



## Assessment Policy of Ardrahan N.S.

### Introduction:

This policy was formulated following collaboration by the teaching staff in November 2021 so as to have a transparent and uniform approach to assessment throughout the school. The PDST guidelines were used to assist in the drafting of this policy.

### 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 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 across all areas of the curriculum
- 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

### **Policy Content:**

#### Purpose of Assessment

The Primary School curriculum describes assessment as having four functions; formative, summative, evaluative and diagnostic.

- 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 the achievement of learning outcomes
- To enable teachers to differentiate their instruction in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils / groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and achievement
- To enable pupil self-assessment where appropriate
- To enable teachers to reflect their individual practice and on learner experiences.

### **Assessment of Learning**

## Forms of Assessment

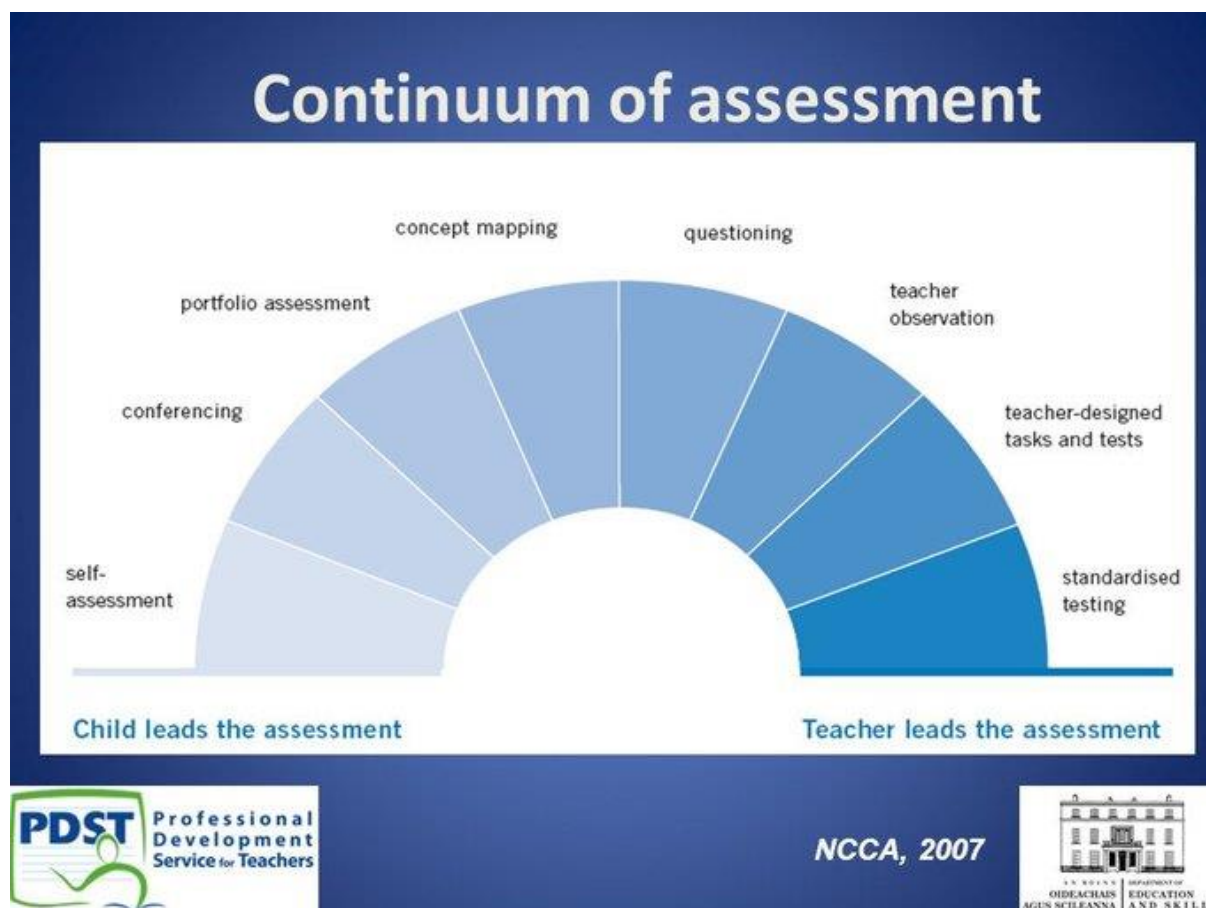
There are three main types of assessment - formative, summative and evaluative.

**Formative:** Covering a range of formal and informal assessment and enabling the teacher to modify teaching and learning and improve children's learning outcomes. This is Assessment FOR Learning.

**Summative:** Using teacher-designed tasks and tests to provide information about the achievement of learning targets. This is Assessment OF Learning.

**Evaluative:** Focusing of the achievements of the school, i.e, the teaching and the learning that is taking place. This is Assessment OF Learning.

Assessment takes place on a continuum ranging from pupil self-assessment to standardised testing. A combination of methods is used in each classroom at Ardahan N.S. See table below.



A variety of methods for gathering and using information about how well children are learning across the curriculum will be referenced in the policy. Eight of these assessment methods are presented on a continuum in Figure 1 and will be outlined in further detail. Methods positioned towards the left are those in which the child plays a leading role in assessing his/her own work; towards the right of the continuum the teacher plays a greater role in leading the assessment. While no single assessment method is exclusive to AfL or AoL, those towards the left of the continuum (the child in a leading role) generally have a stronger AfL focus while those to the right generally have a stronger AoL focus.

### Screening:

The first step in identifying pupils who may need Learning Support in Literacy or Numeracy is for the class teacher to administer screening tests.

### Diagnostic Testing:

Diagnostic tests have an important role to play in identifying children with learning difficulties. When a child is moving from Classroom Support to School Support, the support team may administer diagnostic tests to inform their teaching and to form the basis of their subsequent support plan. Results of tests administered by the support teacher are discussed with the class teacher and with parents to ensure the child is fully supported in all settings.

Classroom Assessment Methods in use at Ardrahan N.S.	
Pupil Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thumbs up, thumbs down</li> <li>• My Proud Work folder on digital platforms</li> <li>• KWL grids</li> <li>• Traffic Lights</li> <li>• Talk buddies</li> <li>• Pupil target setting</li> </ul>
Conferencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on a specific piece of work from class teacher</li> <li>• Online feedback via digital platforms</li> <li>• Three Stars and a Wish</li> </ul>
Portfolio Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-portfolio e.g. Seesaw/Google Classroom</li> <li>• Aistear Portfolio</li> </ul>
Concept Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graphic organisers/picture summaries of children's</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understanding of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Thematic mind maps</li> </ul>
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher questioning</li> <li>• Pupil questioning</li> <li>• Open and closed questions</li> <li>• Lower and higher order questioning</li> <li>• Peer questioning</li> </ul>
Teacher Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anecdotal notes</li> <li>• Spontaneous observation</li> <li>• Planned observation</li> <li>• Individual or group-focused</li> </ul>
Teacher-Designed Tasks & Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written tests</li> <li>• Oral tests</li> <li>• Practical tests</li> </ul>
Standardised Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drumcondra English from 1<sup>st</sup> Class</li> <li>• Drumcondra Maths from 1<sup>st</sup> Class</li> <li>• Drumcondra Gaeilge from 2<sup>nd</sup> Class</li> </ul>

### Recording and Reporting of Standardised Tests

Standardised Tests are an assessment instrument used to measure a child's reading and mathematical skills, and to determine children's progress in those areas. Information from the tests is important given the vital role of literacy and numeracy in enabling children to access the full curriculum. The school uses the Drumcondra Primary reading test in English, Spelling and Maths. The SEN team assists in the administration of the tests as required. Dates are given in advance to parents to ensure that pupils are present from the tests. If possible, absent pupils may be accommodated later with another class.

In line with Circular 0056/2011 results are communicated to parents. These results are accompanied by a standard explanatory note from school. The STEN is communicated to parents. The parents of all children in the school, whose results give cause for concern, are invited to come into school and discuss their child's progress and attainment with the class teacher. Under the circular, these results are also reported to the BoM.

Results are uploaded to Aladdin and are available to view by parents. A hard copy is also held in the school for one year.

In line with the National Strategy to improve Literacy & Numeracy standardised test results will be given to the relevant second level school on transfer from Primary to Second Level.

## Assessment of Additional Educational Needs

Arising from the Education Act (1998) and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004), the school ensures that the educational needs of all children, including those with a disability or other special educational needs are identified and provided for. A variety of diagnostic assessment tools are used to help identify pupil needs in consultation with parents/guardians.

### **Psychological Assessments:**

In keeping with the current support model, Psychologists will now play a supportive role for the school and a psychological assessment is no longer a prerequisite for School Support/School Support Plus.

Following consultation with parents, where a teacher feels that it is necessary, advice will be sought from our NEPS Psychologist. If it is deemed necessary a psychological assessment will be carried out. **The results of the psychological assessment will form the basis of the child's support plan.**

In the case of children progressing to second level education, psychological reports will only be passed on upon request from parents.

### **Success Criteria:**

This policy is considered successful if;

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Procedures are clear, with roles and responsibilities defined
- Each child has been presented with the opportunity of assessment from the spectrum of assessment tools mentioned above.
- The Special Education team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers, parents and outside agencies and secondary schools.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

All teachers are responsible for selecting assessment methods and implementing them in the classroom or support room. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess at classroom level, particularly if a Classroom Support Plan is in place. At Stage 2 of the CoS, the responsibilities are shared with the

support team, who may also use particular diagnostic or screening methods. The Principal assumes a primary role at Stage 3 when a psychological assessment may be required.

**Implementation:**

This policy supersedes the policy drawn up in 2017 and is effective from December 2021.

**Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ and communicated to parents thereafter.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Review Timetable:**

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.