Lackamore NS Assessment Policy 2026

Table of Contents

1. Overview 3
2. Development 3
3. Policy Rationale 3
4. Relationship to School Ethos 3
5. Aims and Objectives 3
6. Principles 4
7. Policy Content 4
8. Assessment Methods 5
9. Assessment for Learning (AfL) 5
10. Assessment of Learning (AoL) 6
11. Self-Assessment by students and teachers 7
12. Early intervention and Supplementary Teaching 8
13. Screening/Diagnostic Assessment 8
14. Standardised Assessment 11
15. Educational Psychological Assessment 11
16. Recording and storage of assessment information 12
17. Success Criteria 14
18. Implementation Date 14
19. Timetable for Review 14
20. Ratification 14

1. Overview

While it is generally accepted that assessment has always been an integral part of primary school life in Ireland, it has been given statutory obligation in Section 22 (2) (b) of the Education Act 1998 which requires schools to "regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents." Thus in formulating this policy, Lackamore N.S. understands assessment to be "...the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes". (Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools NCCA).

2. Development

This policy was developed by the teaching staff during the 2019-2020 school year following recommendation during an incidental inspection. It was reviewed in January 2026.

3. Policy Rationale

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. The policy endeavors to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties and put in place a whole school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

4. Relationship to School Ethos

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and the enhancement of teaching processes. We believe that an effective Assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that relative success, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved for all pupils.

5. Aims and Objectives

The primary aims/objectives of the policy are to:

- facilitate improved pupil learning
- create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- Identify areas of concern
- track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers
- co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.

6. Principles

1. Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole Curriculum and learning opportunities. The main purpose of assessment is to facilitate progress in a pupil's learning.
2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.
3. The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organisation, which encourages children to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group.
4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the Curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.
5. We recognise the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success, which encourages further study.
6. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
7. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should not be administratively burdensome.

7. Policy Content

This policy is aimed towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils so that adequate strategies are in place early enough to facilitate remediation. These strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication

between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes, and Student Support Plans.

8. Assessment Methods

How is learning assessed?

As part of the assessment process, a selection of assessment tools, **chosen at the discretion of the teacher,** will be used to help gain a clearer picture of the success of the teaching and learning in our school. Apart from the specific tests named below, a variety of assessment methods is used throughout the school, depending on the age of the pupils and the specific curricular area. In general, the assessment methods used in this school are:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Pupil projects and portfolios
- Pupil profiles
- Samples of pupils' work
- Record keeping
- Annual reports
- Checklists

Main Areas to be Addressed in this Policy

1. **Assessment for Learning**
2. **Assessment of Learning**
3. **Self-assessment by students and teachers**
4. **Screening/Diagnostic assessment**
5. **Standardised assessment**
6. **Educational Psychological assessment**

9. Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Assessment for Learning emphasises the child's active role in his/her own learning. This level of involvement, in shaping their own learning, can heighten children's awareness of themselves as learners and encourage them to take more personal responsibility for, and

pride in, their learning. By interacting with the children in such a way, the teacher can gain invaluable information as to how best to deliver the curriculum in their classroom. Every interaction has the potential to provide the teacher and children with a better idea of what they do or don't understand or can and can't do. Many of these interactions are informal and are a continuous part of everyday classroom activities, in all classes, across the full curriculum. They are used to identify what pupils have achieved, what might be affecting their progress and what strategies will best support their future learning. The information that such assessment provides will also enable teachers to evaluate their own practice and make changes.

Assessment for Learning may consist of, among others, the following:

a) Teachers observing the child in the classroom and whole school environment, through listening, observations, reflections, and reactions to classroom problems, so that a picture of the child can be built up. Various checklists can be compiled e.g. vocabulary, behaviour, skills, samples of pupils' work (e.g. writing, art) etc. An important part of recording the progress of the child is the periodic recording of strengths and weaknesses of the child.
b) Class work
c) Homework
d) Pupil – teacher discussion
e) Projects in the Senior classes
f) Teacher designed assessments

10. Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of Learning generally involves assessing a child's learning at the end of a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term, or a year. Assessment of Learning is more about measuring a child's cumulative progress towards objectives, often in the form of a grade or score. Assessment of Learning also helps the teacher to plan future work, to set new targets, and to provide feedback and information for end-of-year assessment.

11. Self-Assessment by Students and Teachers

Children are involved in self-assessment when they look at their own work in a reflective way, identify aspects of it that are good and that could be improved, and then set personal learning targets for themselves. Self-assessment skills include effective questioning, reflection, problem solving, comparative analysis, and the ability to share thoughts in a variety of ways. Self- assessment can be used by children of all ability levels and in all areas of learning. In age-appropriate ways, it can be used throughout the primary school and across all subjects. Whole class discussions, group situations or one-to-one conferencing are all platforms for self-assessment. These everyday activities place assessments at the very heart of teaching and learning. It enables the child to take greater responsibility for his/her own learning. A learning log and/or reflective report cards can be used to document the child's self assessment and reflection on his/her work samples or collections.

Teachers in turn, can also use self-assessment to evaluate how they deliver the curriculum content to the children and by reflecting on how a unit of work was delivered. This reflective practise, coupled with the AfL and AoL mentioned earlier, will help to inform them as to what was successful and if any adjustments may improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

We will use a variety of ways of involving pupils in assessing their own learning, these may include:

1. Questioning
2. Feedback-individual and/or group feedback
3. Dialogue and Discussion
4. Focused Correction of Work
5. Thumbs up/thumbs down
6. Traffic Light System
7. KWL grid – This can be used orally and/or written, by group and/or class and/or individual
8. Learning logs
9. Concept maps
10. Two stars and a wish
11. Rubrics

12. WALT and WILF

12. Early Intervention and Supplementary Teaching

There is an emphasis in our school on early intervention in Literacy and Numeracy from the Infant classes upwards. If a child begins to show signs of difficulty or a discrepancy becomes apparent between the chronological age of the child and their level of attainment, the SEN teacher and the Class Teacher will meet to discuss with the parents/guardians, the possibility of further testing in order to establish the nature of any difficulty. At this point the parents/guardians will be asked to sign a consent form allowing their child to receive additional support. After this consultation with parents/guardians, the SEN teacher, in co-operation with the Classroom Teacher and Principal, will administer screening/diagnostic checklists and/or tests in order to identify any underlying causes of learning difficulties which are acting as obstacles to learning. By eliciting more precise information, it is possible to analyse the relative strengths and weaknesses of the child. Programmes can then be devised, based on the needs of the child, in order to give him/her specific help. If there is still cause for concern the child, after Learning Support intervention, is referred to the Principal and possibly placed on a priority list for educational psychological assessment. Children will only be put forward for an educational psychological assessment on receipt of written consent from the child's parents/guardians.

In the case where a child is selected for supplementary teaching but the parents do not wish for the child to receive such support, a written letter from the parents will be sought outlining that while the school made them aware of the difficulty their child was experiencing and while supplementary teaching was made available, they have decided that they do not wish the child to avail of this support.

13. Screening/Diagnostic Assessment

Junior Infants

All children in Junior Infants are screened in order to identify children experiencing difficulties in learning. Some or all of the following screening measures may be used

- Input from parents
- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Checklists
- Early Literacy Test
- Jolly Phonics Literacy Assessment

Senior Infants

The same assessment methods are used as in Junior Infants, as well as the Dromcondra Test of Early Literacy. This is administered during the third term of Senior Infants to screen for literacy difficulties. The aim is to identify pupils who have not the literacy skills in place or who are showing confusion, and to allow intervention before failures are observed. The Dromcondra Test of Early Numeracy will also be administered in the third term of Senior Infants.

First and Second Class

Assessment will continue as in the Infant classes, except that Standardised Testing begins in First Class in both English and Maths. Teacher testing, in areas such as Spelling, in both English and Irish, and Maths Tables will also commence. Standardised testing using the MICRA T for literacy and the SIGMA-T numeracy will be administered during the third term, usually in the month of May. The New Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT) will also be administered during the second term of First Class to aid in the detection of language difficulties and specific learning difficulties.

Third and Fourth Class

Assessment will continue as per previous classes. The NNRIT will be administered to specific pupils during the second term of Third Class to aid in the detection of language difficulties and specific learning difficulties. Results will be analysed in relation to Standardised Test results.

Fifth and Sixth Class

Assessment will continue as per previous classes. The NNRIT may be administered again in Fifth Class and results will be analysed in relation to Standardised Test results.

List of Screening/Diagnostic methods which may be used by our school

- Schronell spelling/reading
- Dolch List
- NNRIT
- MICRA T
- BURT word reading test
- Drumcondra English Reading Test (DPRT)
- SIGMA T
- DST Junior
- Drumcondra Maths Test
- Teacher Designed Tests
- Teacher Observation
- Neale Analysis
- Diagnostic Spelling test
- Dromcondra Spelling test
- WRAT
- SIGMA-T
- MICRA-T

14. Standardised Assessment

Standardised Assessments are conducted by class teachers during the months of May/June in accordance with circular 0056/2011. It may, on occasion, be deemed appropriate by the school to administer alternative standardised tests at the beginning of the school year, to help gain a clearer picture as to any learning needs of a particular child/class. However, it should be noted that this is not required and if carried out will be in addition to the May/June testing.

The results of tests are scrutinised by the Class Teacher, the SET and Principal. Where results indicate a learning difficulty i.e. where there is a marked difference between the child's chronological and reading/mathematical age and/or whose classroom performance signify some level of difficulty, the pupil is, with written parental approval, referred for diagnostic testing. If there is still cause for concern, the child, after Learning Support intervention, is referred to the Principal and possibly placed on a priority list for educational psychological assessment, again after getting parental written consent.

In line with Circular 0056/2011 results are communicated to parents. These results are accompanied by a standard explanatory note from school. Under the circular, these results are also reported to the BOM. Results for Second, Fourth and Sixth Class are reported to the Department of Education and Skills in aggregated form. The STEN and/or Standard Score is communicated to parents. The parents of all children in the school, whose results give cause for concern, are asked to come into school and discuss their child's progress and attainment with the class teacher.

15. Educational Psychological Assessment

When a child is prioritised for an educational psychologist assessment, a meeting will be held with the parents to discuss this procedure. The SEN team in conjunction with the Principal will organise the assessment. The assessment will inform the drafting of a Student Support Plan for the child. The psychological reports can only be accessed by personnel as outlined in page 95 of the NCCA Guidelines. These reports are stored securely in locked filing cabinets.

16. Recording and Storage of Assessment Information

- **How is assessment information recorded?**

Assessment information in this school is recorded through marks, grades, checklists and narrative comment, both oral and written. Comments are phrased in a positive manner and, if appropriate, with recommendations for improvement in specific areas of learning.

- **Where is assessment information stored?**

The records of report cards and standardised assessments are stored in a secure filing cabinet. The results are also stored in electronic copy form on Aladdin Student Management System.
The standardised test booklets are kept until the following year when the new test results are collated. Thereafter, only the results section will be stored. These records are kept until the child has reached twenty-five years of age.

- **Data Protection**

GDPR and relevant Data Protection legistation

The Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 entitles the parents/guardians of all primary school children to have access to all personal data relating to their children, whether stored in electronic form or hard copy. This school complies with this legislation.

Where appropriate, the school also shares information with other teachers, other primary schools and secondary schools when children transfer, and the children themselves. Assessment information on an individual child will be provided to another school, primary or post-primary, to which the child is transferring. This will only be done upon receipt of written enrolment confirmation. If a school requests our school to forward the educational psychological assessment, this request will be conveyed to the parent.

The school also shares information with other relevant individuals and agencies such as the Inspectorate of the Dept. of Education and Skills, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENOs), Educational Welfare Officers (EWOs) of Tusla and other professionals such as speech and language and occupational therapists. Where assessment information is shared, confidentiality is maintained between the school and the receiver of the information. All requests from outside agencies for assessment information on individual pupils must be made through the Principal.

- **How is assessment information shared with parents/guardians?**

Assessment information is formally shared with parents twice a year.

Parent/teacher meetings take place once a year during the first term, usually in November. Each child's parents are invited to attend a ten minute meeting. If either the teacher or the parents believe that a follow-up meeting should take place, it will be arranged for a mutually convenient time.

A comprehensive written report is given to parents at the end of the school year. This report covers both academic and social progress. This report includes the results of the Micra-T/Sigma-T/Jolly Phonics/Early Literacy/Early Numeracy and a short explanation of the results.

Results of diagnostic tests are shared with the parents and teacher of the child concerned.

Copies of the end of year reports are passed on to the child's new teacher at the beginning of the following school year via the Aladdin Student Management System.

- **How are assessment results used?**

Assessment results are used to communicate a child's progress to his/her parents (Assessment of Learning).

Results are also used to enable teachers to plan lessons in a specific way, both for the class in general and to differentiate the learning experience for particular pupils (Assessment for Learning).

17. Success Criteria

We will know this policy has succeeded when:

1. A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning.
2. Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for the different aspects.
3. Transfer of information from teacher to teacher happens efficiently at the beginning and end of the school year.
4. Each child has been presented with the opportunity of assessment from the spectrum of assessment tools mentioned above.

18. Implementation Date

While most of the elements of this policy have been in operation within the school for many years, this amended Assessment Policy will formally apply from

Timetable for Review

This Policy is scheduled for review in February 2028.

19. Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on

Chairperson's signature _____

Date: 4-2-26.

Bibliography

Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for School NCCA 2007

Special educational Needs – a Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers and Learning Support Guidelines (DES 2007)

DES Circular 0056/2011 Numeracy and Literacy Strategy

DES Circular 0138/2006 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools

DES Circular 02/05 Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools

DES Circular 64/2024 The operation/application and deployment of Special Education Teacher resources.

Primary School Curriculum – section on assessment for each subject

Drumcondra English Profiles, G Shiel & R.Murphy ERC 2000

Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Needs, Peter Westwood, Routledge