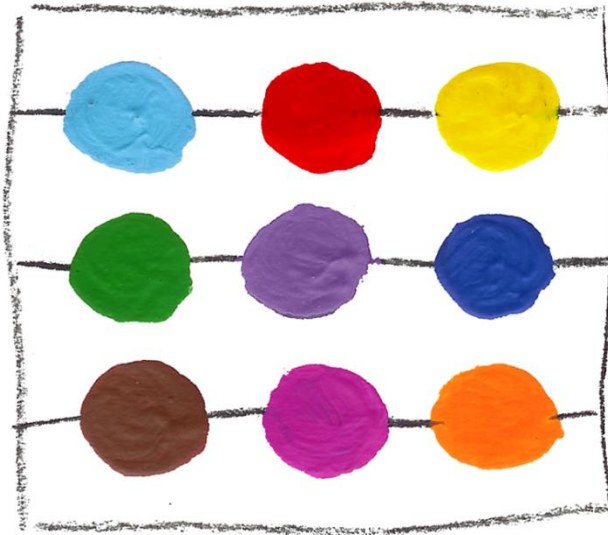


Assessment Policy



Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS) relating to Assessment. It is intended to help the school community, including staff, parents, guardians and other relevant parties to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

Version	Description	Authors
Term 3 2010	Devising of policy	Board of Management
November 2014	Minor amendments to reflect current practice	Board of Management
October 2016	Amendments made to existing policy	Board of Management
November 2018	Minor amendments to reflect current practice	Board of Management
March 2021	Revision of policy and amendments	Board of Management

School Contact Details

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Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy on assessment was originally prepared by the policy committee, made up of two parents, two Board of Management (BoM) members and two teachers, in line with the *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools* (NCCA 2007). It was reviewed in November 2014, October 2016, November 2018 and March 2021 by members of the policy committee and these amendments were formally ratified by the Board of Management.

Rationale

This assessment policy was written in 2010 as there was currently no assessment policy in place in the school. It was reviewed in 2014 as it is important to review policies regularly and a gap longer than the usual biennial practice had occurred. The policy was reviewed again in October 2016, November 2018 and March 2021.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is one of a rapidly increasing number of equality based schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Skills and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- **Equality based** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role

of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

Information taken from the Educate Together website www.educatetogether.ie

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: *Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.*

Aims

By introducing this policy, the school hopes:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- To assist teachers' long and short-term planning
- To have a cohesive plan on assessment throughout the school
- To support practice on assessment for learning and assessment of learning
- To support the assessment guidelines set out by the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

Guidelines (content of policy)

(Refer to Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007)

(a) Purposes of assessment:

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms
- To identify and support the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able
- To contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- To monitor pupil progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

(b) Assessment for learning: *(Refer to Assessment section for each subject in the Curriculum)*

- The following types of informal assessment methods are used in the school:
 - *Teacher observation*
 - *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
 - *Questioning*
 - *Work samples, portfolios and projects*
- There are different assessment methods depending on age, level and subject (e.g. weekly checks, termly reviews, standardised tests and diagnostic tests)
- Teachers assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples and projects. What is included is at the discretion of the teacher, or in some cases the pupils
- The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests may be used for all curricular areas. However, they are always used for English, Irish and Maths
- Pupils are involved in the assessment of their own work/progress (e.g. self-correcting, compilation of portfolios and paired/collaborative assessment)

(c) Standardised tests

- The following standardised tests are used in the school:
 - Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
 - Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT)
 - Drumcondra Primary Maths Test (DPMT)
 - Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST)
 - Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach do Scoileanna Rialta
- Senior Infants are tested in Term 3

- 1st – 6th classes are tested in Term 3 and results are based on Spring Norms
- Senior Infants are tested using the MIST. 1st-6th classes are tested using the DPRT and DPMT. (Refer to Circular 0138/2006)
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) co-ordinator, principal and middle management team are responsible for ordering and co-ordination of testing
- Each class group's class teacher and Special Education Teacher (SET) is responsible for the distribution of the tests
- The class teacher administers the standardised tests in co-ordination with the Special Education Teacher (SET)
- In the case of children with specific needs, the tests may be carried out on a one-to-one basis or within a small group
- Pupils who are not taking a test with their classmates complete the test in the SEN room under the supervision of a SET
- The raw score, standard score, percentile rank, and STen (Standard Ten) scores are recorded. There is a uniform approach across all classes
- The SET and class teacher are involved in the analysis of results for an individual class. The SEN co-ordinator 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, 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 is used to communicate results. An explanatory note is enclosed with the end of year report. Efforts are made to provide this sheet in the parent's mother tongue
- The results of these tests are used to inform the SEN 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 12th percentile in either English or Maths are prioritised for learning support

(d) Screening Testing: *(Refer to Learning Support Guidelines and Circular 02/05)*

- The following screening tests are used to facilitate the early identification of learning strengths / difficulties:
 - MIST
 - Drumcondra Early Numeracy Screening Test
- These screening tests is administered on completion of five terms in school
- The class teacher administers this test in conjunction with the SET
- The class teacher, SET, SEN co-ordinator and principal are involved in interpreting results
- Screening leads to specific intervention by the class teacher based on the staged approach (refer to SEN Policy and Stage 1 Circular 02/05)
- Children who score below the specified criteria undergo further diagnostic testing
- Parents are informed by the class teacher following diagnostic assessment
- An additional screening test is used for all children with English as Additional Language (EAL) in their first two years of schooling and as deemed necessary therein. This screening test is called the Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK)

and it is administered by the EAL Teacher at regular intervals in accordance with Special Educational Needs Policy

(e) Diagnostic Assessment: (*Refer to Learning Support Guidelines, Chapter 4*)

- Formal diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties. These include the Jackson Phonics, the Neale Analysis and the Drumcondra Early Numeracy Diagnostic Test, WRAT II, Dyslexia Screening Test, Non-verbal Reasoning Test etc. This is not an exhaustive list
- The class teacher and SET are involved in selecting pupils for diagnostic assessment
- In some cases, parents/guardians are consulted in writing or via Aladdin prior to diagnostic assessment. This parental/guardian consent is given to them by the class teacher. However, diagnostic assessment may be carried out prior to consultation with the parents. Parents will be informed of the results following this
- The SET administers the diagnostic tests
- The class teacher and SET interpret the results
- The school has a staged approach to assessment to ensure that the results of the assessments inform subsequent learning plans (*refer to the SEN Policy*)
- For criteria used when deciding which pupils should be referred for supplementary teaching, refer to the SEN policy
- If it is felt necessary to consult a psychologist (NEPS or other) about diagnostic test results, the SET, principal and/or parents/guardians arrange for such consultation

(f) Psychological Assessment: (*Refer to Circular 02/05*)

- The Principal, Special Education Teacher and class teacher liaise with parents/guardians if it is felt that a psychological assessment or other assessment is required (Stage 3, Circular 02/05)
- The principal or SET teacher is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from specialists (e.g. Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist, Audiologist, etc.)
- The assessment plays an important role in drafting an educational plan for a pupil as it identifies areas of weakness and strength as well as providing recommendations for learning
- Psychological reports are stored in the individual pupil's file in the principal's filing cabinet. The Principal and Special Education co-ordinator controls access to them

(g) Recording the results of assessment

- In the past, assessment results were recorded using a Pupil Profile Card which were then stored in each pupil's file. All results from May 2014 onwards are stored on Aladdin Schools
- An agreed terminology is used and understood by all teachers
- Teachers are made aware of the need to record comments in an objective and instructive manner

- Sensitive data is stored in secure filing cabinets
- Arrangements are in place for the transfer of appropriate information based on assessments. We request that parents provide information (report cards) if their child is transferring to or from another school
- This policy has implications for other policies and procedures the school e.g. Special needs, Record keeping, Data protection, Reports to parents/guardians.

Success Criteria

The school wide implementation of this policy will ensure:

- A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects
- Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year

Roles and Responsibility

The following people have particular responsibilities for aspects of this policy:

- Teaching staff
- Parents/guardians
- Principal
- Board of Management
- Psychologists, therapists, etc.

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented in September 2011. Amendments were implemented with immediate effect following review in November 2014, October 2016 and November 2018. The policy was most recently reviewed in March 2021.

Timetable for Review

The operation of the new policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended during the school year 2022/23.

Ratification & Communication

The policy was circulated to the members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting in Term 3 2010 at which it was formally ratified. Amendments were circulated to the Board prior to a meeting in November 2014, November 2016 and November 2018. Further amendments were circulated to the Board prior to a meeting in March 2020 and these were formally ratified on 15th March 2021.

Notification that the policy is available for viewing will be communicated to the parents in the next School Communication, via Aladdin. It will be available for viewing on the school website and a copy will be available to all staff on Google Drive.

Signed: _____
CHAIRPERSON of the BOM

Date: _____

Reference Section

- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2007
- Special Educational Needs – a Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers and Resource Pack for Teachers, NEPS, 2007
- Learning Support Guidelines, DES, 2000
- Circular 0138/2006 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools
- Circular 02/05 Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools
- Primary School Curriculum – section on assessment for each subject
- Working together to Make a Difference for Children, NEPS
- Drumcondra English Profiles. G. Shiel & R. Murphy, ERC, 2000
- Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Needs, Peter Westwood, Routledge Falmer, 1997
- A range of assessment tests are listed on the SESS website www.sess.ie
- Draft Report Cards Templates. www.ncca.ie
- info@ncca, September 2005. Issue 1, p. 8. Assessment for Learning