;
Neale Analysis
Quest
Aston Index

Psychological

Assessment:

If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver adequate intervention, the class/learning support teacher will contact the parents for permission to secure a psychological assessment for their child. An assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention, Learning Support/Resource hours. 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 and the school report issued at the end of the school year. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing.

Pupils Who Are Absent On Day Of Testing:

If pupils are absent on the day of testing the test will be administered to them by a SEN teacher at a later date.

Recording:

Each pupil has a file which is stored in the teacher's filing cabinet. The files of children who

have been identified for intervention are stored in the office This file records standardised test results, work samples and end of year reports. This file is passed from teacher to teacher as the child progresses through the system.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Self-assessment: Rubrics and questionnaires used across the curriculum so that the children can reflect on their own work by asking themselves: What did I do well? Where did I have difficulties? What can I do better next time? **Conferencing:** On a one to one/ in small groups teachers and pupils chat about work carried out and reflect on how they feel it went. What did you find easy to do? Where do you think you may need some extra help?

Portfolio/Assessment Folder: Teachers have been keeping samples of completed work / completed questionnaires/rubrics etc in assessment folders. Visual Art and creative writing pieces, etc. are kept in the children's portfolios.

Concept-mapping: Concept maps are formulated in copies of individual students. White boards are also used for this activity. Concept maps may be used at the beginning and end of a unit of work.

Questioning: A variety of questions used to assess students' developing understanding of new learning; ranging from closed questions: i.e. *what's the name of this 3D shape?* To open questions that encourage higher order thinking i.e. *can you identify any 2D shapes with lines of symmetry in the classroom?*

Teacher observation: Teacher observation is directed at all forms of learning and social interaction between the students both inside and outside the classroom. Most observations are mentally noted but on occasions brief notes are taken and kept on file or noted in a child's file/teacher's note book using the child's initials or roll number.

Teacher-designed tasks/tests: Tasks and tests are frequently set for children. The data is used to gather further evidence of a child's learning. Learning tasks are set across the curriculum. Occasionally these tasks/tests are filed in portfolios but results and data are recorded by the teacher.

Pupil-profile: A pupil's profile is gathered throughout the year from the above assessment tools and methodologies. This profile is presented in the 'School Report' form at the end of the year in written format and to parents/guardians orally at parent/teacher meetings in November and later in the year should the parents request such a meeting. A copy of individual school reports are kept in individual pupil files and kept on file for 10 years after the child has left 6th class.

Standardised testing: The Sigma-T and Micra T tests are administered in May/June of every year to all classes from 1 st class upwards. Results are kept in individual pupil files: booklets kept for one year, scoring sheets kept for 10 years on file. Results are shared with parents in school reports.

Success Criteria: This policy is considered successful if; Early identification and intervention is achieved Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in a staged approach Procedures are clear, with roles and responsibilities defined The Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities: The SENT and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal 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 must be always kept open.

References:

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000 www.sess.ie Working Together to make a Difference for Children – NEPS Assessment in Primary Schools - NCAA