**The Rock National School**

**ASSESSMENT POLICY**

*“Assessment is the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a pupil’s progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes”*

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

**Introduction**

This policy was drawn up with full collaboration of all members of the staff within the context of the Revised Primary School Curriculum, the Education Act of 1998 (Article 22), DES circular 01/338/2006 and the NCCA Guidelines, 2007. The Rock National School considers assessment to be an integral part of teaching and learning.

**Rationale**

* To review the existing policy for assessment in our school
* To benefit teaching and learning in our school
* To ensure that our approach in The Rock N.S. reflects current educational practice
* To inform and enhance the teaching and learning process
* To set out the use and purpose of standardised testing in the school

**Aims of Assessment Policy**

Our school aims to:

* Evaluate pupil learning
* Monitor learning processes
* Generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
* Involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths, styles or difficulties
* Assist teachers’ long and short term planning
* Co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis
* Establish baseline data for newly enrolled pupils

**Purposes of Assessment**

At The Rock N.S. the motivation for assessment is:

* To gather and interpret data at individual, class and whole school level
* To compare individual pupils’ data to class and national norms
* To identify the particular learning needs of pupils and groups of pupils
* To contribute to the school strategy for the assessment of learning difficulties
* To monitor and compile records of 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 and modify their planning in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
* To inform the DEIS plan

**Functions of Assessment**

There are four functions of assessment which include formative, evaluative, summative and informative:

* Formative: Helps the pupils in the process of learning.
* Evaluative: Helps the teacher to evaluate the learning activities provided. Pupils are also involved in assessing their own work.
* Summative: Provides information for reports and school records.
* Informative: Provides information for parents and for the pupil’s next teacher.

**Approaches to Assessment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Assessment for Learning (A.f.L.)*** | ***Assessment of Learning (A.o.L.)*** |
| * An ongoing process of recognising and responding to the pupil’s learning in order to enhance his/her development | * Involves assessing a pupil’s learning at the end of a given instructional period |
| * Pupil-centred and pupil-directed | * Teacher-led |
| * Goal is to enable learners to further their own learning | * Goal is to establish levels of attainment |

**Continuum of Assessment**

The Rock National School believes that assessment is an integral element of the teaching and learning process. We employ a wide variety of assessment strategies that are based on the Continuum of Assessment.

(Taken from NCCA Assessment Guidelines)

**Assessment Practices**

* Assessment practices in The Rock National School incorporate some or all of the following approaches (this is not an exhaustive list):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment approach** | **What we use** | **When it happens** |
| Standardised testing  (see further explanation below) | Non-reading Intelligence Test (N.R.I.T.) | First term with 2nd & 5th  Classes and newly enrolled pupils |
| MICRA T  SIGMA T  Drumcondra Primary Reading Test | Mid May of  each year/November |
| MIST | Middle/end January for Senior Infants |
|  | Two Peas Phonological Test | As appropriate, all ages |
|  | Jackson Phonics Test | As appropriate, all ages |
| Teacher-designed tasks and tests | Pre-tests  Summative tests | Ongoing |
| Teacher Observation | Use of mini-whiteboards (Active Student Responding) | Ongoing |
| Work samples (use of copies/folders) |
| Questioning | Teacher questioning  Peer questioning | Ongoing |
| Portfolio  Copybook  Hardback Notebook | Examples of work at different stages of development | Ongoing |
| Literacy Lift Off Running Record |
| Project work |
| Work samples |
| Concept/mind mapping |
| Reflective logs and journals |
| Conferencing | Teacher-led conferences | Ongoing |
| Pupil-led conferences |
| Self-assessment  (Active Student Responding) | Thumbs up, thumbs down | Ongoing |
| Traffic lights system |
| Two stars and a wish |
| Smiley faces |
| Journals |
| Find and fix (error-analysis) |
| K.W.L. chart  (What I know, what I want to know, what I learned) |
| Sharing learning intention:  W.A.L.T. / Learning Outcome |
| Sharing success criteria:  W.I.L.F. / Success Criteria |

**Use of Standardised Testing**

We are cognisant of the value of standardised testing in order to establish pupil attainment in Mathematics and English reading.

Standardised testing allows us:

* To compare pupils’ achievements with national norms
* To monitor pupils’ performance in Mathematics and English reading
* To identify strengths and weaknesses in the school approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy
* To inform teaching strategies in literacy and numeracy
* To alert teachers to pupils’ difficulties in either literacy or numeracy
* To provide a nationally agreed method of reporting to parents of their pupils’ progress in the area of literacy and numeracy

**Implementation of Standardised Testing**

The school administers standardised tests in both English and Mathematics in May each year. The school administers an English standardised test in November also. MICRA T, SIGMA T tests are administered to all class groups. The Special Education Co-ordinator is responsible for the purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing and for secure storage of test materials and booklets. The results of standardised tests are used to inform parents of pupils’ progress and to assist in the identification of pupils that may require support. Results of standardised tests are communicated to parents in written form with the annual school report. SETs administer the tests in accordance with the guidelines given in the testing manuals. Exemption from standardised testing is considered when deemed necessary (c.f. circular 0138/2006). Raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STen and reading age are recorded electronically and manually. The principal, SETs and classroom teachers are involved in the analysis of standardised results for an individual pupil, class and at whole school level. The school offers special education teaching to pupils in accordance with our Special Education policy.

**Assessment at School Support and School Support Plus Level**

**a)      Screening**

The following screening tests are in use;

* Standardised tests as above
* Non-reading intelligence test (N.R.I.T.)
* YARC

*The school’s Special Education Needs policy outlines the procedures involved in the administration of these tests, interpreting results and communication with parents/guardians.*

**b)      Diagnostic Testing**

The following diagnostic tests are in use:

* W. R.A.T.
* Running Record – Engage Readers
* Alpha to Omega

**Enlisting the support of outside agencies**

If there are serious concerns expressed by the parents, Special Education Teachers and class teacher, support from an outside agency will be sought which may include a formal assessment.

**Recording Results of Assessment**

The results of each pupil’s standardised tests are recorded manually and electronically and copies sent to the principal and SETs. Results are communicated to parents/guardians along with the annual school report. Parents are welcome to contact the school regarding the test results.

When transferring to secondary school, parents/guardians are encouraged to pass on any relevant documentation and any further relevant information is communicated orally from school to school on request. End of year reports for 6th class children are forwarded to secondary schools once confirmation is obtained of intended transfer to the chosen secondary school.

**Maintenance of Records**

Each pupil’s test results are reported in writing to parents on the annual report card in June each year. The results of standardised tests are maintained carefully by the school and are available for inspection by D.E.S. officials. Pupil records are held in school until the pupil reaches the age of 25. These records are stored securely under the direction of the school principal.

**Success Criteria of the Policy**

This policy will be successful when:

* All of the staff are familiar with and implement the procedures outlined
* All of the staff understand and recognise their responsibilities and carry out the assessment of pupil’s work continually
* The transfer of assessment data between teachers is systematic and efficient

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The principal, deputy principal, class teachers and special education teachers will have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

**Implementation & Review**

The policy will be implemented from 2023-2024 onwards and will be reviewed in light of experience.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_