



Redeemer Boys' National School
Ard Easmuinn
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Assessment Policy

Introduction:

This policy sets out our approach to assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It sets out guidance on assessment in order to assist us in identifying children with various learning needs, particularly in literacy and numeracy, in order to facilitate planning for teaching in these areas.

Policy Rationale:

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. Teaching staff at Redeemer Boys' N.S. endeavour 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 and the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be implemented to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved by our pupils.

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-term 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.

Policy Content:

This policy outlines the use of assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally able so that adequate strategies are put in to facilitate appropriate educational development. These strategies may include the following:

- Pupil self-assessment

- Pupil profiling
- Communication between parents and teachers
- The Continuum of Support
- Conferencing
- Portfolio Assessment
- Concept Mapping
- Questioning
- Teacher Observation
- Teacher Designed Tasks
- Standardised Tests.

Standardised Testing:

Redeemer Boys' N.S. administers the Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) with Second Class and Fifth Class each year.

The school uses the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test-(DPRT) from First Class through to Sixth Class. The Sigma T Maths test is administered to all children from First Class to Sixth Class, this will change to the Drumcondra Primary Maths from June 2020.

All tests are usually administered during the month of May by class teachers and the Special Education Teacher (SET) team where appropriate. All scores including standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on our Aladdin Schools account (the student management software system in a secure, encrypted site). Each class teacher holds a print out of these scores in their Assessment Folder. The SET team collate and analyse these results in June to support the effective allocation of teaching resources in the next academic year.

In line with Circular 56/2011, the results from Second Class, Fourth Class and Sixth Class are returned to the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Equally, the parents of children from First Class through to Sixth Class will receive their son's results on the end of year school report in June. Redeemer Boys' NS provides the results in the format of a STEN score. Time is available after the issue of reports, should parents wish to consult with class teachers to discuss their child's results.

Diagnostic Assessment:

Depending on the nature of the test, tests may be administered by the SET team or the class teacher. In some cases, tests are administered by the SET team following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians.

The diagnostic tests used in Redeemer Boys N.S. include:

- PM Benchmark Levelling Kit
- Reading Recovery Assessment
- Maths Recovery Assessment
- Words Their Way

Screening Assessment:

Screening tests are used to identify learning strengths and weaknesses throughout Redeemer Boys N.S. The following is a list of tests administered, this list is not exhaustive, and teachers may introduce new tests where appropriate:

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) and Forward Together Programme
- Dyslexia Screening Test
- Renfrew Vocabulary Test
- Maths Recovery Screening Tests
- Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
- Free Writing samples
- Running records (Write to Read format) 3rd to 6th Class
- Teacher Observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Sight Word tests- PM high-frequency words
- Running records using the PM Benchmark Kit

Assessment within our ASD Specific Classes:

Class teachers will use a variety of assessments within the ASD setting to appropriately measure the progress and educational attainment of each pupil. This assessment may include the following:

- ABLLS-R
- VB MAPP
- Functioning Language Assessment (SESS)
- PEP 3 (to be introduced within the academic year 2019/2020)
- Maths Recovery Screening Tests
- Reading Recovery Assessment

The most common form of assessment used in our school is teacher observation, teacher-designed tests 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. Teachers use an assessment folder to support assessment practice by gathering and recording relevant information on the progress and achievement of the whole class and individual pupil learning (Appendix 1).

Psychological Assessment:

The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by **Circular 0013/2017** where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to psychological assessment is sought.

Therefore, If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver the adequate intervention, the class teacher/school leadership team will contact the parents for permission to arrange a psychological assessment for their child. If a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought, and a consent form is completed. The school leadership team will facilitate such an assessment with our NEPS psychologist.

The school policy on Psychological Assessment is a three-step approach based on the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) Continuum of Support process:

1. Stage 1- Classroom Support
2. Stage 2- School Support
3. Stage 3- School Support Plus

Identification of Pupils for Support:

Following formal and informal assessments, the following children will be prioritised for supplementary teaching support;

- Those performing at or below the 12th percentile in literacy or numeracy standardised tests.
- Pupils previously in receipt of supplementary teaching support who continue to experience significant difficulties.
- Pupils who are identified as having significant needs through the process of ongoing assessment as set out on the Continuum of Support Process.
- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social and emotional problems, or coordination or attention control difficulties and pupils with specific learning disabilities.
- Pupils with significant educational needs.
- Pupils who present with a range of learning difficulties which may affect their ability to access the full curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language needs including those who have English as Additional Language (EAL).
- Pupils who present as being exceptionally able who score at or above the 95th percentile in standardised tests

Recording:

Each pupil has a file which is stored on our Aladdin Schools account. This account contains Standardised Test Results and End of Year Reports. This file can be accessed by the class teacher which allows for the effective tracking and monitoring of pupil's progress. Hard copies of test sheets are available in the Deputy Principal's classroom. They are stored in a secure filing cabinet. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data. Student records will be kept on file in a locked filing cabinet in a secure room until the child has reached the age of 21 (see Data Protection Policy).

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for each child (Learning Support Guidelines, 2000). It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to establish staged interventions at class level, following consultation with the Principal/Deputy Principal/SET assigned to their class. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal and Deputy Principal in her role as SEN (Special Educational Needs) Coordinator, 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 will be always kept open.

Success Criteria:

This policy is considered successful if:

- Early identification and intervention are achieved
- Procedures, roles and responsibilities regarding all assessment outlined in this policy are clear to all relevant parties
- Class Teachers and Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives in the assessment process
- There is an efficient transfer of information, from teacher to teacher and from parent to teacher.

Implementation and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21st August 2020.

Signed: F. Mullen, Chairperson, BOM Date: 21/08/20

Signed: M. Murray, Principal, Date: 21/08/20

Date of next review: September 2022

Appendix 1

Redeemer Boys' N.S. Building your Assessment Folder

Your Assessment Folder supports your assessment practice by providing a dedicated place for you to gather and record **relevant** information on the progress and achievement of your whole class and individual pupil learning. This information or *evidence of learning* is gathered using a variety of assessment methods over the course of the year.

Gathering the information in the Assessment Folder is not an end in itself. The use you make of the information is more important. The information can be used to support you when...

- **Reporting** on the child's learning progress and achievement to parents and other relevant people such as the SET team, the principal or the school psychologist. This use of the assessment information is called **Assessment of Learning (AoL)**.
- **Identifying the next steps** to be taken by the teacher and the child to improve the learning. For example, you might think about *what does this sample of the child's work tell me about what I now need to do to help him improve?* This approach to assessment is called **Assessment for Learning (AfL)**.

It is important to remember the purpose of the Assessment Folder when making decisions about what you might include in it.

Your Assessment Folder can be divided into two sections:

Section A: General class records (Assessment of Learning)

- This section may include results and analysis of standardised tests, class checklists, class test results, monthly/end of topic revision, spelling test scores, project results or any other assessment of the class as a whole.

Section B: Pupil profiles (Assessment for Learning)

- This section can be divided into subsections i.e. one per child. The following information may be included for each child:
 - Child's name, class level
 - Interests
 - Strengths, learning needs (include continuum of support checklists and plans as

appropriate)

- P-T meetings: dates, issues, actions taken
- Observations regarding subject areas (always dated)
- Selected samples of child's work* (dated)

Selecting samples of children's work should be guided by their use:

- Reporting learning progress to parents and others (AoL)
- Identifying next steps needed to improve the child's learning (AfL)

Important to Remember:

- Psychological assessment reports are not normally included in your Assessment Folder.
- Enter facts only when recording your observations. Date the observations.
- Store the assessment folders in a secure place in your classroom.

*NB. A small number of carefully selected samples gathered during the year are more meaningful and useful than having large quantities.

Teacher Observation

As a teacher you are constantly observing the children in your class – Did they understand the new maths concept? Has their behaviour changed? Can they answer comprehension questions? Are they reading with fluency and expression? etc. etc. By the end of the day it can be hard to remember about each individual child – here are some tips;

- Have a teacher clipboard with individual labels for each child (with their initials/number). If you notice something, jot it down. You can write it up properly later.
- Use a refill pad page – and jot things down on it.
- Make sure to include the date

At the end of each academic year the class teacher should hand the assessment folder over to the teacher in the class level above. Folders should be kept as a reference point for one year after they have been compiled and then destroyed.

Informative Video on Building your Assessment Folder

<http://teacherinduction.ie/en/supports/nqt-planning-support/assessment-folder>

