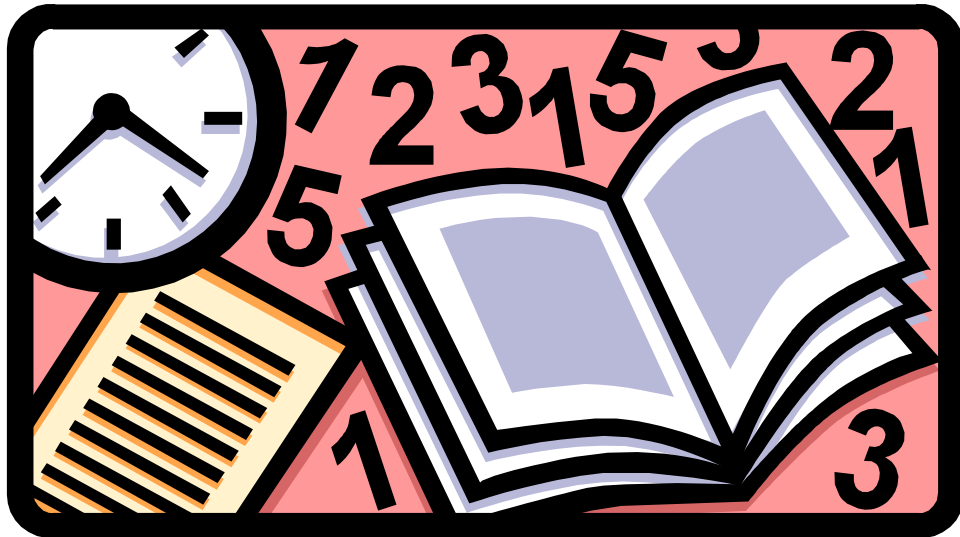


ASSESSMENT POLICY

March 2009



Updated (March 2009)

ST EITHNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Assessment

Assessment in St Eithne's forms an integral part of the planning, teaching and learning process. It is an essential element of all teaching. It is the process through which we obtain and interpret information relating to the knowledge, understanding, abilities and attitudes of our pupils. Teachers will use suitable forms of assessment, based on expectations, which are clear, realistic and understood by the pupils.

Pupils' written work will be regularly and consistently marked in ways that highlight the strengths and shortcomings, using approaches that are well understood by the pupils and their parents. Teachers' responses will provide guidance and encouragement for the pupils and information for parents.

The level and nature of the pupils' prior attainments will influence the selection and use of teaching methods and subject content. Pupils' strengths will be consolidated and their weaknesses addressed.

The purpose of homework will be explained clearly. Work will be set appropriate to the needs of the pupils. It will reinforce and extend their knowledge and understanding. It will consolidate work, which has been undertaken in class. It will provide parents with evidence of their progress.

Our assessment procedures will ensure high quality teaching and learning i.e., that we teach a balanced range of subjects, set clear objectives and monitor each pupil's progress.

In addition to appropriate assessment and evaluation procedures we will maintain a comprehensive, clear and concise record of our pupils' progress.

Purposes Of Information Derived From Assessment

- **Formative:** so that the positive achievements of a pupil will be recognised and appropriate next steps planned;
- **Diagnostic:** through which learning difficulties will be scrutinised and classified so that appropriate remedial help and guidance can be provided;
- **Summative:** for the recording of the overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way and at a particular time, e.g., reporting to parents annually, end of each key stage reports and summative records of achievement;
- **Evaluative:** by means of which aspects of the work of the school will be assessed and reported on and used to make curriculum planning and resource decisions.

Key principles of assessment

To provide effective support in the classroom, assessment should:

- be integral to the processes of curriculum planning, teaching and learning;
- take account of previous levels of pupil performance and be capable of detecting any significant changes;
- indicate learning successes and identify weaknesses;
- focus upon learning processes as well as learning outcomes;
- be based upon criteria which are clear and precise;
- be objective and consistent;
- actively involve pupils in the process of self assessment, encouraging them to review, reflect, record and evaluate their performances;
- support and reinforce the implementation of the programmes of study for subjects within each area of the areas of study in the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- be an important professional responsibility of each teacher;
- ensure that the demands on teachers be kept to a minimum compatible with the effective monitoring of pupil's progress.

Uses Of Assessment

Assessment will be used:

- to evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching of the curriculum;
- to ensure that there is continuity and progression between year groups and that standards are maintained within year groups.
- to identify pupil's learning difficulties or problems and to determine specific action, which needs to follow;
- to encourage pupils to learn;
- to provide with feedback about how well they are doing and their strengths in a group;
- to assist pupils to a particular group and to discriminate between the individuals in a group;
- to assist pupils, staff, parents, the Board of Governors and outside agencies such as DENI and CCEA, to make judgements on teaching and learning within our school.

PUPILS

The work of pupils will be closely monitored and pupils will be directly involved in the assessment of their own work and behaviour at school.

- to know what progress they are making.
- to ascertain their strengths, weaknesses and special abilities.
- to know where to concentrate their efforts.
- to set appropriate learning targets.
- to find ways of improving their performance.

The following strategies will be used to monitor the pupils at St. Eithne's:

Teacher observation, Baseline or Entry assessment Topic tests, INCA's, Standardised Tests and Mid Year tests, Weekly Spelling Tests (P.3 to P.7), Statutory assessment in Year 4 and Year 7, Collection and evaluation of pupils' books (Most subject areas) by Co-ordinator and Principal and other general strategies/methods employed by the teacher to assist planning and lesson making.

Note: The class teacher and the Special Needs Co-ordinator identify/ assess pupils with Special educational needs. This may take place as early as Year 1.

TEACHERS

Assessment is the responsibility of each member of the staff. Teachers use it to identify what children can do, to identify the different needs and to identify those children with learning difficulties so that their special learning needs can be met.

Teachers assess:

- to identify individual pupils learning needs.
- to plan lessons appropriately.
- to identify which areas of the curriculum are going down well or are proving difficult.
- to plan teaching.
- to pass information about children's progress to parents.
- to pass information about children's progress to next teacher.

At St. Eithne's teachers assess each pupil throughout the year to assist him or her in planning and catering for the needs of the children. Lessons are created and taught so that we may cater for the differing needs of pupils. Differentiation is an important element of the teaching.

Continuous Monitoring

There will be continuous monitoring of pupil progress. This will involve teachers in providing regular opportunities for the assessment of pupils in a variety of contexts, complementing teaching and learning activities.

From this assessment information, accumulated over time for every pupil, teachers will be able to determine the progress made by each pupil in relation to each attainment target.

Pupils' class topic books (Maths, Story, Handwriting, Science and History/Geography) will be collected at least once a year (twice for English and Maths books) to ensure that continuity and progress is maintained and that standards of presentation and handwriting are upheld.

Other Staff.

Other members of staff may be required to assist teachers in assessing the pupils in their care. Classroom assistants may be asked to help individual pupils with special educational needs and this may entail guiding the pupil through tests. Such assistance will follow the usual guidelines and procedures. All staff are required to heed the rules of confidentiality in all cases.

RECORD KEEPING AND RECORDING

In accordance with statutory requirements this school will:

- keep a formal record of each pupil's academic achievements, his / her other skills, talents and achievements and his / her educational progress (a 'formative record of progress and achievement');
- update that record once a year;
- disclose the contents, on request, to the pupil or his / her parents (as appropriate);
- transfer a summary of the information to a secondary school by 30 June when a pupil transfers at the end of Key Stage 2;
- if requested to do so, transfer the whole record to the receiving school; when a child transfers to another school at any other time, the formal record of progress and achievement must be transferred to the receiving school.

Recording

An important part of our assessment process will be recording the achievement and progress of our pupils for the following purposes:

- to give teachers information about children's academic achievement.
- to give teachers information about children's other skills, abilities and progress in school.
- to provide a baseline to compare future achievements.
- to give parents access to information about their children's academic achievement, other skills and abilities and progress in school.

At St. Eithne's a profile is kept on each child from the day they enter the school to the day they leave. This profile contains a number of important comments on the pupil's academic capabilities, behavioural trends and general progress throughout each year. There will also be a number of samples of pupil's work kept in the file. This work will be updated (changed) regularly. All pupils' reports will also be stored in the pupil profile folder.

The profile is in a process of change. Much of the record keeping, results and samples of work are gradually being transferred to the computerised system known as SIMS.NET. Reports, standardised scores, mid-year test results are now being electronically stored and attached to pupils' electronic profiles. The data can now be interpreted by teachers and tracking methods used to assess strengths and weaknesses of classes so that curative measures can be put in place as early as possible.

Teachers manage and maintain these electronic records updating them regularly. Each class teacher can access this "E-Class Record File" at the beginning of the year.

NEW: INCA's are a new computerised form of testing for children in year 5, 6 & 7. These are conducted in October and the results used to diagnose pupils' strengths in English and Maths.

Parents are informed of these results and what they mean during the first parent/teacher meeting of the year. They will also be given an idea what work is to follow during the year and how parents can support their children and the school.

STATUTORY ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Statutory assessment of English and Mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 will take the form of teacher assessment with moderation. INCA's are now a part of the statutory assessment arrangements.

Pupils who have statements of special educational needs and who have been assessed as having severe learning difficulties are exempted from statutory assessment. Other pupils with statements of special educational needs will be assessed in the same way as the majority of pupils. In some cases a pupil may be exempted from all or part of the assessment arrangements if this is specifically set out in the pupil's statement of special needs.

On other occasional and exceptional circumstances, a pupil may be exempted on a temporary basis from statutory arrangements, where the principal considered that it would be inappropriate to undertake teacher assessment. Details for making these temporary exceptions are set out in DENI circular 1990/45.

Teacher Assessment of Pupil's Work

Teachers will assess each pupil in all three attainment targets in English and in all five attainment targets in Mathematics between 1st January and the date specified on the Assessment Timetable.

Class Assessment Records

Teachers will assess each pupil in each attainment target using a 'best fit' approach and will record the outcomes on the attainment target sheet in the Class Assessment Record, indicating where assessment has been confirmed by an Assessment Unit.

Assessment Units

Assessment units are short, informal tests supplied by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). These are not a legal requirement but teachers may choose to use some of these units to help them arrive at a judgement of the level at which each child is working.

Teachers' Assessment of their pupils will be recorded on Class Assessment Records provided by the Council (CCEA). These will be collected by the council as specified on the assessment timetable. The minimum Assessment Units to be completed by end of-key-stage pupils are:

English.

Two Assessment Units, one in Reading and one in writing.

Mathematics.

Two Assessment Units, one in Number and one in one other attainment target.

The results will be recorded on the Class Assessment Records.

The Class Assessment Records will be returned to the school at the beginning of June and will be accompanied by:

- a summary of the complete assessment outcomes for the school;
- a summary of the outcomes for Northern Ireland.

Quality Assurance Moderation

Quality assurance moderation will provide external verification of teacher assessment. We will be required to provide portfolios of pupil's assessed work in a subject once every three years. This begins in the year 1999-2000. We will receive feedback from moderation before we are required to complete the end of key stage assessment of our pupils.

REPORTING

Reporting to Parents

In accordance with statutory requirements this school will send a written report to the parents of each child by the 30 June in every school year. This report will include information about:

- each pupil's progress in every subject and activity which forms part of his / her curriculum;
- each end-of-key stage pupil's statutory assessment results and summary information about the assessment results of other pupils in the same year group in the school;
- the results of any public examinations taken by a pupil.

Teachers will meet parents at least twice a year. On the first occasion (October/November) teachers and parents will discuss the year ahead and how the pupil is settling. On the second visit (Feb/March) the teacher will report on the child's progress to date.

A written report will be sent to the parents before the end of each academic year and parents may arrange to discuss the report with the teacher if they wish.

Records of Achievement

Each pupil at the end of Key Stage 2 will be provided with a summative Record of Achievement. This will include:

- the results of any public examinations taken by a pupil;
- his / her statutory assessment results;
- his / her progress in every other subject and activity which forms part of his / her curriculum;
- any award or certificate which he / she has obtained;
- information about his / her involvement in extra-curricular activities in the school.

From the beginning of Primary Seven the pupils will begin to compile a "Record Of Achievement" file. . This will be a kind of CV where pupils under the guidance of the teacher will gather together any achievements gained by the pupil whilst at St. Eithne's. As well as the items mentioned above pupils could include other successes or achievements as listed below:

Music grades, successes in competitions, Certificates of attendance, certificates of Merit, membership of clubs, Swimming levels/badges and any other such items which tell more about the pupil's talents, skills and other interests.

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES.

Practical Arrangements of assessment & recording keeping at St. Eithne's is summarised below.

- Reports from Nursery schools are sent to the P.1 teachers.
- Primary 1 Baseline or Entry assessment takes place over the first 2 months.
- Primary 1 teachers open up a profile on each pupil in the class.
- Class record of results and tests kept electronically and updated each year by teacher.
- P.5, 6 & 7 classes will undergo computerised tests (INCA's) in October.
- Teachers meet parents in October (settling in discussion) and March (progress report).
- Teacher and Special Needs Co-ordinator identify/ assess pupils with Special educational needs.
- Mid-year tests conducted by all teachers (P.1 to 7) in February (P.1 & P.2 pupils tested in essential areas).
- Topic Testing done throughout the year (i.e. monthly) by P.3 to 7 teachers.
- Standardised Tests in English, Maths and Reasoning conducted throughout the year.
- Weekly Spelling Tests (P.3 to P.7)
- Statutory assessment of English and Mathematics in Year 4 and Year 7 January to May.
- Monitoring Pupils' Work: Pupils' class topic books (Maths, Story, Handwriting, ICT, World Around Us) collected and monitored by Co-ordinators and Principal.
- Primary 7 Pupils build up their Records of Achievement.
- Teachers complete written reports on each child at the end of May (sent out to parents before 30th June).

Tests. Year 1 to Year 7

Assessment	Mathematics	English Reading Spelling	Other
<u>Primary 1</u> 4 - 5 years		Sounds and letter recognition. May/June <i>School test</i>	Baseline - Autumn (Infant Index BL) <i>School test</i>
<u>Primary 2</u> 5 - 6 years		MIST - Summer	
<u>Primary 3</u> 6 - 7 years	Progress in Maths 7 Mental Maths 7 -	Progress in English 7 NARA Form 1 Spelling Parallel	NRIT
<u>Primary 4</u> 7 - 8 years	Progress in Maths 8 Mental Maths 8 -	Progress in English 8 Edinburgh Reading Test 1 Spelling Parallel	
<u>Primary 5</u> 8 - 9 years	Progress in Maths 9 Mental Maths 9 -	Progress in English 9 Reading Progress Test 4 Spelling Parallel	INCA's
<u>Primary 6</u> 9 - 10 years	Progress in Maths 10 Mental Maths 10 -	Progress in English 10 Edinburgh Reading Test 2 Spelling Parallel	INCA's
<u>Primary 7</u> 10 - 11 years	Progress in Maths 11 Mental Maths 11 -	Progress in English 11 Edinburgh Reading Test 3 Spelling Parallel	INCA's
CCEA ICT Accreditation Award for pupils.			
Other:			
<p>Special needs/ Screening / Diagnostic testing</p> <p>British Picture Vocabulary Scale.</p> <p>Burt reading</p> <p>Vernon Spelling</p> <p>NARA- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability Form 2</p> <p>NRIT- Non Reading Intelligent Test</p> <p>Early Maths Diagnostic Kit.</p> <p>NFER- Maths Test</p>			
Other: Class testing:			
Teacher's own topic testing for continuous assessment.			
Mid Year testing for all year groups in February. (Except Primary 7)			
P.1:	-	Recognition of numbers	
	-	Recognition of letters/ sounds	
P.2	-	Simple Spelling	
	-	Addition / Subtraction / Match Number to word	
P.3 to 6	-	Spell, Story, Comprehension, science and Maths	
P.4 + 7	-	End of Key Stage Assessments	
P.7	-	<i>Transfer Tests In a state of Flux (Awaiting guidance from CCEA)</i>	
Standardised Tests Timetable			
<u>Term 1</u>	<u>Term 2</u>	<u>Term 3</u>	
P1 Baseline	P3 NRIT	P2 MIST	
P3-P7 Mental Maths.			
P3-P6 Parallel Spelling			
P7 Parallel Spelling	P3-P7 NFER Maths (new)	P3-P7 Progress in English	
P3-P7 Reading			

NOTE: Due to new arrangements being introduced, i.e. INCA's, the assessment tests listed above are under scrutiny. Adjustments are probable.