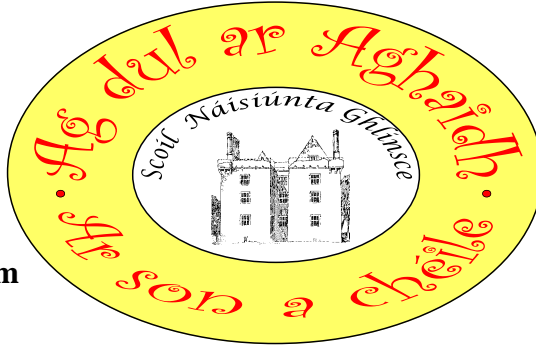


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Glinsk,
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Glinsk N.S.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Introduction:

A policy on Assessment has been in use at Glinsk National School since 1990 and this policy is being re-visited during the School year 2011-2012 to update the policy in line with the “Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools” (NCCA), the NEPS presentation on “Assessment in the Primary School” and the Department of Education circular on “Numeracy and Literacy”(2011) and using the advice of the School Development Planning Service.

The Policy will be redrafted in consultation with the Parents Association and will be brought forward to the Board of Management for ratification.

Policy Rationale:

The Assessment policy at Glinsk National School aims to layout a clear pathway to define how the school will use assessment to meet the needs of Children, Teachers, Parents and other relevant parties. The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have learning difficulties or may be exceptionally able, and put in place a school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

Relationship to School Ethos:

The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child, and the enhancement of teaching processes. 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. The staff at Glinsk NS believe that it is important that the assessment policy of the school is cognisant of and recognises the abilities of each child and that every effort is made to develop the individual abilities of each child.

Aims and Objectives:

The primary aims/objectives of the policy are:

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

Assessment is about building up a picture, over time, of a child's progress and/or achievement in learning across the Curriculum. Assessment is part of a dynamic process of intervention that is designed to promote learning. It involves a wide variety of means by which the strengths and needs of a learner are identified.

“Assessment encompasses the diverse aspects of learning: the cognitive, the creative, the affective, the physical and the social”. It includes self esteem, interpersonal and intrapersonal behaviour, and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Primary School Curriculum 1999)

Assessment has a clear purpose and this purpose is to generate an understanding of what is happening, who is concerned, to identify a problem, find out why it exists and to help decide what can be done to make a difference to the situation.

It is important to understand that Assessment is NOT:-

- Synonymous with testing.
- A static once-off event.

Assessment will provide information about:-
HOW the child learns (The Learning Process)
WHAT the child learns (The Products of learning)

ASSESSMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL WILL INVOLVE THE PROCESSES OF:-

Gathering information.

Recording information.

Interpreting information.

Using information.

Reporting information.

The Curriculum describes Assessment as having FOUR functions:-

=**FORMATIVE**: Formative assessment is an ongoing collection of information that occurs throughout the day/unit/term that enables teachers to track, support and guide students' continuous progress and improvement towards achievement of the expectations.

=**SUMMATIVE**: Summative assessment occurs at the end of a period of learning and provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the important/enduring learning addressed during that period of time.

=**EVALUATIVE**: Evaluating the success or otherwise of teaching methods etc.

=**DIAGNOSTIC**: This type of assessment will provide the teacher with an understanding of the prior knowledge and skills a student brings to a unit, as well as the strengths and specific learning needs of an individual.

Policy Content:

This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils, including the exceptionally gifted so that adequate strategies are put 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 individual education plans.

School Policy encompasses the basic principles of being:-

- Qualitative and quantitative
- In partnership with parents/guardians
- Involve the child/young person
- Happen in different contexts
- Holistic
- Dynamic
- Reliable and valid
- Communicated clearly
- Formative

School Policy, in line with new Guidelines, will focus on two principal approaches to assessment:

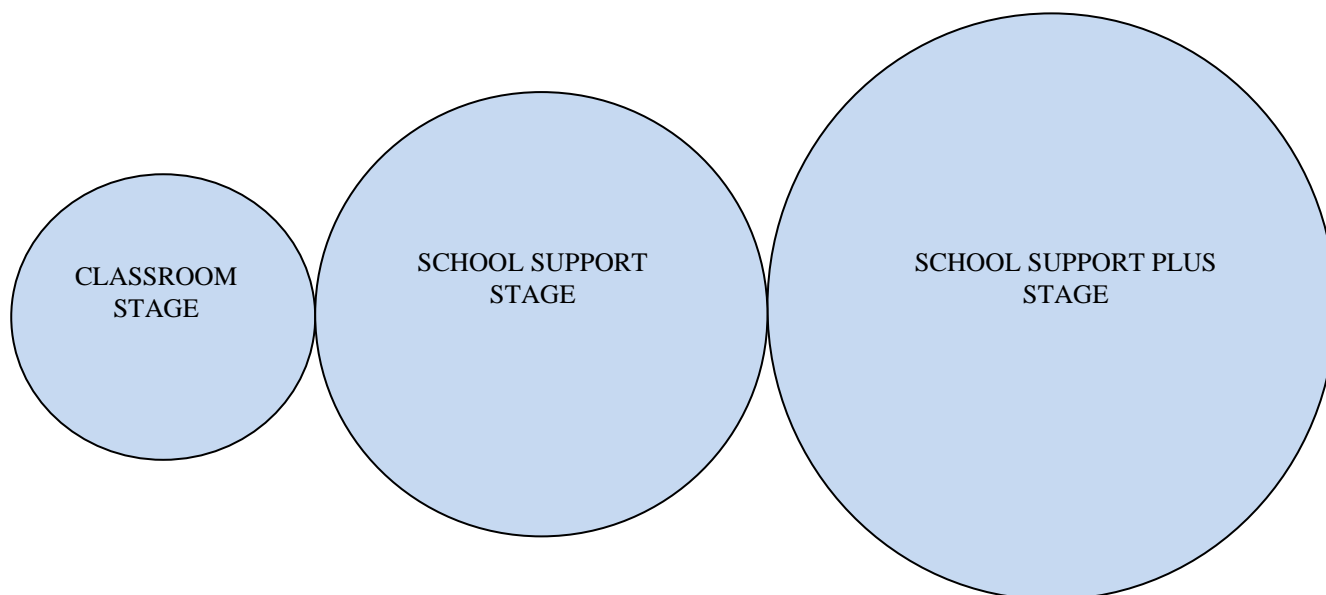
==**Assessment for Learning(AfL)**:

This is used on an ongoing basis to inform Teaching and Learning. It will include the Day-to-Day(minute-to-minute) interactions in the classroom and school grounds. The teacher can use AfL to evaluate his/her own teaching as well as interpreting the child's progress and how best to support the children in their work.

==**Assessment of Learning(AoL)**:

This is used to periodically record progress/achievement for the purpose of reporting to Parents and others. AoL focuses on medium and long-term Assessment.

The School's Assessment policy will follow the staged model of intervention with initial assessment within the Classroom. The second stage will involve the Learning Support Teacher and available school resources. Stage Three involves agencies and professionals from outside the school setting. The staged model of assessment is a graduated problem-solving model, consisting of three distinct school-based stages. It provides a framework to enable schools to meet their statutory obligations in relation to identifying, assessing and making provision for their pupils:-



<i>STAGE ONE:-</i>	<i>STAGE TWO:-</i>	<i>STAGE THREE:-</i>
<i>Parent(s)+Teacher(s) +Child</i>	<i>Parent(s)+Teacher(s) +Child+Support Teacher.</i>	<i>Parent(s)+Teacher(s) +Child+Support Teacher+E.P.+other Professionals.</i>

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT METHODS:

1.	Self-Assessment:	This enables the child to reflect on their own work, take greater responsibility for their own learning and to judge their work and efforts
2.	Conferencing:	Teacher/Child together reflect on items of the child's work and the child is allowed to express their own opinions and have them respected. Parent/Teacher conferencing is important for sharing information.
3.	Portfolio Assessment:	Useful way to create skills to develop responsibility. It can provide evidence of progress. Various examples of different types of work can be assembled.
4.	Concept Mapping:	Also known as semantic networking – a type of graph showing relationships between things using labels and arrows.
5.	Teacher Questioning:	Closed questions, Open questions and probing questions should be used.
6.	Teacher Observation:	By recording details of the child says, does or makes things, the teacher can gather important information about the child's learning.
7.	Teacher designed Tasks and Tests:	Include Written and Oral assessments. Practical Assessments. Can form the basis of Continuous assessment
8.	Standardised Tests:	Used to measure a child's Reading and Mathematics skills. Also, Screening tests and Diagnostic tests.

Standardised Testing:

The school uses Micra T, Sigma T and Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach, MIST, DTEL (Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy), DTEN (Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy).

All classes from Senior Infants upwards are tested. Micra and Sigma tests are usually administered in the last week of May or first week of June by the class teacher in partnership with the Learning Support Teacher. Percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher in the INDIVIDUAL PUPIL PROFILE with a copy held in the administration office. The class Teacher and the Learning Support Teacher analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September. Results of the Micra and Sigma tests will be stored on a secure database and annually updated. A copy of class records are also held by the Learning Support Teacher. All tests resulted must be securely stored at all times.

Diagnostic Assessment:

The school Learning Support policy lists all diagnostic tests used by the school. Such tests are administered by the Learning Support and Resource Teachers following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing /psychological assessment. Parents are provided with test results and if a psychological assessment is warranted, parental permission is sought and a consent form is completed. The Principal will facilitate such an assessment happening. The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be consulted initially. If necessary, other psychological services may be accessed.

Screening:-

All pupils are screened annually, using appropriate standardised tests, administered by the Learning Support Teacher and Class teacher. Priority for Learning Support is given to those pupils who perform at or below the 12th Percentile or below the stated standard cut off point.

Junior Infants-	Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (B.I.A.P) - Administered in the Summer Term)
Senior Infants-	Middle Infant Assessment Profile (MIST) – During 5 th Term in school
	Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy Screening Test (Summer Term)
	Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy Screening Test (Summer Term)
	MICRA-T (Summer Term)
	SIGMA-T (Summer Term)
1 st Class to 6 th Class:	MICRA-T (Summer Term)
	SIGMA-T (Summer Term)
	Drumcondra Spelling Test (Summer Term)
	NRIT (Non Reading Intelligence Test)

Diagnostic Assessment and Profiling

Once pupils have been selected for additional learning support provision and parental permission has been granted, a battery of assessments are used to profile pupils' strengths and weaknesses, including but not exclusive to the following:

Assessments:

Aston Index
Get Reading Right -Jackson Phonics Skills Tests
Schonell Graded Word Reading Scale
Schonell Graded Spelling test
Marino Word reading Test
Spar Spelling Test
Neale Analysis of Reading Attainment
Cloze Test 1, 2, 3.
WRAPS
Westwood 1 Minute Number Tests
Westwood Maths Checklist
Basic Number Screening Test
Basic number Diagnostic Test
Alpha to Omega Placement tests
Phonics Inventory
220 Word test (Dolch List)
100 most common words
Bangor Dyslexia Test)
Non Verbal reasoning Test 8-9, 10-11, 12-14
Otis Lennon
Reading Placement test
Phonological Awareness inventory
Literacy Profile
Drumcondra Checklist for emergent literacy
Drumcondra Checklists in Oral Language, Reading and Writing
Diagnostic Reading Programme Checklist
Early Literacy and Numeracy Checklist
Curriculum Profiles
Teacher – designed tasks & tests
Portfolio assessments

Assessment of Pupils for Supplementary Teaching:

Tests are organised by the Learning Support Teacher in conjunction with the class teachers as per Learning Support Policy. Tests used:

- Standardised Tests
- Diagnostic Tests
- Ability Tests (Verbal and Non-Verbal)

Screening Tests and Standardised Tests are administered on a class basis.

Pupils who score at or below the 12th percentile or pupils about whom teachers have concerns are referred to the Learning Support Teacher for assessment using diagnostic/ability tests.

Screening tests are given to all pupils during the Infant cycle or 1st Class.

Tests are administered to pupils transferring from another school.

Recording:

School policy requires that each Class Teacher maintains a PUPIL PROFILE on each individual pupil. This profile will include records of standardised test results and end of year reports. Results of teacher-designed tests and class tests during the year in the full range of the Curriculum as well as samples of the child's work will also be included in the profile. This profile (file) is passed from teacher to teacher as the child progresses through the system. The profiles must be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the office.

Procedures are in place to manage sensitive data (see Data Protection Policy).

REPORTING:

The **NATIONAL LITERACY & NUMERACY STRATEGY 2012** requires that testing is carried out in:-

English & Mathematics: May/June Annually: 2nd, 4th & 6th classes

The Assessment Policy for Glinsk NS will continue as heretofore in that **ALL** classes from Senior Infants upwards will be tested in English and Mathematics.

=Pupils with Learning or Physical disability may be exempted.

=Results to be retained carefully for inspection by DES officials.

Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach is administered in all classes from 2nd Class upwards.

From 2012 onwards, a **REPORT CARD** (template by NCCA) will be drawn up for each child by the Class Teacher. The Report card will feature four key areas:

=Children's Learning & achievement across the Curriculum.

=Child's Learning dispositions.

=Child's Social and Personal development.

=Ways in which Parents can support child's learning.

Reporting to Parents and others:

Principals and Teachers are required to report on Children's progress to their Parents **twice** during school year one of which must be a written communication. Parent-Teacher Meetings are held during the first term and towards the end of each school year, parents will receive a copy of the written **REPORT CARD**.

The Sten Score or Standard Score of any standardised tests **must** be included on the Report Card. Written reports should be

- Clear, concise and factual
- Presented to the Principal and a copy of the report entered into the pupil file
- Signed and dated.

A note or letter explaining STen scores and Standard Scores will be issued to parents.

Reporting To Board of Management:-

With effect from 1 June 2012 the Principal will report annually aggregated assessment data from standardised tests to the board of management. The report will comprise the aggregated results of standardised tests administered in accordance with circular (2011). A copy of the form for reporting test results appended to the circular will be used.

Reporting to the D.E.S.:-

With effect from 1 June 2012, the Principal will report aggregate standardised test results to the DES once annually. The aggregate results for each class will be recorded for reading and mathematics in second, fourth and sixth classes in May/June of each year.

Reporting to other Schools: Pupils transferring to other schools will, on confirmation of their enrolment in the new school, will have the report card including results of Standardised Tests forwarded to that school.

Participation in National and International Assessments

As part of the Assessment policy of Glinsk School the school will be required to cooperate with such national and international testing where requested to do so by the Minister for Education and Skills.

Items to include in the Individual Pupil Profile/Folder

Section A: General class records

This section includes standardised tests results, class checklists, class test results, etc.

Section B: Pupil profiles

This section can be divided into subsections i.e. one per child. The following information may be included for each child: child's name, class level, interests, strengths, learning needs, P-T meetings: dates, issues, actions taken, observations regarding subject areas (always date observations), selected samples of child's work (dated). A small number of carefully selected work samples gathered during the year are more meaningful and useful than having large quantities of samples in a folder. When selecting samples of children's work for inclusion in the assessment folder consider how they will support you in reporting learning progress to parents and others (AoL) and in identifying the next steps needed to improve the child's learning (AfL). It is also very important that the child chooses some samples of work for inclusion in the assessment folder.

EPSEN:

School policy recognises that arising from the Education Act for Persons with Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, schools must ensure that children with special needs are identified and provided for. In line with EPSEN (2004) every child who has a special educational need should have a personal Education plan.

Appendix 1

The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of Circular 02/05).

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Stage One: It is the responsibility of the class teacher to set in train staged interventions at class level.
- Stage Two: The responsibilities are shared with the Special Education Team.
- Stage Three: The Principal assumes a primary role at Stage 3 when a Psychological Assessment may be required. Parents have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must be always kept open.

Stage I

A class teacher or parent may have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of certain pupils. The teacher should then administer screening measures, which may include screening checklists and profiles for pupils in senior infants and first class, standardised, norm-referenced tests for older pupils and behavioural checklists where appropriate.

The class teacher should then draw up a short, simple plan for extra help to be implemented within the normal classroom setting, in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management. The success of the classroom support plan should be reviewed regularly, with appropriate parental involvement. If concern remains after a number of reviews and adaptations to the plan, the special education support team or the learning support/resource teacher in the school may be consulted about the desirability of intervention at stage II.

Stage II

If intervention is considered necessary at stage II, then the pupil should be referred to the learning support/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing. In the case of pupils with learning difficulties, if the classroom support plan fails to achieve the desired outcome the pupil should be referred to the learning support teacher/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing. If this diagnostic assessment suggests that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this should be arranged. The parents and the class teacher should be involved with the learning-support/resource teacher in drawing up the learning programme, which would include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom, and during supplementary teaching.

The learning support/resource teacher and the class teacher should review regularly, in consultation with the parents, the rate of progress of each pupil receiving supplementary teaching. If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews and adaptations to the learning programme, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at stage III.

In the case of pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, with serious difficulties, more urgent action may be needed. In these cases the pupil's needs should, with parents' permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case should be referred to the clinical services of the Health Services Executive. This may lead to a more detailed behavioural management programme to be implemented at home and in class, or to referral for further specialist assessment (stage III).

Stage III

Some pupils who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at stage III. The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school in respect of pupils with learning difficulties or with mild or moderate behavioural problems (or both) who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of pupils with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.¹

The learning support/resource teacher, resource teacher, if available, and the class teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. The parents should be fully consulted throughout this process. This programme should be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning programme and referral for specialist review, as necessary.

In the case of pupils identified at an early age as having very significant special educational needs, intervention at stage III will be necessary on their entry to school. Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such pupils, and primary responsibility for the pupil will remain with the class teacher, in consultation with the learning support/resource /or resource teacher.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____

Signed Chairperson:_____