



Assessment Policy

Introductory statement and rationale

In Mallow CNS, we recognise that assessment is an integral process of primary education, and that assessment procedures are contingent on the relationship between the curriculum and the child's interaction with it in the learning process. In this context, our assessment facilitates the modification of teaching strategies and can lead to curricular revision.

This policy draws on the NCCA Assessment Guidelines for its rationale, contents and purpose. We adhere to the NCCA definition of assessment as "the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes" (NCCA, 2007, p. 7).

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the school

Mallow CNS seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring and secure environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents, pupils and the whole school community. We believe that this assessment policy will enhance our work.

Aims

- to benefit pupil learning
- to conduct Assessment for Learning - to help guide teachers with short term and long term planning to monitor learning processes and learning styles
- to conduct Assessment of Learning
- to generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievements over time
- to involve parents, guardians and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths and needs to co-ordinate and structure assessment procedures on a whole-school basis
- to establish the necessary and appropriate tools and approaches to gather assessment information for reporting to parents

Purposes of assessment

- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the more able
- To monitor each pupil's progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their planning in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate communication between parents, teacher, and other professionals about pupils' development, progress and learning needs
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies taking into accounts pupils' different learning styles



Mallow Community National School

Kingsfort Avenue, Castlepark, Mallow, Co. Cork



Assessment of Learning (AoL)	Assessment for Learning (AfL)
Involves assessing a pupil's learning at the end of a given instructional period	An ongoing process of recognising and responding to the pupil's learning in order to enhance his/her development
Teacher-led	Pupil-centred and pupil-directed
Goal is to establish levels of attainment	Goal is to enable learners to further their own learning
Takes place at the end of a particular piece of work or a period of time	Takes place in the day-to-day, minute-by-minute interactions between teachers and children
Summative, more formal assessments	Formative, more informal assessments

The following are samples of assessment which may be used to assess learning at Mallow CNS:

- Self-Assessment - children looking at their work and the work of their peers in a reflective way (AfL and AoL)
- Conferencing - The child's work and progress can be the subject of meetings between the child and his/her teacher, or the teacher and parents/guardians, or teacher and teacher, or all parties together (AfL and AoL)
- Portfolio Assessment - A pupil portfolio is a collection of the child's work, reflecting his/her learning and development over a period of time, and encourages pupils to take more responsibility for the quality of their own work. Portfolios also provide opportunities for collaborative assessment whereby the teacher and child together look at and talk about the child's work, identifying positive features and points for improvement (AfL and AoL)
- Concept Mapping – A process used to make spatial representations of ideas and the relationships between these ideas. Writings, drawings, graphic organisers or picture summaries all show the child's understanding of ideas and the relationships between ideas (AfL and AoL)
- Questioning - underpins all classroom assessment methods in AfL and AoL. Teachers regularly ask children oral questions about their work to find out what they have done and why. Children also use questions to help them to learn, for example they ask their teacher and their peers questions (AfL and AoL)
- Teacher observation - Observations made by the teacher in the classroom provide some of the most immediate and accurate information about a child's learning (AfL and AoL)
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests - Tasks and tests can take the form of written or oral assessments or practical assignments developed by the teacher to assess children's learning (AfL)
- Standardised Tests - Standardised tests are used to measure a child's reading, spelling and mathematical skills, and to determine children's progress in those areas (AoL)



Mallow Community National School

Kingsfort Avenue, Castlepark, Mallow, Co. Cork



Standardised testing

Standardised tests are used to measure a child's literacy, numeracy and spelling skills, and to determine children's progress in those areas. All classes from First class upwards are tested. The tests are usually administered at the end of May by the class teacher. The SEN team analyse the results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September. Results of standardised tests are reported to parents using the end of year report card. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents. Results are forwarded to the DES as required.

The purpose of the standardised tests is to allow teachers to make placement and progress decisions based on assessment results and to develop appropriate interventions for certain children. The support teachers in consultation with the class teacher and the Principal is responsible for purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing. In the event that a pupil is absent on the day of the test support teachers can administer the test at a later date. Pupils may be excluded from the tests if it is the view of the SET team along with Class Teacher they have an additional need which would prevent them from taking a test and is in line with DES guidelines.

Diagnostic and screening tests

We work in accordance with the continuum of support staged approach (See Mallow CNS SEN policy). The particular screening measures that are administered will depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils. This process can lead to early intervention strategies being put in place. Early intervention is of great importance at Mallow CNS. Screening can take the form of whole-class screening or individual pupil screening (in the form of a diagnostic assessment). See appendix of diagnostic and screening tests used in Mallow CNS.

Educational assessment

Each September the school is informed by NEPs, The National Psychological Service, the number of assessments the school will receive for the academic year. This number is determined by NEPs. NEPs also determine the criteria for ranking children in order of priority for a psychological assessment. A discussion meeting then follows with the school NEPs psychologist, SEN Team and the principal where the children for psychological assessment will be identified. The child's teacher/principal will contact the parents for permission to secure an educational assessment for their child.

In the event of our Educational Psychologist not being available the school then has access to psychological assessments through the Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments SCPA, which is administered by NEPS. The number of educational assessments provided under this scheme is at the discretion of NEPS.

Parents may choose to arrange an assessment privately through a private Educational Psychologist or other agency.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) is administered to children who present with EAL needs.



Mallow Community National School

Kingsfort Avenue, Castlepark, Mallow, Co. Cork



Record keeping in Mallow CNS

Records of standardised assessments are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the principal's and on Aladdin. A class score sheet is generated and given to the class teacher. The Special Education Teacher will retain a copy for the purpose of further diagnostic testing and tracking of results.

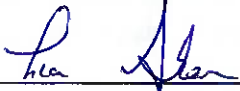
Informal or Class Based Assessments are kept by the class teacher. Class teachers keep records of informal assessment.

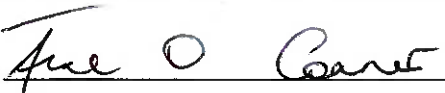
Diagnostic / Psychological Assessments. Results of any such testing are kept securely in the pupil's individual file in the central storage filing cabinet. These assessments and accompanying recommendations are scanned and attached to the child's file on Aladdin.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was revised by the SET team on 24.02.2020 and ratified by the Board of Management on 27.02.2020. It was then reviewed by staff during the 2023/24 school year and ratified by the Board of Management in June 2024.

It is to be made available to the school community via the school website.

Signed:  Date: 15/10/24
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed:  Date: 11.6.24
Principal