**WHOLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY**

**Policy Rationale:**

D.E.S. Circular *0056/11*  asked schools to implement a range of measures relating to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. The measures include the implementation of standardised testing with effect from 2012 in English reading and Mathematics. The core of this policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a school response to their needs. C.B.S. Primary School also caters for exceptionally able pupils. This policy sets out to formalize our existing practice within this school, and is our response to the Department of Education’s publication on assessment entitled “Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum” (2007). An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS Policy.

**Relationship to School Ethos:**

C.B.S. Primary School adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child. An effective assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that enhancement, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved among our pupils.

**Aims and Objectives:**

The primary aims/objectives of the policy are:

1. To provide accurate information to appropriate interest groups:
* Principal
* Staff
* Parents
* D.E.S.
* N.E.W.B.
1. To track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers.
2. To generate base-line data that can be used to monitor achievements over time.
3. To facilitate improved pupil learning.
4. To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.
5. To ensure all pupils reach their full educational potential.
6. To monitor learning achievements.
7. To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum.
8. To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms.
9. To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able
10. To contribute to the school’s strategy for prevention of learning difficulties.
11. To monitor pupil progress and attainment
12. To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
13. To compile records of individual pupil’s progress and attainment
14. To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

**Policy Content:**

This policy is geared towards using assessments to inform school planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally gifted, so that adequate strategies are put in place early enough to cater for the needs of all pupils. *The*se strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes and individual education plans.

**Assessment Methods**

The most common forms of assessment used in mainstream classes in our school are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Teacher led assessment** | **Child led assessment** |
| Questioning | Self assessment |
| Teacher observation | Conferencing |
| Teacher designed tasks and tests | Portfolio assessment |
| Standardised testing | Concept mapping |

These 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.

**Standardised Testing:**

C.B.S. Primary School uses the Drumcondra Tests to assess pupils in spellings, literacy and numeracy. These tests are usually administered in springtime of each year by the class teacher aided by the S.E.S.T. (Special Education School Team). Classes from 1st class to 6th class are tested. Standard score, percentile ranking and sten scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the administration office. The Drumcondra tests are graphed which allows the school to compare our results with the national norm. The S.E.S.T. analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September. Results are sent to parents in early June to allow sufficient time for response and questioning from parents.

**Reporting Results:**

A facility is now available on [www.esinet.ie](http://www.esinet.ie) to upload standardised test results for the Drumcondra tests for 2nd class, 4th class and 6th class and forward these results to the Department of Education and Science. The same results are also reported to the Board of Management.

**Diagnostic Assessment:**

A broad range of diagnostic and screening tests are in use by the S.E.S.T. Please see *appendix 1* for a list of our diagnostic tests which are available in C.B.S. Primary School. Such tests are administered by the Learning Support and Resource Teachers following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing /psychological assessment. Parents are provided with test results and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a parental consent form is completed.

**Screening:**

* Screening tests in the Infant Classes are done throughout the year in accordance with The Staged Approach as outlined in Circular on Special Education 02/05 and in The N.E.P.S. Model of Service.
* Any child deemed immature or unable to cope with the Junior Infant programme is screened using the B.I.A.P. (Belfield Infant Assessment Programme)
* The Middle Infants Screening Test (M.I.S.T.) is administered by the learning support teachers to Senior Infants.
* The C.A.T. (Cognitive Attainment Test) is administered by the resource teachers to all pupils in third classes.
* A checklist for social skills such as “Cornish and Ross” or “Behaviour Checklist” is used to identify pupils who may present with emotional behaviours. The school also uses “Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire” (www.sqd.com)
* Standardised tests in spellings, literacy and numeracy are administered to all pupils from 1st class to 6th class every spring. Drumcondra Tests are favoured at present and the results of these tests together with the views of class teachers and parents form the basis for selection to learning support classes.

**Assessment of International Pupils.**

Refer to our E.A.L. Policy to read about the detailed assessments administered by the E.A.L. teacher.

**Psychological Assessment:**

If stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver adequate intervention, the school will contact the parents for permission to secure a psychological assessment for their child. An assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention, be it ‘Learning Support/ Resource hours’ or an ‘Individual Education Plan’.

**Recording:**

The results of each pupil’s Drumcondra and M.I.S.T. tests are recorded. This allows the school to build an individual pupil file, a class profile and a whole school profile. Each pupil’s file is stored in the administration office. This file may contain copies of the following:

* standardised test results
* screening tests
* end of year school reports
* psychological, clinical, occupational therapy, speech and language assessments
* diagnostic tests reports

This file may be stored in an electronic form. Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data.

Individual class teachers keep his/her own day to day records.

Records will be kept until pupils are 18 years old plus 7 more years.

A review of the time required to store records will take place when further

 update/ guidance is provided/published.

**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
* Reporting to parents is clear and timely.
* Pupil results are comparable with national norms.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

* The Principal, Mainstream class teachers and Special Education Teachers assume shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in motion staged interventions at class level, (stage1).
* At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Special Education School Team.
* The Principal assumes a primary role at Stage 3 when a Psychological Assessment may be required.

**Implementation:**

This policy is effective from December 2012.

**Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in December 2012 and communicated to parents thereafter.

**Review Timetable:**

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

Signed by Chairperson of Board of Management

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**Michael Gallagher.**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Appendix 1**

N.R.I.T. Non-Reading Intelligence Test (Hodder and Stockton)

M.I.S.T. Middle Infant Screening Test (NFER Nelson)

C.A.T. Cognitive Abilities Test (NFER Nelson)

Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NFER Nelson)

Jackson Phonics

Aston Index (L.D.A.)

Quest (NFER Nelson)

D.E.S.T. Dyslexia Early Screening Test

B.I.A.P. Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (Folens)

Daniels and Diack

S.W.R.T. Single Word Screening Test

B.P.V.S. Receptive language test

Sound Linkage

Basic Number Diagnostic Test

Cornish and Ross

Strengths and difficulties questionnaire

**References:**

Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, NCCA 2007

DES Circular 66/12

The Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life Strategy, DES 2011/2012

DES Circular 02/05

DES Circular 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000

Education Act 1998

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

[www.sess.ie](http://www.sess.ie)

Working Together to make a Difference for Children – N.E.P.S.

[www.sqd.com](http://www.sqd.com)

**GLOSSARY**

BESDBehavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties

BIAP Belfield Infant Assessment Programme

BOM Board of Management

CAT Cognitive Attainment Test

CPD Continuous Professional Development

DES Department of Education and Science

EAL English as Additional Language

EBD Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

EPSEN Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act, 2004

ERST Edmond Rice Schools Trust

IEP Individual Education Plan

IPLP Individual Pupil Learning Profile

LS Learning Support

MIST Middle Infant Screening Test

NCCA National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

NEPS National Educational Psychological Service

NEWB National Educational Welfare Board

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

SEN Special Educational Needs

SENO Special Educational Needs Organiser

SESS Special Education Support Service

SEST Special Education School Team

SNA Special Needs Assistant

SPHE Social Personal Health Education

SSLD Specific Speech and Language Disorder