



# Canal Way ETNS

## Assessment Policy

### Introduction and Rationale

The Introduction to the Primary School Curriculum (1999) identifies assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and emphasises the importance of assessing the process of learning as well as the product. The curriculum includes general guidelines on assessment for each subject and suggests a range of assessment tools that can be used for specific purposes. The school recognises its obligations under Article 22 of the Education Act "to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents". The school staff were all involved in drawing up this policy as the importance of a whole school approach to assessment was recognised by the staff.

The school has identified the following advantages associated with meaningful assessment in the primary school:

- Facilitates improved pupil learning.
- Creates a procedure for monitoring achievement.
- Tracks learning processes which assist long and short term planning.
- Identifies areas of difficulty and indicates a course of action to overcome these.
- Highlights pupil needs which will inform future targets and learning outcomes.
- Helps to inform individual teacher plans as well as whole school planning.

If assessment is to be meaningful, it must be developed alongside learning activities so that it can reflect how pupils are learning, what pupils are learning and where the learning is taking them. Assessment is based on clearly defined skills or curricular activities.

### The Focus of Assessment Approaches Utilised

- **Assessment of learning**

Assessment of learning focuses more on medium and long term assessment. Assessment of learning generally involves assessing a child's learning at the end of a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term or a year. The emphasis in assessment of learning is on measuring a child's cumulative progress towards curriculum objectives,

Examples:

- Teacher designed tests and tasks
- Weekly tests i.e., spellings and table checklists
- Standardised Tests
- Diagnostic Tests

- **Assessment for Learning**

Assessment for learning is an on-going process of recognising and responding to the child's learning in order to enhance it. This involves engaging children in their own learning through questioning, and discussion and involving children in peer and self-assessment. The child's response to rich questions and his/her dialogue with the teacher and peers provide evidence of the child's learning which can be used to direct future learning. The quality of a child's response to a question can, for example, suggest further questions which lead the child to a greater understanding of an idea or concept. Central to the idea of the assessment for learning is the role of feedback in promoting children's awareness of and participation in their own learning. Feedback that is focused on the learning or task in hand, that indicates next steps and that points to achievement and challenges has been shown to be integral to children's classroom progress and confidence in learning.

Examples:

- Teacher Observations
- Teacher Questioning (lower and higher order)
- Discussion
- Work Samples
- Teacher designed tests and tasks
- Portfolio
- Self-assessment
- KWL and Mind Maps
- Peer Assessment Standardised Test
- Diagnostic Test

### Types of assessment that are utilised in the school

- **Formative Assessment:**

This provides both teacher and learner with information on the progress made and the next steps needed for the learning. This is "ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING" and is used by teachers and pupils.

- **Summative Assessment:**

This assessment takes place at the end of teaching and helps to inform teachers' planning for the future.

- Weekly spelling tests
- Weekly Mental Maths Assessment
- Text based or teacher designed termly tests – numeracy and literacy (sight words in English Policy, high frequency words, Jolly phonics sounds)

- **Self-Assessment:**

Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in their learning by self-evaluating and setting future targets. Self-assessment involves metacognition, the process of being aware of and reflecting on one's own learning and learning style.

We will encourage various Self-assessment methods including:

- Traffic Lighting
- Thumbs up/down

- o Yearly student-parent conferencing
- o Questionnaires
- o Two stars and a wish

- **Peer Assessment:**

Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to evaluate and assess each other's work. This is done across curricular subjects and can consist of:

- o Marking work
- o Questioning
- o Giving constructive feedback
- o Co-operative learning
- o Setting targets
- o Shared reading activities

- **Teacher Assessment:**

Teacher assessment is carried out on a daily basis. Most assessment is done informally. The following strategies are used:

- o Observations
- o Discussions
- o Teacher devised tests in literacy and numeracy
- o Questioning
- o Developmental checklists
- o Portfolios
- o Projects work
- o Guided reading

- **Diagnostic and Screening Assessment:**

The use of standardised tests in literacy and numeracy enables the detailed diagnosis of specific areas of pupils' learning by identifying both how well students are doing in some curricular areas and where they require more support. These tests can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of new curricula, teaching methodologies and resources. In doing so, the results from such tests should inform teachers' planning to ensure areas of the curricula, in need of development, are addressed.

**Diagnostic and Screening Assessment:**

The following diagnostic assessments and screening processes are to be implemented within the school. The results of these assessments will be kept on file and will become part of the pupil's school record.

- Micra T and Sigma T are administered at the end of each academic year for 1st - 6th class. Results from these tests will help highlight pupils needing supplementary teaching.
- The MIST test will be administered in the second term of Senior Infants. Results from these tests will help highlight pupils needing supplementary teaching.

- Non Reading Intelligence Test is used to assess background experience and ability. This will be conducted in the second term with children in 1<sup>st</sup> class, 3<sup>rd</sup> class and 5<sup>th</sup> class. Results from these tests will help highlight pupils needing supplementary teaching.
- Other screening tests such as the ones listed below will be administered to pupils with undiagnosed learning difficulties who are identified as being in need of learning support:
  - Dyslexia Screening Test
  - Basic Number Screening Test
  - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- If a teacher feels screening tests available to the school staff are not sufficient or of no use in relation to diagnosis of an individual child, the teacher is to refer the child to relevant professional.

### Administration of Screening Tests

- The SEN Post Holder is responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing
- The class teacher administers the standardised tests in co-ordination with the SE Team
- Classes may be split in accordance with requirements of specific tests.
- Pupils who are not taking a test with their classmates complete the test in the SEN room under the supervision of the SE Team where possible.
- The raw score, standard score, percentile rank, and STEN scores are recorded. There is a uniform approach across all classes
- The SE Team and class teacher are involved in the analysis of results for an individual class. The SE Team and principal are involved in the analysis of results across a number of classes and at whole school level
- Information gathered from tests inform teaching and learning by showing pupils' areas of weakness and areas of strength in relation to national norms
- Results of the standardised tests from 1st-6th are communicated to parents in the end of year report card. The STEN score (Standard Ten) is used to communicate results. An explanatory note is enclosed with the end of year report. With regard to Micra-T results, the Age Based STEN will be communicated to parents.
- The results of these tests are used to inform the SE Team of those who require further diagnostic testing. Furthermore, they have bearing on the allocation of learning support hours in the school. Those who score below the 10th percentile in either English or Maths are prioritised for learning support. After this children who score below 12th percentile get any more available learning support. For more information on prioritisation of SEN support, please read Canal Way's SEN policy.
- As per Learning Support Guidelines, English is given priority over Maths with regard to allocation of support hours.
- The Canal Way Designed Diagnostic Junior Infant Test will be used to assess children at the end of Junior Infants. This test is a slight variation to the Belfield Infant Assessment Profile test (BIAP).
- In exceptional circumstances and in consultation with his/her parents/guardians a student will be offered the option to defer or refrain from participating in the Annual Standardised Testing. Exceptional Circumstances: Mental Health Problems e.g mood disorder, severe anxiety, school phobia, Change in Family Circumstances e.g Bereavement, Homelessness, Separation/Divorce

### Administration of Diagnostic Assessment:

Formal diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties.

- The class teacher and LST are involved in selecting pupils for diagnostic assessment
- Parents are to be informed in advance of dates of Assessments to avoid low attendance
- The LST administers the diagnostic tests
- The class teacher and LST interpret the results
- If it is felt necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about diagnostic test results, the LST, principal and/or parents arrange for such consultation

### Timetable of Assessment:

Class Level	Assessment	Date
Junior infants	Canal Way Designed Diagnostic Junior infant Test	End of Term 3
Senior infants	MIST	End of Term 2
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Micra T NRiT Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
2 <sup>nd</sup> class	Micra T Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	Micra T NRiT Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
4 <sup>th</sup> Class	Micra T Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
5 <sup>th</sup> Class	Micra T NRiT Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	Micra T Sigma T	1 <sup>st</sup> week in May 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in May

### Record Keeping:

Under the Education Act (1998), parents have a right to be informed of their child's progress. Schools will at times need to share assessment information with a range of people including parents, teachers in other schools and other professionals associated with the education of the child. It is important, therefore, that assessment information is readily communicable to such a varied audience.

Standardised Test scores will be stored centrally on Aladdin.

Standardised test papers will be kept in the school until the child is 21 years of age.

### Reporting:

Schools are obliged, under Part 7 of DES Circular 0056/2011: 'Reporting and Using the Results of Assessments to Improve Pupil Learning', to report information from standardised tests to parents, the school Board of Management, the Department of Education and Skills and to another school if a pupil moves there.

### Reporting to Parents:

Parents are formally informed of their children's progress in the following ways:

- Formal:
  - Annual Parent-Teacher meetings
  - Written end of year report
  - Other meetings may be arranged throughout the year, should the need arise

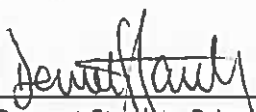
This policy has implications for other policies and procedures in the school e.g. Special needs, Record keeping, Data protection and Reports to parents.

### Review:

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by: Canal Way Educate Together Board of Management in April 2018.

Signed:   
Chairperson: Board of Management

Signed: :  
Dermot Stanley, Principal

Date: 20.4.2018

Date: 20 April 2018