

Assessment Policy.

Introductory Statement.

The development of a whole school policy on assessments in Ss. Peter & Paul's has been done within the context of the revised primary school curriculum, the Education Act of 1998 (Article 22) and circular 0138/2006 issued by the Department of Education and Science.

Assessment is integral to all areas of the curriculum and it encompasses the diverse aspects of learning:-

- the cognitive
- the creative
- the affective (emotional)
- the physical
- the social

In addition to the products of learning, the strategies, procedures, and stages in the process of learning are assessed.

Assessment includes:-

- the growth in self-esteem
- interpersonal and intrapersonal behaviour
- the acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Rationale.

In Ss. Peter & Paul's we are committed to providing a holistic education to the pupils in our care. We therefore hope that within that context our Assessment Policy will enable us to:

- identify development stages of pupils
- outline procedures and practices in relation to pupil assessment
- assist curricular planning (short/long term)
- assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to enrolling their children in our school
- develop communication structures for the involvement of parents in their children's education
- aid both children and teachers self-evaluation.

School Mission Statement.

S.S. Peter & Paul's C.B.S. is a Catholic school committed to the mission of nurturing the whole child – Spirit, mind and body. It seeks to welcome and accommodate the beliefs and customs of children of other faiths and cultures.

The staff of the school aims to ensure that the boys graduate from the school with a healthy sense of confidence and a willingness to face the future with self discipline and a deep respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Parents are acknowledged as their children's primary educators and, as such, are encouraged and facilitated to work together with teachers for the benefit of their children

Each pupil is encouraged to develop all his talents – academic, creative, spiritual and physical. The school endeavours to value all children equally in accordance with the values of the Gospel.

Aims of Assessment:

- Establish pupils' current educational developmental stages
- Assist in teachers' short/long term planning in all areas of the curriculum
- Evaluate teaching methodologies/approaches to teaching
- Monitor the pupils' progress
- Identify learning needs/strengths in individual pupils
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning
- To facilitate teachers in devising differentiated programmes for pupils
- Help identify children with special needs including gifted children
- Help co-ordinate whole school assessment and analysis
- To help the keeping/updating of pupils' progress records
- To facilitate the provision of accurate information to parents in regard to their children's progress
- To encourage parents to participate in programmes designed to help their children's learning
- To encourage pupils to assess their own work.

Curriculum Implementation.

- The curriculum indicates the elements of each subject area that should be assessed and suggests several procedures that can be used for this purpose.
- In both short-term and long-term planning, the teacher will give careful consideration to the forms and uses that will best facilitate the learning process and provide the most relevant information about the progress of individual children.

Roles & Responsibilities.

We believe that the effective implementation of our school policy on Assessment is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the different partners involved in pupil education:

- Board of Management.
- Principal.
- Parents.
- Child.
- Class teacher.
- Learning Support Teacher.
- Resource Teacher.
- Special Educational Needs.
- Language Support Teachers.
- Special Needs Assistant.
- Home School Community Liaison.
- Posts of Responsibility.

(c.f. Policy for Learning Support/Resource Teaching pp. 4/8).

Assessment Methods.

Informal Tools:

- teacher observation
- class work
- homework
- discussion with pupils
- projects
- curriculum profiles.

Formal Screening Tests.

- M.I.S.T. (Senior Infants Term 2)
- Drumcondra Primary Reading Tests (Summer 1st/6th)
- Drumcondra Primary Maths Tests Summer 1st/6th)
- Schonell Spelling Test (Nov – 2nd – 3rd Class)
- N.R.I.T. (2nd and 5th – November)
- Young Group Reading Test (1st – 3rd – November)

The class teacher and/or SEN teachers administer these tests. The tests are corrected by the class teacher and/or SEN teachers. The tests are analysed and % of children scored under percentile categories (e.g. 0% – 12%/13% - 20%/21% - 40% etc.) c.f. Result Sheet. The results of standardised tests, along with the informal testing recorded above, inform what support is provided.

Recording/Reporting.

- Drumcondra Results recorded in Pupil Profiles by class teacher.
- Pupil Profiles will be passed from teacher to teacher at the beginning of each school year.
- Children in receipt of Resource Hours to have letter 'R' on Pupil Profile. The professional reports to be made available to the relevant class teacher at the beginning of each school year.
- Learning Support/Resource Test results to be kept on file by L.S./R.T.
- Psychological Reports and all assessments by outside agencies will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in S.E.N. co-ordinators classroom.
- When boys transfer to 2nd level these reports to be put in filing cabinet in Principal's office. (Boxed in alphabetical order).
- All tests will be available for inspection by parents and Department officials within the context of confidentiality.
- Drumcondra Test Results to be reported to parents using STEN score method and an appropriate explanation.
- In June each year the Drumcondra Test Results are analysed by co-ordinator and L.S. teacher to determine who qualifies for L.S. the following September.
- The 'Forward Together' programme is offered to parents who wish to participate following administration of M.I.S.T.
- Prior to formal assessment by outside agencies e.g. N.E.P.S. parents are consulted by class teacher. Referral Forms are filled in by class teacher, parents and L.S. teacher where applicable.
- When psychological reports or Assessment reports by professionals are returned to school, parents are again invited to consult with class teacher and school S.E.N. co-ordinator. The 'recommendations' on these reports are discussed with parents.
- If the child is diagnosed with a low incidence disability under the guidelines of the D.E.S., an application will be made to the S.E.N.O. for designated Resource Hours by the co-ordinator, with parental consent.
- If the child does not qualify for Resource Hours but has a professional report – a copy of this report is made for the class teacher and L.S. teacher with parental consent.
- If the child qualifies for Resource Hours the relevant reports are copied for class teacher and Resource Teacher
 - The child will be withdrawn from class by Resource Teacher with parental consent.
 - An I.E.P. will be put in place for child in consultation with parents.

- When the support of an S.N.A. is warranted the following procedure will be put in place.
 - Incidents of behaviour and/or care needs to be observed and recorded by class teacher and L.S. teacher over designated period of time.
 - A School Support Plan to be set up by class teacher and L.S. teacher.
 - A Behaviour Care Needs form to be filled in by relevant teachers in conjunction with parental consultation, where applicable.
 - The B.C.N. form and profile form to be sent to S.E.N.O. with all relevant professional reports and parental consent, by co-ordinator.
 - The 'Incident' file to be shown to S.E.N.O. by class teacher on day of classroom and playground observation to determine need for S.N.A. support.

Standard Letters.

Standard letters of consent are sent to parents for the following:

- Psychological and other professional assessments
- Permission for child to attend L.S./R.T.
- Withdrawal of child from same if deemed appropriate by class/L.S. teachers (c.f. L.S/R Policy)

Roles & Responsibilities.

The following is a list of the personnel at the frontline of roles and responsibilities.

- Principal
- Class teacher
- Learning Support Teachers
- Resource teachers
- B.O.M.
- Parents.

The S.N.A.'s will be employed to assist with testing if/when appropriate.

High Achievers/Exceptionally able pupils.

Aim.

We are committed to providing an environment which encourages all pupils to maximise their potential, and this clearly includes pupils who display some form of exceptional ability.

Identification of the exceptionally able pupil.

Before identifying any student as exceptionally able in a particular area, we aim to ensure that all pupils have had the opportunity to learn and succeed in this area. This makes the process of identification fair. An exceptionally able pupil should be identified using a variety of methods. The specific procedure will vary according to subject but will include elements of the following:

- Teacher referral
- Assessment result
- Parent referral
- Identifying by previous teacher/school identifying by outside agency or organisation.

The Exceptionally Able Pupil

Children may be identified as exceptionally able through the following checklist (Eyre, 1993).

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one particular area
- Of high ability but with low motivation
- Of good verbal ability but poor writing skills
- Exceptionally able but with short attention span
- Exceptionally able but with a learning disability that masks achievement
- Keen to disguise ability.

Future Plan.

In the event that a pupil is identified as exceptionally able the class teacher consults with other teachers and L.S./R.T. The area of ability is recorded with reference to which aspect the pupil has exceptional abilities in. Parents are consulted. This plan may be implemented by the extension of class work and/or working independently on specific designed tasks, under the supervision of class teacher or special education needs teacher and/or the assistance of outside agencies or organisation e.g. Mensa.

Team Teaching/Differentiation in Class – 2013/14.

- Team Teaching in place in 2nd and 4th class for Numeracy.
- Differentiation i.e. provision of more challenging work for the exceptional able pupil.

Review: This policy will be kept under regular review.

N.B. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Learning/Resource Policy.

