

Assessment & Reporting Policy

School Policy for Assessment & Reporting School Policy for Assessment & Reporting

May 2012

Holy Trinity N.S.

Leopardstown

20190T

School Policy for Assessment & Reporting

This school policy on Assessment and Reporting-

- is informed by *Assessment in the Primary School – Guidelines for Schools* (NCCA, 2007) and by the *National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020*.

The policy

- supports both Assessment of Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL) across all class levels;
- identifies a range of assessment methods used to gather information about pupil progress and achievement;
- provides practical support to the teacher in how self-assessment is expected to be used by the pupils;
- supports consistency on what information is recorded about pupil learning progress and how this information is shared with parents, teachers and other professionals.

Whole school curriculum plans are influenced by the information yielded from assessments and support teacher judgment by specifying what is to be learned by most of the pupils at the end of each class level.

~~~~~

## CONTENTS

### 1. Policy Statement

#### 1. Appendices:

- Appendix A: AfL- Strategies & Methodologies**
- Appendix B: Learning & Assessment Portfolios**
- Appendix C: Monthly work sample suggestions**
- Appendix D: Standardised, Screening & Diagnostic Tests in use**
- Appendix E: Communication of Test Results to Parents**
- Appendix F: Record-Keeping: The Pupil Profile**

**Appendix G: End-of-Year Report Card**

**Appendix H: Photocopiable / online Resources**

---

**1. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY STATEMENT**

This draft (May 2012) of the School Policy on Assessment and Reporting complies with the requirement of the National Strategy on Literacy and Numeracy for a review of our existing policy in this area. It has been drafted following extensive teacher reflection on current practices and on-going professional development in our knowledge and understanding of AfL and AoL. Our aim is to enrich teaching and learning and to report pupil progress to the relevant personnel.

In formulating and operating this policy, Holy Trinity 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 NCCA2007]*

**Introduction**

The development of this policy has been guided by legislative requirements enshrined in:

- *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.*
- *the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003)*
- *the Equal Status Act (2000)*
- *the Education (Welfare) Act (2000)*
- *the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)*

The policy has been drafted by the teaching staff of the school, in consultation with ppds facilitation, with due regard to the above requirements as well as recommendations from the Department of Education & Science and best practice in the area of pupil assessment.

**Rationale**

This assessment policy sets out to clarify the purpose and practice of assessment in Holy Trinity N.S.

**Relationship to characteristic spirit of our school**

Assessment activities used in Holy Trinity N.S. will contribute to pupil learning and development by highlighting key areas of strength and need.

The policy links with policies in curricular areas as well as our Special Needs/Learning Support policies.

## Aims

The chief aims of our assessment policy are:

- *To benefit pupil learning*
- *To monitor learning processes*
- *To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time*
- *To involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties*
- *To assist teachers' long and short term planning*
- *To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis, etc.*

## Policy Content

This policy is outlined under the following headings:

- a) purposes of assessment
- b) assessment methods
- c) interpreting, recording, using and reporting of assessment information

We endorse the following -

*“Assessment enables the teacher to build a picture over time of the child’s progress and achievement in learning. This on-going process of how the child learns as well as what the child learns shapes this picture and informs subsequent stages of the teaching and learning process”* [Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools \(NCCA, 2007\)](#), page 7.

### **(a) Purposes of assessment:**

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 of pupils including the exceptionally able
- To contribute to the school’s strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- To monitor pupil progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils’ progress and attainment
- To facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils’ development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies.

### **b) Assessment Methods**

Holy Trinity N.S. recognises the four functions of assessment as being formative, summative, evaluative and diagnostic. Our approach to assessment focuses on the two principal, interrelated and complementary approaches namely, Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL) at all class levels. This means that evidence is used on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning (AfL), in addition to the periodic recording of children’s progress and achievements, for the purpose of reporting (AOL). The school acknowledges the importance of a concentrated focus on Assessment for Learning, the key characteristics of which we identify as follows:

- the sharing of learning intentions with pupils;
- assisting pupils in identifying and recognising the standards being aimed for;
- involving pupils in self-assessment and peer assessment;
- providing pupils with feedback which will lead them to recognise the next steps in their learning and how to take them;
- the promotion of confidence in pupils;
- involvement of teacher and pupil in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information.

Classroom practices and display charts reflect the school's policy of giving clarity and direction to teaching and involving pupils in their own learning and assessment, with the aim of increasing motivation and standards.

A continuum of assessment methods is used in the school [*See Appendix A*]. These range from child-led to teacher-led. Through the use of class charts / IWB charts, pupil attention is routinely drawn to learning intentions, success criteria and various self -assessment practices. Learning and Assessment Portfolios are kept by pupils to provide motivation and support to them as learners. [*See Appendix B*] A yearly plan is in operation whereby particular assessment methods are a focus each month. [*See Appendix C*].

With a view to our pupils taking more responsibility for their own learning, teachers strive to ensure that pupils know:

- what they are going to learn;
- how they will recognise when they have succeeded.

To this end, the school teaching approach is one where learning intentions are shared with pupils and success criteria are established with pupils. Two characters are used to reinforce the approach-

WALT ~ We Are Learning To

IRMA ~ I Remembered My Aims

Each classroom is equipped with the following:

- ü WALT chart for lesson Learning Intentions;
- ü IRMA chart for lesson Success Criteria;
- ü PMI chart & KWL chart
- ü Pupil self-evaluation prompts
- ü Talk-Partner prompts

*The table below outlines the main AfL and AoL techniques in practice in the school.*

*Assessment practice Purpose -to enable pupil...*

*Operation in Holy Trinity N.S. Self-assessment*

**&**

**Learning Portfolios**

- to reflect on his/her performance; to document the *what* and *how* of learning. Learning & Assessment Portfolios are used in all classes, to develop pupil self-assessment and personal reflection on self as learner.

- Awareness of the learning intention (**WILF** – We Are Learning To..) and establishment of Success Criteria **IRMA** (I Remembered My Aims)
- Rubrics / PMI charts / KWL charts etc.

~[See Methodologies below]

**Conferencing** -to enable pupil, with the assistance of Teacher, to reflect on his/her work. Discussion on work through directed Teacher questioning

- 1-1
- Small groups
- Whole-class

**Concept Mapping** -to enable pupil graphically present his/her prior knowledge and understanding about a particular topic and to later amend and extend the map to reflect his/her new learning. Concept-maps are used periodically at the start and end of lessons; Resources: [www.bubbl.us](http://www.bubbl.us) and Mind Mapping by Tony Buzan.

**Questioning** -to enable pupil experience a range of questions to assess the progress s/he is making in their learning. A variety of questions are used to assess developing understanding of new learning; these range from closed questions, to more open questions to help promote higher order thinking. **Teacher**

**Observation** -to enable Teacher observe pupil play /activity/ written work/ discussion and questioning during class or group work and record specific strengths or challenges.. Use of sticky labels / Teacher Diary to note pupil learning / social interaction development. **Teacher-designed tasks and tests** -to enable Teacher assess pupil learning through specific set tasks and tests. Frequent oral and written tasks to determine pupil knowledge of the concepts and skills being taught. **Standardised Tests** - to establish a standardised measurement of pupil achievement in English reading and Mathematics compared to other children throughout the country at the same class level or age level. Standardised tests are administered in accordance with the requirements of Circular 0056/2011 and to all classes from 1st – 6th. Micra-T, Sigma-T, Drumcondra Spelling and the Single Word Spelling Test are administered in May of each year. The results are shared with the parents in writing with the end-of-year Report.

Assessment information on pupils in Holy Trinity is maintained through the following:

- ü Key AfL classroom practices and strategies
- ü Teacher observation notes
- ü Pupil Learning & Assessment Portfolios
- ü AoL tasks and tests
- ü Pupil Profile details

**Learning & Assessment Portfolio Pupil Profile** Pupil-maintained plastic pocket file / scrapbook of work samples, personal reflections on self as a learner. Formal school record of pupil containing

- Pupil name and date of birth
- home contact details
- enrolment data
- school attendance record
- medical history (where appropriate)

- information concerning experiences at pre-school / other school (if made available to the school on transfer)
- the products of assessment (for example, completed standardised test booklets)
- yearly STEN scores for standardised tests
- copies of end-of-year Reports
- continuum of support details, if applicable.

- kept on file in school until pupil reaches age 21yrs.

## **Holy Trinity Learning & Assessment Portfolios      Self-Assessment and Learning**

*(adapting S.A.L.F. \* practice- \*Keating & Cahillane Mc Govern)*

Pupil Portfolios are an important element of our school's focus on Self-Assessment and active learning practices.

Each pupil's **Learning & Assessment Portfolio** has as its aims -

- to provide a framework for pupils to present evidence of what they know & of what they can do;
- to provide a source of information that can be used by them to make decisions about that learning;
- to provide motivation and support for pupils in their learning;
- to communicate learning with a wider audience – Teacher/peers/other classes/home

Key classroom practices and strategies:

The following are considered essential -

- a positive classroom culture and ethos, which encourages pupils to think and talk about their learning and which provides a safe place for open, honest and respectful comment;
- questioning skills (P-T; P-P), which stimulate thinking and reflecting on learning and explicit teaching of how to consciously reflect on what you know and how to make an evaluative comment on it;
- frequent identification and review of learning goals through Teacher-directed discussion, clearly defining learning objectives and success criteria thereby empowering pupils and enabling them to take responsibility for their learning;
- a recognition and acknowledgement of the purpose and importance of audience ie those involved (home+ school) in the pupil's learning process.

Self-Assessment & Learning Methodologies:

**Jun Inf – 2nd**

**3rd – 6th**

**Junior**

- **whole class charts WALT & IRMA**
- **whole class KWL**
- **checklists**
- **rubrics**
- **thumbs up / down**
- **traffic lights**
- **mapping, including 3-D mapping**

- **whole class charts WALT & IRMA**
- **individual KWL**
- **checklists**
- **rubrics**
- **work samples with comments that justify selection**
- **mapping**
- **personal interest survey**
- **photographic record with written comment**
- **task review sheet**
- **reviewing of learning goals**
- **peer review**
- **monthly progress review**

## **Learning & Assessment Portfolios**

**Junior Infants – Sen Infants: Scrapbook**

**1st-2nd Class: 20-pocket**

Self-assessment of learning in the junior classes is collaborative, reflective and practical.

Through implementation of key SPHE skills, pupils are enabled to think about their learning and achievements and to develop the appropriate language for discussion of these. Periodic conferencing also provides an opportunity for the teacher to affirm the pupil as a learner.

Personal pupil pages are dedicated to developing a sense of identity and curriculum work samples and ICT material provide evidence of participation and learning. Pupil reflections on individual subjects or on Portfolio collections may be written or scribed and parents/guardians are invited to provide feedback on pupil learning.

It is intended that pupils at the junior level will come to see their Portfolios as a record they have created, showing themselves as learners. Whole-class Portfolio review sessions indicate how the pupils are working on their Portfolios and can be used to introduce the concept of peer review.

**Learning & Assessment Portfolios 3rd – 4th Class: 20-pocket**

**5th-6th Class: 40-pocket**

Pupils in the senior classes are involved in -

- identifying the purpose of their Learning & Assessment Portfolios;
- suggesting how they might record and report on *what* and *how* they are learning.

SPHE curricular learning objectives help establish a supportive classroom culture and ethos and direct pupil attention to the development of skills such as recognition of personal strengths and the strengths of others, goal-setting, decision-making, collaboration etc.

Whole-class Portfolio review sessions are also conducted in senior classes. At this level, pupils share success criteria and take responsibility for explaining and justifying their selections of work samples for inclusion in their Portfolios. Parents/Guardians also have the opportunity to review and reflect on their child's progress in learning and self-assessment.

## **Standardised tests**

In accordance with the requirements of Circular 0138/2006, standardised tests are carried out in literacy and mathematics. It is school policy to carry out these tests as follows-

*Time:* between mid-May and mid-June each year

*Classes:* all classes 1st -6th

*Administration:* Class Teacher [Where a pupil is tested out of the class situation or with assistance, a note to this effect will be put on test booklet].

*Exemptions:* as per Circular 0138/2006

*Recording of results:* Results are recorded in terms of raw score, standard score, percentile rank and STEN

*Reporting to parents:* Results are reported to parents on the end-of-year Report; in the case of an unexpected score for a particular pupil, the Class Teacher will convey the score orally to the parent/guardian, before the Report is sent home. To maintain consistency, STEN scores are given along with a descriptor eg 'high-average'.

*Analysis of results:* Results are analysed on an individual basis by class Teachers and on a whole-school basis by Learning Support Teacher, in order to identify pupils for supplementary teaching. Whole-staff analysis of results informs teaching and learning practices in the school.

In addition, further to Circular 0056/2011 Holy Trinity, in its implementation of the National Strategy for Literacy and Numeracy, adopts the following procedures:

- the reporting of Standardised Testing results to DES, the school BOM, parents and to a pupil's transfer school;
- the use of Standardised Testing results to inform school self-evaluation & our School Improvement Plan.

Full details of Standardised, Screening and Diagnostic tests used in the school are outlined in **Appendix D**.

Arrangements for the communication of test results to parents is outlined in **Appendix E**.

### **c) Interpreting, Recording and Reporting of Assessment information**

In fulfilling the requirements of the Education Act (1998) individual records of pupils' learning are created and maintained, while they are attending our school. This enables the school to provide parents with assessment reports which contain accurate and clearly accessible information about their children's progress and achievement. Three kinds of

records are maintained by the school:

- *Teacher Diary:*

The teacher normally keeps his/her own day-to-day record of observations, remarks, incidents, etc. as they occur in the classroom and playground. This kind of record provides the teacher with additional information about the child, which helps him/her to meet the needs of individual children more effectively. It also

informs the teacher's classroom organisation.

- *Pupil Portfolios and Pupil ProfilesFiles:*

The main functions of these are to -

-support both teachers and children in monitoring and structuring learning

-provide information for teachers when preparing reports for parents

-provide information for teachers who will have subsequent responsibility for the child's education.

The Pupil Portfolios aid pupil self-assessment and help pupils identify themselves as learners. The Pupil Profile takes account of the child's strengths and needs, the progress he/she has made, and any areas of learning and development that need particular attention.

Holy Trinity Pupil Profiles include:

1. Pupil name and date of birth
2. home contact details
3. enrolment data
4. school attendance record
5. medical history (where appropriate)
6. information concerning experiences at pre-school / other school (if made available to the school on transfer)
7. the products of assessment (for example, completed standardised test booklets)
8. yearly STEN scores for standardised tests
9. copies of end-of-year Reports
10. continuum of support details, if applicable.

## **Report Card**

By means of our end-of-year Report Card, the school shares assessment

information with parents in an accessible format so that they can use the information to help their children to learn, and thus strengthen the link between school and home. We strive for clarity and consistency in order to identify pupil -strengths, needs and progress under the following headings-

- the child as a learner
- the child's social and personal development
- the child's learning across the curriculum
- parents' role in supporting the child's learning
- standardised test results
- attendance and punctuality

## **Screening:**

To facilitate the early identification of learning strengths / difficulties, the school administers screening tests in Junior classes. These are administered by the Learning Support Teacher and results interpreted in consultation with the Class Teacher. Screening may lead to specific intervention by the class teacher in line with our Staged Approach to special needs provision. In addition, the school places strong emphasis on early intervention.

## **Diagnostic Assessment:**

Arising from the Education Act (1998) and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004), Holy Trinity N.S. aims to ensure that the educational needs of all children, including those with a disability or other special educational needs are identified and provided for. To this end, formal diagnostic tests are used to determine the appropriate learning support for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties or for pupils whose standardised test scores are of concern.

In this instance, parents will be met by Class Teacher and a Learning Support Teacher and the purpose of the testing explained. Diagnostic tests are administered by a Learning Support Teacher, who will interpret results and advise Class Teacher of results. A school meeting will be arranged with parents to discuss the implications of results which may include –

- Classroom differentiation measures / Stage 1 monitoring;
- Referral to supplementary teaching;
- Further assessment by an outside agency eg Educational Psychologist.

## **Exceptionally-able pupils:**

School procedures used to identify exceptionally-able pupils include Teacher observation, Standardised Tests, PM benchmarking kit, work samples and conferencing.

Teachers endeavour to meet the needs of exceptionally-able pupils through the use of differentiation by outcomes, tasks, resources and grouping. Alternative, more challenging textbooks are used, in addition to greater focus on problem-solving and the extension of activities where possible. The school also facilitates an 'Enrichment Club' which is academically-based and designed to boost pupil confidence and curiosity, in an effort to better equip these pupils to realise their potential.

## **Psychological Assessment:**

Where it is felt a psychological assessment or other assessment is required, this is arranged by the school using the standard consent forms. Results of psychological assessment are a key factor in the drafting of pupil IEPs. In the event of a private consultation, parents are requested to supply the school with a copy of the report in order to facilitate this.

Reports are securely stored by the school and confidentiality is maintained at all times.

- Pupil screening and standardised assessment results are recorded in class lists until the pupil reaches the age of 21.
- Test booklets are kept for one academic year.
- Agreed terminology is used to communicate results (see above) and teachers are mindful of the need to record any comments in an objective and instructive manner.
- Sensitive data is securely stored in computer file (Micra-T & Sigma-T) and in hard copy stored in locked filing cabinet.

- Test results are communicated to those with an involvement in the pupil's learning – parents, psychologist, specialized therapist, secondary school to which pupil is transferring etc.

Reporting to Outside Agencies on Individual Pupils In the event of a request by an outside agency for a pupil assessment, the Principal will be informed and will be supplied with the report before its being forwarded. The Staff member who completes the report will keep a copy of the report and a copy will be kept in the school records. A copy of the request should also be kept on file and the reason why the report was sought. The Principal will have the discretion to bring any sensitive reports or requests to the Board of management for their attention, advice or direction.

Success Criteria Practical indicators of the success of the policy will include -

- *A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning.*
- *Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects.*
- *Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of school year.*

Roles and Responsibility the coordination of this policy is the responsibility of Principal, Class Teachers and Learning Support / Resource Teachers.

Implementation and Review the implementation of the original policy commenced in September 2009. This review and redraft was carried out in 2012. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or as circumstances may warrant.

Ratification this policy was ratified by the school Board of Management on

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chairperson, BOM Holy Trinity N.S.**