Dec. 2022

Assessment Policy Threen N.S.

Introduction:

This policy was originally drafted in 2011 following whole staff training and a planning day facilitated by a PDST facilitator. An updated policy was formulated by the teaching staff in Spring 2019 so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school.

This version of the policy was formulated in November 2022 taking into consideration new guidelines and updated practises within Threen NS.

Rationale:

In order to ensure that all children in our school achieve to the best of their ability we believe it is imperative that any learning difficulties are identified at the earliest opportunity and that the school must put in place an appropriate response to their needs. An effective assessment policy ensures quality in education is central to this process of teaching and learning. Through assessment the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the short term and long term needs of the child and plans accordingly. Assessment assists communication to all parties involved in the child's education i.e. teacher and child, teacher and parent and teacher to teacher. It helps the child become more self-aware as a learner and develops powers of self-assessment. It is integral to all areas of the curriculum and to the child's growth in self-esteem and acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Relationship To The Characteristic Spirit of The School

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and to the enhancement of teaching processes. An effective policy of assessment will identify the early interventions required to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved.

Aims:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties

- To assist teachers long and short term planning
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis and to establish a firm link between assessment and decision making with regard to future strategies, content and methodologies in the classroom
- To describe strategies for assessment of pupils over as many areas of development as possible
- To emphasise the importance of early identification of pupils with specific numeracy and literacy problems through establishing relevant baseline data which in turn can be used to monitor achievement over time.
- To ensure availability of finance to purchase texts and resources
- To outline specific strategies for monitoring the progress of all pupils with particular learning needs
- To evaluate for planning targets of class teachers and SET teachers
- As a guide for professional development
- To guide the school to select target areas of various subjects for further school development planning
- To report to parents
- To highlight good practice and school strengths
- To keep a clear focus on good teaching and learning
- To inform the BOM and DES of levels attained in Numeracy & Literacy

Policy Content:

Purpose 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 the particular learning needs of pupils / groups including the exceptionally able if applicable
- To monitor pupils 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 the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work where feasible
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

Assessment FOR Learning And Assessment OF Learning

There are three main types of assessment – formative, summative and evaluative.

1. Formative: Covering a range of formal and informal assessments and enabling the teacher to modify the teaching and learning activities to improve child's attainment.

This includes self-assessment strategies. Formative Assessment is Assessment FOR learning.

2. Summative: Using teacher designed tasks and tests to provide information about the achievement of learning targets. This is Assessment OF learning.
3. Evaluative: Focusing on the achievements of the school i.e. the teaching and the learning that is taking place. This is Assessment OF Learning.

Assessment of Learning

(1) The following are among some of the methods of informal assessment that are used in the school.

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests, homework tasks
- Work samples (guided and independent) , portfolios & projects
- Checklists, concept map, rating scales

(2) The above assessment methods are used across the whole school, at the discretion of individual teachers, depending on the requirements of individual pupils, class level or subject and parents are given feedback on a regular basis.

(3) Depending on the subject and the class level and the needs of individual pupils, teachers may assemble portfolios of pupil assignments, work samples, projects etc.

(4) The school's plan for each curriculum subject addresses the issue of assessment

(5) Examples of teacher designed tasks / tests

- Weekly spelling test/ Weekly table test/ Dictation tests
- SESE review (senior classes)
- Termly assessment
- Assessments in Irish / English / Maths designed by teachers/ Busy at Maths

(6) Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the assessment of their own work / progress. Examples include the use of

- KWL
- Self-editing / drafting / redrafting
- Comments good / needs improvement
- 2 stars and a wish
- This data will be stored in assessment folders / children's copies/ on seesaw (e portfolio)

Standardised Testing:

The school has alternated in recent years between Micra T, Sigma, Drumcondra English test. Alternative/ New Tests may be administered based on school needs and in line with Dept of Education guidelines and best practise.

All classes from First class upwards are tested. Children on/ under STEN 4 in Literacy/ Numeracy Standardised tests will be prioritised for SET teaching, through withdrawal one-to-one, groups support or class support/ team teaching.

The tests are usually administered in the Summer term by the SET .

Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the administration office. The SET analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

Results of standardised tests are reported to parents using the end of year report card and at parent / teacher meetings. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents.

The Principal, in conjunction with all staff, analyses the results of these tests. The SET will then include the children in the SET timetable. The results of end of year testing are included in end of year reports.

Screening:

The first step in identifying pupils who may need Learning Support in Literacy or Numeracy is for the class teacher to administer class- based or use their own informal assessment techniques/ screening tests. The particular screening measures that are administered will depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils.

The following tests are used to screen in Threen NS:

- Pre-School Profile (On enrolment), (Mo Sceal Document provided by the pre-school)
- Junior Infant Work Samples (guided and independent tasks
- M.I.S.T. (end of Senior Infants)
- NEPs Checklists
- NEPs "My Thoughts About School" assessment
- Gross and Fine Motor Checklists

Diagnostic Testing:

Diagnostic tests have an important role to play in identifying children with learning difficulties.

Special Education Teachers administer any Diagnostic Test deemed necessary. In-house diagnostic testing takes place following classroom intervention and the completion of the Classroom Support Plan (as per staged approach) and following referral by the Class Teacher in consultation with parents.

A suitable diagnostic test from the list above will be chosen by the Special Education Teacher in consultation with the Class Teacher. The Administration of such tests is in keeping with Circulars 02/05, 0014/2017 and 0018/2021, where a staged approach is used by individual Class Teacher before recourse to diagnostic testing or psychological assessment.

Special Educational Needs

Tests administered by S&LT Assessments, OT Assessments, Physiotherapy Assessments, Play Therapy Assessments may be used as guidelines to set targets for progression of skills on an individual basis.

Psychological Assessments:

Each September a cohort of children may be identified for assessment / observation that academic year. The class teacher and / or Principal meet parents & a consent form is signed by the parents if the child is targeted for psychological assessment. The Principal/SET teacher will organise the assessment.

Children who present with possible SLT / OT needs will be identified by teachers to the Principal. The Principal and / or the class teacher will advise parents re: getting a medical referral from their G.P.

The results of assessments will guide the drafting of an IEP for the pupil if appropriate. The Principal will ensure that details of relevant reports are transferred with all 6thclass pupils on their transfer to Second Level Education.

Recording Results Of Assessment:

Each pupil has a file in a locked cabinet in the office. Test booklet record sheets, end of year reports, copies of assessments etc. are kept here. All data is sensitive to each child and therefore the cabinet must be locked at all times.

In line with the National Strategy to improve Literacy & Numeracy and once guidelines are in place standardised test results will be given to the relevant second level school on transfer from Primary to Second Level. End of year assessment results will determine who will receive SET teaching for the following year.

The standardised test results may be given to the BOM, annually to review overall school standards in Literacy / Numeracy. (No individual results will be identifiable). The school will report aggregate standardised test results for 2nd, 4th and 6th Class (via Esi Net) once annually to the Department of Education.

Success Criteria:

This policy is considered successful if;

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in a staged approach
- Procedures are clear, with roles and responsibilities defined
- The Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Roles and Responsibilities:

Mainstream, Special Education Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team. The Principal 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 must be always kept open.

Test results will be analysed by the Class Teachers and the Special Education Teachers and discussed on a whole-school basis. These results will be used to both monitor the child's progress and to inform classroom planning. (The results may also be used in the school's self-evaluation process)

Note: Parents are not given copies of the test. The Class Teacher may show the completed test booklet to parents if requested, and if this is appropriate in individual circumstances. A parent may view their child's booklet in the presence of the teacher. No photographs are permitted.

Ratification & Communication:

This policy supersedes the previous policy and is effective from December 2022. This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in December 2022 and communicated to parents thereafter. It is available on the school website.

Signed: Valerie Callaghan Date: 1/12/2022

(Chairperson)

Signed: Aine O Connor Date: 1st December 2022

(Principal)

Review Timetable:

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaboration.