



## Assessment Policy

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## 1. Introduction

This policy was created in the 2021/2022 school year, through a collaborative process between the school's teaching staff, the Board of Management and the Parents' Committee. It was reviewed in term 1 of the 2024/2025 school year to ensure that it is systematically applied throughout the school. This policy has strong links to the Special Education Policy and the Data Protection Policy.

## 2. Rationale

The core purpose of this policy, and everything we do at Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha, is for every child to succeed in our school. For this to happen, it is vital that children's learning experiences are tailored to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to achieving this core objective by identifying the child's strengths and difficulties in order to form and implement appropriate learning experiences for the child.

## 3. Relationship to School Ethos

The school takes a holistic approach to the education and development of each child. An effective Assessment Policy identifies early interventions that must be implemented to ensure improvement, increased confidence and self-esteem is achieved.

Our objective is to provide a high standard of education through the medium of Irish and for each child to have a positive learning experience, which encourages him/her to reach his/her own potential. It is our objective as a school community to foster a welcoming, co-operative and communicative atmosphere, and we work collaboratively to enable our pupils to achieve their potential.

## 4. Objectives

The main aims/objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To enhance the quality of learning of our students
- To systematically implement assessment procedures on a whole-school basis
- To give parents and pupils the opportunity to be involved in identifying and managing learning strengths/difficulties
- To help teachers with their short-term/long-term planning
- To ensure that we are fulfilling the responsibilities set out for us by the Department of Education and Skills in relation to the teaching of the curriculum

## 5. Policy Content

This policy is aimed at using assessment to provide information for planning and to identify the needs of all pupils, including very gifted pupils, so that the appropriate strategies are implemented throughout the school. This is done by making use of strategies, such as student self-assessment, student profiling, two-way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teaching programmes and individual support plans.

## 6. Assessment of Learning & Assessment for Learning

Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha recognizes that there are four assessment functions: formative assessment, summative assessment, evaluative assessment and diagnostic assessment. Attention is focused on assessment *for* learning as well as assessment *of* learning. This means that evidence is used on an ongoing basis to guide teaching and learning, as well as keeping an ongoing record of children's progress and achievement.

## 7. Informal Assessment Methods

It is good practice to use a wide range of assessment methods. In Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha, the following methods are used to carry out informal assessment:

- Teacher observation
- Traffic Light System
- Tasks and tests designed by teachers
- Directed questioning of the teacher
- Discussion
- Listening
- Giving feedback
- Anecdotal records of the teacher
- Checklists
- Work samples
- Checking of children's work
- Concept Mapping

## 8. Self-Assessment/Peer Assessment & Assessment Displays

Teachers implement the most effective self- and peer-assessment methods for their own classes. The WALT (We Are Learning To) learning outcome, and the WILF (What I'm Looking For) success criteria are prominently displayed at the start of lessons. This encourages discussion at the beginning, middle and end of lessons.

One notice board is used in each classroom/special education room for an assessment display. Examples of self- and peer-assessment are posted on these boards and are regularly updated. These boards show the range of strategies used in the rooms, for example ABC charts, traffic lights, 2 stars & a wish, rubrics.

## 9. Standardised Testing

The special education teachers are responsible for ordering, distributing and co-ordinating standardised tests. Testing is done in mid/late May. In the case of children who are absent on a test day (usually due to illness), a retest is carried out as soon as possible on their return to school.

The class teachers and the special education teachers, working collaboratively, administer and mark the tests. All scores are recorded and registered on Aladdin. The STen is written on the school report in Rang 2/4/6. The meaning of the scores is explained in the report. Parents of pupils in other year groups can get the results by asking the class teacher or the office.

The results are analysed by the principal and special education staff and are used to screen for class/school strengths/weaknesses. A hard copy of the examination results is kept in the principal's office. The results of the examinations are used to plan and implement teaching methods. Results are discussed at team meetings and individually with class teachers. They are used for school planning at class level and the results of these examinations strongly influence the distribution of support resources for the next school year.

<b>Standardised Testing in Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha</b>	
Náonáin Bheaga	British Picture Vocabulary Scale
Náonáin Mhóra	Bury Infant. MIST
Rang 1	Drumcondra Maths Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test
Rang 2 *Results in School Report	NRIT Drumcondra Maths Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test
Rang 3	Drumcondra Maths Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test
Rang 4	Drumcondra Maths

* Results in School Report	Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test
Rang 5	NRIT Drumcondra Maths Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test
Rang 6 * Results in School Report	Drumcondra Maths Drumcondra Gaeilge Drumcondra English Single Word Spelling Test

## 10. Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic tests are used to provide suitable learning support for students who fall below the cut-off point in a standard test. The special education team administer the diagnostic tests, interpret them and explain the results etc to the class teacher and the parents. The results of the diagnostic tests strongly impact on the child's support plan. The special education teacher and the class teacher work collaboratively to choose the appropriate goals and activities for the children who receive school support and to carry out continuous monitoring. Parents and children (as appropriate) have strong input into this process. The following are some of the diagnostic examinations used in Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha:

- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
- Dyslexia Screening Test
- Dolch
- NEPS First 100 Words/NEPS Second 100 Words
- NEPS Phonics Skills Check
- Féasta Focal Sight Words
- Cleite Sight Words
- Reading Reflex
- British Ability Scale
- Alphabet Sounds Checklist
- Reading Recovery exams

## 11. Psychological Assessment (N.E.P.S.)

When a pupil reaches Stage 3 (School Support +) of the Support Continuum and a psychological assessment is felt to be necessary, the class teacher/principal will contact parents to ask for permission. The class teacher/special education teacher and principal take all necessary steps to facilitate the assessment process, including arranging observation/meeting times and filling out questionnaires. Recommendations from psychological reports are used to write and continuously monitor a student support plan.

## 12. Recording Results & Data Protection

Each teacher records the results of his/her class on Aladdin. The principal keeps a hard copy of the standardised test results locked in his filing cabinet. All reports from external agencies are kept locked in a central file in the office. The Special Education teachers keep a hard copy of the results of the diagnostic testing locked in their filing cabinets. A copy of individual children's exam results are kept locked in their folders in the secretary's office. All this data is kept for the recommended periods (see the Data Protection policy).

## 13. Teachers' Assessment Folders

All teachers use an assessment folder to keep a record of the assessment carried out and to assist them in planning for the pupils under their care. These folders are continuously updated throughout the school year.

<b>Class Teachers' Folders</b>	
<b>Section A General</b>	A copy of the assessment policy A copy of 'Assessment in the Primary Curriculum - Guidelines for Schools'
<b>Section B Class Information</b>	Class list List of pupils on class/school/school support + Standardised test results Class test results Class checklists
<b>Section C Pupil Profiles</b>	Key information/strengths/goals Latest school report Exam results from Aladdin Observation notes Notes from parent meetings Work samples Examples of the child's self-assessment & peer-assessment

<b>Special Education Teachers' Folders</b>	
<b>Folder 1</b>	Timetable Daily Planning Cuntas Míosúil
<b>Folder 2</b>	Student Profiles including: Support Plan Diagnostic Examinations Contact with parents Notes from parent meetings Observation Notes Work Samples

## 14. Reporting to External Agencies

If an external agency is seeking a report on a student, the principal is informed and given the report before it is forwarded. A copy of the report is kept in the child's folder in the office. After consulting the parents, it is the school's responsibility to seek an assessment from NEPS. It is the parents' responsibility to seek an assessment from a speech and language/occupational therapist etc. The results of the assessment are used to write a support plan. Reports from outside agencies are kept in the child's file in the office.

## 15. Roles & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set up phased interventions at class level. At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the special education team. The principal takes a leading role at Stage 3 where a Psychological Assessment may be required. Parents have a role at every stage and open home-school communication is emphasized throughout.

## 16. Success Criteria

The following criteria will indicate that this policy is working well:

- Early identification and intervention is carried out systematically
- A range of formal and informal assessment methods are used systematically throughout the school.
- Everyone understands the actions to be taken and who is responsible for the different aspects of implementing the policy.
- Knowledge is effectively transferred from class teacher to class teacher at the beginning/end of the school year.
- All teachers are using an assessment folder effectively
- All teachers are using assessment displays effectively

## 17. Ratification & Communication

This policy was approved at a Board meeting on 18/05/2022. Every teacher in the school has a copy of this policy. Parents can access this policy on the school's website or request a hard copy from the school office.

**Signed:** Colm Ó Tuathaláin **Date:** 18/05/2022

**Chairperson**

This policy was reviewed and updated during term 1 of the 2024/2025 school year. This policy was approved at a board meeting on 20/11/2024 and parents were informed. This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure that our assessment practices are in line with the Department's guidelines and recommended good practice.

**Signed:** Colm Ó Tuathaláin (Chairperson)

Pól Mac Daibhéid (Principal)

**Date:** 20/11/2024