

# SWORDS EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL

## Assessment Policy

### General Information

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Denominational Character:	Multi-Denominational
Patron:	Educate Together

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to *regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and parents.*

#### 1. What is meant by Assessment?

"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" *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, NCCA, 2007*

Assessment is central to the process of teaching and learning. It is a continuous, dynamic process, both formal and informal. It provides the teacher with the information he/she needs in order to make important decisions about the teaching and learning process. The teacher is enabled to answer the needs of the child through selecting curriculum objectives, identifying appropriate teaching methodologies, designing learning activities, choosing suitable resources, differentiating learning and giving feedback to the children on how well they are doing. These everyday activities place assessment at the very heart of teaching.

## 2. Assessment - Aims and Rationale

### Assessment

- provides information about how the child learns (the learning process) and what the child learns (the products of learning)
- allows the teacher to construct a comprehensive picture of the short-term and long-term learning needs of the child and plan future work accordingly
- helps to identify children with learning difficulties so that the nature of the support and the assistance they need can be determined
- assists communication about children's progress and development between teacher and child, between teacher and parent and between teacher and teacher
- facilitates the child in becoming more self-aware as a learner and in developing powers of self-assessment
- helps to ensure quality in education

## 3. Forms of Assessment

Assessment takes the form of two interrelated and complementary approaches: Assessment of Learning (AoL) and Assessment for Learning (AfL)

- AoL - This refers to assessing a child's work at the end of a given period. A grade or score is often given. Methods include questioning, observation, weekly tests and standardised testing. They allow teachers to keep records of children's progress and achievement.
- AfL - This emphasises the child's active role in his/her learning. It encourages children to take more personal responsibility for, and pride in, their learning by focussing on the following three questions

Where are children now in their learning?

Where are the children going in their learning?

How will children get to the next point in their learning?

The teacher can also use information gathered from AfL to evaluate his/her teaching.

#### 4. Types of Assessment

##### (a) Informal Assessment in all Subject Areas

- Teacher observation of a child in a range of situations - working/playing/social interaction
- Teacher designed tests and tasks
- Classwork and homework samples
- Portfolios and projects
- Discussion with children
- Collaboration/communication between teachers/parent/support staff
- Self-assessment methods such as rubrics, traffic lights etc.  
(See Assessment Guidelines pg 84)

##### (b) Formal Assessment in Literacy and Numeracy

###### Senior Infants

- Every year in September Senior Infant pupils will be tested in letter sounds and letter names by SEN team. The results of this testing will inform groups for Early Intervention. Children who know less than 20 sounds will be taken for a six-week block of Early Intervention. This will be followed by an extended block of EI with those children who score the least.
- MIST - Middle Infants Screening Test - will be administered to children in Senior Infants.
- Test will be administered during their fifth term in school ie. Before Easter during second year in school
- Test will be administered by class teacher in the classroom under test conditions with assistance from the SEN team and support staff if required.
- Children who are assessed as having difficulty in three or more areas may be recommended for the Forward Together Programme. This programme will be delivered by the class teacher with the support of, and in collaboration with, parents - as laid down in the Forward Together Programme Guidelines. At the conclusion of the programme children will be retested.
- The Forward Together Programme may also be used to inform the work of the Learning Support Teacher.

###### First to Sixth Classes

- Sigma-T and Micra-T will be administered to all classes from First to Sixth every year.

- Tests will be administered by the Class Teacher with the assistance of the SEN Team and support staff.
- Class Teachers should familiarise themselves with the administration technique/procedure in advance of testing.
- Tests will be administered during the last term of the year - the date to be decided annually.
- NRIT - Non Reading Intelligence Test will be administered every year to pupils in Second Class and Fifth Class. This test will be administered in the Second Term.
- All tests will be administered in the pupil's own classroom in a whole-class situation. Since these are class tests there will be no opportunity to re-administer to children who are absent.

#### **5. Ordering, Purchasing and Distribution of Tests**

The SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for this.

#### **6. Results, Record Keeping and Storage**

- ❖ Tests will be corrected and collated by class teacher. The results should be recorded in descending order. The names of absentees should be recorded on the results sheet.
- ❖ All test materials - teachers' manuals, correcting stencils, unused test booklets etc. should be returned to SEN Coordinator as soon as possible after testing
- ❖ The results and test booklets should be sent to the SEN Coordinator not more than a week after testing. They will be stored in a secure filing cabinet in accordance with Data Protection Policy.
- ❖ Results may also be stored on a password-protected computer to restrict access.
- ❖ Teachers will have access to relevant results at the beginning of the school year and on request.
- ❖ Results may also be shared with other relevant agencies e.g. NEPS, DES, SENOs, DES Inspectors and Child Education Welfare Officers - in accordance with Data Protection Policy
- ❖ Test booklets will be retained in a secure location in the school for one year after testing and the results will be kept until the pupil reaches the age of 21.

- ❖ Results - percentile ranks and STEN scores - will be recorded annually **by the Class teacher** in the Report Booklet.
- ❖ The results of Micra-T and Sigma-T will be used to help inform SEN teachers re Early Intervention/Learning Support for the following year - See Special Needs Policy

## **7. Diagnostic Tests**

- Diagnostic Tests are administered on a one-to-one basis.
- Pupils are selected for Diagnostic testing based on results of standardised tests and teacher observation and concerns.
- Parents of children recommended for Diagnostic testing will be consulted/informed and their written permission sought in all cases.
- Tests will be administered by relevant members of SEN Team.
- Results will be communicated to class teacher and parents and will inform subsequent learning plans.
- Diagnostic Tests in use in the school are:
  - a) Quest - Literacy and Numeracy
  - b) BIAP - Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
  - c) NARA - Neale Analysis Reading Assessment
  - d) Lucid Cops
  - e) Lucid Rapid - to determine possibility of Dyslexia
  - f) Bangor Dyslexia Test
  - g) Maths Tracker
  - h) Non-Verbal Reasoning Test (8-9&10-11)
  - i) Dyslexia Screening Test

## **8. Communication of Results to Parents/Guardians**

- ✓ Results of test will be communicated to Parents/Guardians on request.
- ✓ Results will also be recorded on Pupil's report card and sent home at the end of every school year. Teachers will be given an explanatory letter for this purpose
- ✓ The results of the tests will be also communicated orally to parents at the Parent/Teacher meetings in Oct/Nov.
- ✓ The method of reporting to parents is as follows:
  - STEN 8-10 - Pupil achieving above average
  - STEN 4-7 - Pupil achieving in average range
  - STEN 1-3 - Pupil achieving below average

## **9. Assessment by NEPS Psychologist**

- The SEN Team, in collaboration with class teachers, will draw up a list of children whom they consider should be assessed.
- The NEPS psychologist will inform the school of its assessment allocation for the school year.
- The SEN Team will collaborate with NEPS psychologist to prioritise children for assessment.
- Documentation will be completed by Class Teacher supported by relevant member/s of SEN Team.
- SEN Coordinator will liaise with NEPS psychologist
- Results of assessment will be communicated to relevant staff.

## **10. Follow up**

Examination of test results will help to inform SEN team of Learning Support/Resource Needs for the coming school year.

(See Special Needs Policy)

Policy reviewed and updated: \_\_\_\_\_

Ratified by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of BoM)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_