

# *Forgney National School*

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## **Policy on Assessment**

### **Introduction:**

This policy was originally drafted in 2009 during a school planning day using the expertise of the School Planning service Facilitator. The policy was redrafted in 2010 and was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2010.

### **Policy Rationale:**

This 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 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 put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

The primary aims/objectives of this policy are:

- 1) To facilitate improved pupil learning
- 2) To create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- 3) To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers.
- 4) To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.

## **Assessment and Reporting Policy**

It is the policy of this school to assess pupil's progress in curricular areas on a continuous basis.

Continuous Assessment includes the following:

- Teacher Observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Pupil projects and portfolios
- Self-Assessment by pupils
- Pupil Profiles
- Samples of pupils work
- Record Keeping
- Annual Report

This continuous assessment will form the basis of Parent/Teacher consultations. Standardised Tests will be administered on a regular basis and discussed with parents at parent/teacher meetings. At present these are the Micra-T and Sigma-T Tests. The results of these tests may also be used in the allocation of pupils to classes as per school policy. It is the policy of the school to issue written reports to parents once per academic year. The results of pupil assessments will form the basis of these reports. Written reports should be:

- Clear, concise and factual.
- Presented to the Principal and a copy of the report entered into the pupil file.
- Signed and dated.

### **Assessment of Pupils for Supplementary Teaching**

Tests are organised by the Learning Support Teacher in conjunction with the class teachers as per Learning Support Policy.

Tests used:

- Standardised Tests
- Diagnostic Tests
- Ability Tests (Verbal and Non-Verbal)

Screening Tests and Standardised Test are administered on a class basis. Pupils who score at or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile or pupils about whom teachers have concerns are referred to the Learning Support Teacher for assessment using diagnostic/ability tests. Screening tests are given to all pupils during the Infant cycle or 1<sup>st</sup> class. Tests are administered to pupils transferring from another school.

### **Reporting to Outside Agencies on Individual Pupils**

All requests should be notified to the Principal. When the report is complete, it should be sent to the Principal for forwarding to the Outside Agency. The Staff member should keep a copy of the report and a copy should be kept in the school records. A copy of the request should also be kept on file and the reason why the report was sought. The Principal will have the discretion to bring any sensitive reports or request to the Board of Management for their attention, advice or direction.

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

### **Standardised Testing:**

The school has alternated in recent years between Micra – T, Sigma – T and the Drumcondra profiles. All classes from 1<sup>st</sup> class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered in the last week of May or first week of 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 administration office. The SET analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

### **Diagnostic Assessment:**

The school policy on Psychological Assessment, lists all diagnostic tests used by the school. Such tests are administered by the Learning Support and Resource Teachers following referral by the class teacher(s) 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 Principal will facilitate such an assessment happening.

The Diagnostic and Screening Tests used in the school include:

- Aston Index
- Belfield Infant Assessment Programme (BIAP)
- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Non-reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)
- Salford Reading Test
- Sigma – T
- Micra – T
- Drumcondra Reading
- Drumcondra Maths
- Schonell Spelling Test
- Schonell Reading Test

These tests are administered individually or on a class basis. The MIST and BIAP are administered on a class basis around Easter of each year, while the Aston Index is administered individually by the Learning Support Teacher when deemed appropriate. Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per Circular 24/03 and Circular 02/05.

### **Psychological Assessment:**

If stages 1 and 2 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 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. The most common types of informal teacher designed testing in our school are maths tests, spelling tests and oral reports.

### **Recording:**

Each pupil has a file which is stored in the administration office. The file records standardised test results and end of year reports. This file is passed from teacher to teacher as the child progresses through the system. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data (see Data Protection Policy).

### **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:**

Mainstream, Special Education Teachers 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.

### **Ratification and Communication:**

**This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010.**

**Reviewed by Forney Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013.**

**Reviewed on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

**Reviewed on: 15/06/2021 & signed by:**

**Fr. O. Devine, Chairperson – Forney Board of Management. 2019 - 2023**