



**Scope of the Assessment Policy:**

The term “Assessment” refers generally to the gathering, collating and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and areas of learning that need addressing.

**Assessment Policy Statement:**

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student’s progress and achievement.

This Assessment Policy outlines the importance of assessment and the key role students, parents and teaching staff play in supporting this policy document.

**Aims of the Policy:** This Assessment Policy aims to

1. Explain the rationale and importance of assessments
2. List the different types of assessments
3. Detail the annual schedule of assessments
4. Detail the reporting procedures post assessments

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**Rationale for Assessment:**

Assessment is an essential part of good teaching and learning for the following reasons:

1. Assessments enable the teacher to monitor a student’s progress and make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in advancing the students learning and adapt teaching strategies and learning activities as appropriate.
2. Assessments provide the students and parents with information regarding progress.
3. Assessments help to identify appropriate subject levels for students in the Junior and Leaving Certificate.
4. Assessments help identify students who may need additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.

5. Assessments assist school management in identifying students, subjects, classes and areas of the curriculum that require further timetabled support.
6. Assessments play an important role in subject choice, career guidance and progression to third level and further education.

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## **Types of Assessment**

Assessments can be either informal or formal

- Informal Assessment

The most common forms of assessment used in the school are of an informal nature, and these take place regularly in the classroom. These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers who will use them constructively for learning to take place. Timely feedback and constructive advice are vital components in this process. Where appropriate, teachers will keep records of these assessments to provide an insight into a students' progress and to fully inform them regarding the learning process. Informal Assessments methods include –

Worksheets & written classwork

Questions and answers in class

Essays, projects & assignments

Reading & writing in Class

Sample exam questions

Homework – written or learned

Presentations

Performances

- Formal Assessment

There are many types of formal assessments that take place in the school. The results of these generally form the basis for the reports issued to parents. Formal Assessments include –

Monthly/End of Topic/Chapter Tests

House Examinations

Mock Examinations

Aural/Oral Tests

Maths & Reading Age Tests

Aptitude Tests

Leaving and Junior Certificate Examinations

Entrance Assessments

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**Schedule of Assessments**

When appropriate, and as determined by each department plan, common assessments across a year group will be used in each subject area. This will provide for increased cooperation and a common benchmark across each subject area.

**Monthly/End of Topic/Chapter Tests**

These forms of assessments will be conducted at the discretion of the teacher on a monthly, end of chapter or end of topic basis. These formal tests are a vital component in providing feedback to teachers, students and parents, on the level of each students attainment and learning in that specific subject area. Constructive feedback will be given by teachers to students who complete these tests. A minimum of two pre-Christmas and three post-Christmas results from these tests will be recorded onto the database for each individual student in first, second and fifth year. Parents/Guardians will receive a report detailing the results in each subject.

**School Exams.**

First, Second and Fifth year students

-will sit their Christmas Exams in early December and their Summer Exams at the end of May.

These exams are of a serious nature, and this is recognised by students, parents and teachers alike. The purpose of these exams is to measure student learning and attainment in each subject area, and to give students experience in sitting formal exams similar in nature to the state exams.

### **Third and sixth year students**

-will sit formal school exams in December and will undertake Pre Junior and Pre Leaving Certificate Mock Exams in February each year to prepare them for their state exams in June. The Mock Examinations are set externally. These Mock Examinations are very beneficial to the students in measuring their progress in their Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate years. Students will gain valuable experience in time management and answering technique through sitting these Mock Examinations.

### **Transition Year students**

-do not sit any exams in the school. Their reports are based on continuous assessments in the classroom as determined by their individual subject teacher and the grade awarded will be based on the credit system determined at the beginning of the year. As Transition Year is focused on experiential learning and personal development, the forms of assessment used may vary from the standard practices used in other years. Transition Year assessments may involve the following: external certification, portfolio, project, oral presentation, multimedia, self and peer evaluation.

### **State Exams**

The school will strive to ensure that all 3rd and 6th Year students participate (as directed by the State Exams Commission) in the many assessments that make up the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Examinations. These assessments which may include orals, course work, practical work, portfolio work amongst others, will be conducted in accordance with the regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission.

The Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations begin the first Wednesday after the June Bank Holiday Monday each year. The exact timetable of examinations is usually available from the previous January.

### **Other Assessments**

The school will engage in other assessments periodically throughout the year.

Entrance Assessments:

Incoming first years will undertake assessments which will be used as a basis to form mixed ability first year classes.

## Learning Support Assessments:

All first years will be screened by the Resource/Learning Support Department to investigate the possible provision of additional help where necessary. Students may be selected for Non Reading Intelligence Tests, Aptitude Tests and many others. If a student is identified as having a learning need/difficulty the Resource coordinator will apply to the National Education Psychological Service. Classroom strategies such as differentiated assessment, visual aids, hearing aids, spelling waivers, increased time and dictionaries amongst others, may be used from time to time, as determined by the Resource Co-coordinator in consultation with individual subject teachers.

The school's NEPS psychologist, in consultation with school management, may carry out psychological assessments and other assessments on students at different times throughout the year.

## Aptitude Tests:

1st and 5th year year students will complete a Cognitive Ability Test (CATs). The purpose is to focus on those areas in which students do best and try to capitalize on these as far possible in their future education, programme selection, subject selection for the Leaving Certificate, training and job hunting.

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## Reporting Procedures

There are many different methods whereby the results of formal and informal assessments will be reported to students and parents.

## Non Standardised Reports

- Student Journal – the teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parents/guardian of a student by writing the result or a note in the student journal. The parent/guardian is expected to acknowledge receipt of this note by countersigning it.
- Direct Contact - the teacher may decide as they see fit to contact the parent/guardian directly with respect to the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student
- Signature of Parent on Assessment – the teacher may send the corrected assessment itself home with the student to be viewed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- Parent Teacher Meetings – there are Parent Teacher Meetings for all year groups throughout the academic year. At these meetings it will be possible for teachers to relay

the outcomes of varying assessments to parents/guardians of individual students that generate an accurate picture of the student's progress.

### **Standardised Written Reports**

Formal written reports are posted to the parents/guardians of students on four occasions throughout the academic year, depending in which year group they are. The report template is computerised and allows teachers to distinguish levels. A mark and grade are awarded and a comment can be generated from a menu. Alternatively, an original comment can be given. All reports are signed off by the class tutor and a general comment may be made on progress to date.

Reports will be sent to Parents/Guardians in following the October Mid-Term assessments, Christmas Exams, Easter Assessments and Summer Exams.

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