**ASSESSMENT POLICY**

**St. Oliver Plunkett’s N.S., Heywood Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. E91 NW22.**

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**SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT:**

St. Oliver’s N.S. is a co-educational Primary School under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

The following is the Mission Statement for St. Oliver’s N.S. adopted by the staff in 1998.

***“St. Oliver’s respects difference, cares for all, nurtures individual talents***

***and develops self confidence in a safe and caring environment”.***

**Rationale:**

* Assessment in education is about gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. (Assessment for Learning NCCA)
* Assessment is central to the process of teaching and learning. It is used to monitor learning processes and to ascertain achievement in each area of the curriculum. (Primary School Curriculum 1999)
* Through assessment the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the short-term and long-term learning needs of the child and plans future work accordingly. (Primary School Curriculum 1999)
* Assessment enables the teacher to build a picture over time of the child’s progress and achievement in learning. This ongoing process of how the child learns as well as what the child learns shapes the picture and informs subsequent stages of the teaching and learning process. (Assessment in the Primary School NCCA 2007)

**Aims and Objectives:**

The purpose of assessment in our school is to:

* Provide information on what and how a child is learning. This allows the school to assess what programmes are effective or not, for individuals or groups of students, and to plan accordingly intervention strategies to cater for differentiated learning.
* To record ongoing progress.
* To assess effectiveness of curricular strategies and programmes.
* To gather, record, interpret, use and report information using various forms of assessment both formal and informal.
* To provide ongoing evidence to inform teaching and learning.
* To record children’s progress and achievement for the purpose of reporting to parents, teachers and other relevant persons.

**The Assessment Process:**

**1. Standardised Testing:**

Our school uses standardised testing at the end of each school year. This informs:

* what intervention strategies are needed to accommodate the learning of groups of students.
* Which children may need individual support using the Three Stage Model.
* The statistics of the school and whether school-wide learning targets are being achieved.
* End of year reports. It allows for STEN scores to be recorded in the end of year report to inform parents of their child’s progress.

**Tests used:**

Infants:

* *Belfield Infant Assessment Profile*
* *Baseline* (GL Assessment)
* *Jolly Phonics Assessment Test*

1st – 6th:

* *Drumcondra Reading Test*
* *Drumcondra Maths Test*

Other standardised tests used include:

* *Young Group Reading Test (*1st and 2nd – to organise reading groups)
* *STAR reading* (4th to 6th – to ascertain a ZPD for *Accelerated Reading* Programme)
* *Single Word Spelling Test* (Annually – Senior Infants to 6th)
* *British Picture Vocabulary Scale*
* *Non-reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)* 2nd and 5th class.
* *Drumcondra Logic and Reasoning (6th Class)*
* *Planet Maths – Termly Assessment Tests*

**2. Informal Assessment:**

The teachers of our school will informally assess their pupils on an ongoing basis to evaluate the teaching and learning and inform their planning for further teaching. ‘By interpreting much of the information children share through their words, their silences, their actions and their interactions the teacher can balance intuitive and planned assessment in order to benefit each child as a learner’ (Assessment in the Primary School NCCA 2007)

The teachers will informally assess their pupils using the following methods:

* Self- assessment – questionnaires, evaluation sheets, KWL grids etc.
* Conferencing
* Portfolio assessment
* Questioning
* Teacher observation
* Teacher-designed tasks and tests.

**3. Screening:**

To facilitate the early identification of learning strengths and difficulties the school uses the standardised test results:

* Infants: the BIAP results are used to examine the pupils’ progress after their first year in school and to identify those who may be experiencing difficulties.
* Infants: The Jolly Phonics test in Senior Infants further adds to the pupils’ educational profile.
* Senior Infants and First: The bottom 30% are further screened for *Reading Recovery* and *Maths Recovery.*
* First and Second: The *Young Group Test* is used to create three graded reading groups.
* Senior Classes: The *Star Reading Test* is used to facilitate grading for the *Accelerated Reading Programme.*
* First to Sixth: *Drumcondra Reading* and *Maths Tests* allow for screening for difficulties.

**4. Diagnostic Testing:**

Once an individual pupil has been deemed to need assistance through the screening process and when it is not otherwise apparent, he / she undergoes diagnostic testing. This is normally the function of one of the SET team. The tests we use in this school are:

* *Aston Index*
* *Dyslexia Screening Test*
* *Sound Linkage* Phonological Awareness Test
* *Test 2R*
* *Diagnostic Reading Programme Assessment*
* *Single Word Spelling Test* (Diagnostic Section)

**5. Psychological and other external Assessment:**

Each year the Principal and the SET team, in consultationwith the class teachers, draw up a list of pupils where further assessment is deemed appropriate. These are listed for NEPS assessment, OT assessment, or for any other relevant area. Where necessary the NEPS psychologist is consulted and an assessment of need is drawn up. The most urgent cases are then prioritised.

**6. Recording and Storage of results:**

* All standardised test results are stored on *Aladdin*, though individual class teachers may have copies for their own use. These results are stored by class teachers in a locked drawer.
* Assessment information can be recorded in different forms, including marks, grades, checklists, profiles and narrative comments. All comments should be phrased in a positive manner. They should be objective and instructive.
* All psychological and other External assessments are stored in the office. These assessments do not leave the office.
* All class assessments are kept in the assessment folder and kept safely by the class teacher. The assessment folder should be passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Most samples of work may be destroyed unless deemed relevant.
* All diagnostic assessment should be kept in the Student Support File. All children receiving support should have a student support file. This file should be available to any SET or class teacher that is working with the pupil.
* The Report Card is an important element of the school assessment records as it contains all the child’s educational progress and achievements. The key purpose of the report card is to share assessment information with parents in an accessible format so that they can use the information to help their children learn.
* All assessments should be retained by the school for the relevant period of time.

**7. Roles and Responsibilities:**

* Class Teacher: It is the responsibility of each class teacher to assess their class on an ongoing basis, building up a picture of the individuals learning. The class teacher will notice problems and difficulties from this assessment and act accordingly. The class teacher must also ensure that parents are informed about any relevant test results
* Special Education Teachers: It is the role of the SET team to administer, correct and record many of the standardised tests in our school. They must also maintain an assessment record of any pupil that they have worked with and ensure the results of these tests are made known to class teachers, other relevant SET and parents.
* Principal: The school principal has overall responsibility for assessment in our school. It is his/her responsibility to ensure school policy is adhered to.

**8. Policy in Action:**

The Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003) established parents’ rights to regular information on the progress and achievement of their children under the Education Act. It entitles parents to access all personal data relating to students, whether stored in any electronic form or in hard copy. All assessment data comes under this act. St Oliver’s N.S. is committed to upholding the Education Act and regularly inform parents of their children’s results. All assessment data is available from the school on request and once within the statutory time period.

The school will share assessment information with other relevant teachers, other schools and the children themselves, when requested. The school may also share information with DES inspectors, NEPS psychologists, Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) and Education Welfare Officers, as well as other professionals such as speech and language therapists and occupational therapists.

Assessment results will be reported to the parents twice during the school year. Once near the beginning of the year at a parent-teacher meeting and again at the end of the year in a written report. The reports are posted in time to allow the parents have a subsequent meeting with the teacher before the summer holidays if needed.

Ratified by St. Oliver’s N.S. Board of Management December 2018.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_