

Assessment Policy

2012

Craggagh National School

Balla, Co Mayo.

Tel: 094 9365177 Email: Principal@CraggaghNS.ie Roll No: 12467R

www.CraggaghNS.ie

Introductory Statement

This policy was developed in response to Circular 0056/2011 in consultation with all staff members.

Policy's relationship to school's mission statement and ethos

At Craggagh N.S. we promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the child and endeavour to enable each child to reach their full potential. 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.

Policy Rationale

At Craggagh N.S. we endeavour to maintain high standards of teaching and learning, thus enabling each child to reach the highest level of their own ability. Assessment is part of good teaching and learning. It is a fundamental tool in identifying a child's learning strengths and learning needs. 'Gathering evidence about how well students are learning, and using this information to improve the learning opportunities provided for them are essential elements in ensuring that each student makes good progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills.' (Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life; 2011) This policy sets out to formalise existing good practice in the school and to implement new assessment procedures as outlined by the DES in Circular 0056/2011.

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Aims

The aims of assessment are as follows:

- To monitor learning processes
- To benefit pupil learning
- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
- To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths/needs
- To assist teachers long and short term planning
- To identify children who are entitled to Learning Support hours from the general allocation
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis

Purposes of Assessment

Each form of assessment will enable teachers to:

- Inform and planning for all areas of the curriculum
- Gather and interpret data at individual, class and whole-school level, and in relation to class and national norms
- Identify particular learning needs of pupils ranging across all levels of ability (including gifted and talented children)
- Contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- Contribute to the school's strategy for maintaining high standards in and/or improving Literacy and Numeracy
- Monitor pupil progress and attainment

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- Modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- Compile records of individual pupil's progress and attainment
- Facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils development, progress and learning needs
- Enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies
- Facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work

Forms of assessment

In Craggagh N.S. we maintain a balanced combination of *Assessment for Learning* and *Assessment of Learning*

Assessment for learning takes place when the teacher shares information about the child's learning with the child and when the teacher uses this information to plan the next steps in their teaching and in the student's learning.

Assessment of Learning is used to provide a summary of what the student has achieved at fixed points, such as at the end of a period of study, or when a unit of work is completed, or at the end of an academic year. Information from assessment of learning can be used to report to others, such as parents and other teachers.

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Methods of Assessment

At Craggagh N.S. we use a wide range of formal and informal assessment methods:

1. Teacher Observation

This involves assessing the child's progress by observing, questioning and monitoring the child's progress in all areas of the curriculum. This may include the children's responses, participation, interaction and reaction in class.

2. Teacher designed tasks and tests

Teachers use a range of activities to assess the progress of individuals or groups across the full range of curriculum subjects. These may be oral, pictorial, written or practical and may be embedded in the everyday teaching and learning activities in the class or may be used by the teacher in key areas at the end of the topics/activities to provide a fuller picture of the child's performance and progress for example spelling tests, table tests, SESE tests.

3. Concept Mapping

These are used to gather information as a visual representation about the children's ideas and understanding in subject areas for example English, SESE. As an assessment tool it provides evidence of changes in children's thinking over time e.g. before and after assessment of a topic.

4. Self-Assessment

Children are encouraged to look at their own work in a reflective way and to set personal learning targets for themselves. Our multi-class situation embraces conferencing as an integral teaching methodology working with individuals or small groups. It develops self-reflection skills in a safe environment and fosters co-operative learning with peers.

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5. Work samples, Portfolios and Projects

Some examples of children's work are retained where possible to monitor the child's progress in knowledge and skills e.g. portfolio work, projects, samples of work done on computer, digital images of artwork. Each class teacher keeps an Individual Pupil File containing teacher observations, checklists and samples of the children's work.

Screening

The **Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)** is administered at the in the last term of Junior Infants by the Learning Support Teacher.

The **Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)** is administered in the last term of Senior Infants by the Learning Support Teacher. There are four parts to this test:

Alphabet letters and sounds:	We expect a score of 23-26
Listening skills:	We expect a score of 7-9
Words dictated in a sentence	We expect a score of 28-36
Maximum words written in 10 minutes	We expect 20 words written correctly

Children are considered to be at risk if they score below the cut off points in three or more of the subtests. If children are identified as scoring below the cut off points, we then invite their parents/guardians to work with the LS/RT and their child in the Forward Together Programme.

We will also begin administration of the **Non-Reading Intelligence Test** to children in the school during the academic year 2012/2013. For the first year, the test will be administered to all children from 2nd to 6th classes. In

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subsequent years, the test will be administered to second class children during the first term.

The **NRIT** is a group test, presented orally by the class or learning support teacher as deemed appropriate. It assesses pupils' general ability, independently of their reading. This test covers aspects of language and thinking that are not necessarily represented in measures of pupil attainments. It is therefore a valuable assessment tool as it provides a more comprehensive profile of a pupil's ability. The **NRIT** can help to identify low-achieving and slow-reading pupils who may nevertheless have high underlying ability.

Standardised Tests

Standardised testing is used as an assessment tool in Craggagh N.S. These tests are instrumental in maintaining the high standards of Literacy and Numeracy in our school.

The following standardised tests are used in Craggagh N.S.:

MICRA-T

SIGMA-T

Both tests are administered annually during the months of May or June.

- In Craggagh N.S. standardised tests are administered to classes 1st to 6th. Children with learning or physical disabilities, children who have English as an additional language and children who are in receipt of resource hours may be exempt from standardised testing at the discretion of the principal.
- In accordance with DES guidelines, standard scores, STEN and percentile ranking are communicated to parents in the form of a written report in sufficient time before the school closure for the summer vacation to allow parents a reasonable opportunity to seek meetings with the principal and/or teacher(s) to discuss the written report if necessary.
- Results from standardised testing are also reported to the Board of Management on an annual basis.

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- Aggregated results of standardised testing in literacy and mathematics from classes 2nd, 4th and 6th are also reported to the DES annually.
- Results are recorded digitally by class teachers and the learning support teacher using the online system SCORZ. Aggregated data is then analysed by the principal, class teachers and LS/RT.
- The results of standardised tests are used by teachers to inform future teaching and learning. For example, the SIGMA-T strand analysis programme is used to determine specific areas of strength and learning needs for individual children and can be used to inform long/short term planning and IPLP/IEPs.

Diagnostic Assessment

The staged model of intervention is used in Craggagh N.S.

After consultation with the class teacher where an individual child/children's scores fall below the 12th percentile and with the consent of the parents the LS teacher will administer initial diagnostic assessment. These results will be recorded in the IPLP which is drawn up for the child and communicated to parents in the IPLP meeting.

The following diagnostic assessments are used in Craggagh N.S.

- Quest Diagnostic Reading Test
- Quest Diagnostic Maths Test
- Jackson Phonics Test
- Sound Linkage
- Cloze Reading Test

After diagnostic assessment and a complete instructional term of Learning Support, each child's IPLP will be reviewed. If there are any serious concerns expressed by the parents, LS teacher and/or class teacher, further psychological assessment will be explored. The LS teacher and class teacher

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will seek the advice of the NEPS psychologist and discuss test results and concerns about the pupil. Based on the advice received, the application for a full assessment, if required will be completed by the LS and class teacher.

Recording Results of Assessment

- The results of each individual child's standardised test are recorded yearly as part of the child's Individual Pupil Profile. Each class teacher keeps the Individual Pupil Profiles in a locked filing cabinet.
- Children's records are held in the school until they reach their 21st birthday (NCCA Assessment Guidelines 2007).

Success Criteria

This policy will be considered successful if:

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in a staged approach to intervention
- Procedures are clear, with roles and responsibilities defined
- Assessment is used as a tool within the school to maximise pupil potential and success.

References

Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life (0056/2011)

Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools (2007)

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Consultation

A draft of this policy, when approved by the Board of Management will be made available to parents and submissions may be made through the Principal.

Ratification and Communication

This policy will be communicated to all teachers, parents and the Board of Management.

A PDF version will be made available for download on the school website (www.CraggaghNS.ie) and a hard copy will be provided on request.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Craggagh National School on

Date: 23/10/12

Signed: _____

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with our School Improvement Plan.