

St. Peter Apostle Junior National School



Assessment Policy

Policy Summary Details

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Assessment: Key Concepts
 - Purpose of assessment
 - Assessment *for* learning
 - Assessment *of* learning
 - a. Assessment strategies
 - b. Standardised testing
 - c. Screening
 - d. Diagnostic assessment
3. Continuum of Support - Set practices in relation to assessment
 - Support for all
 - School Support
 - School Support Plus
4. Roles and Responsibilities
 - Stage 1 – Support for All
 - Stage 2 – Support for Some
 - Stage 3 – Support for a Few
5. Record Keeping
 - Day to day record keeping
 - Pupil Profile
 - Support Files
 - Report Cards
 - Assessment and Support Log
 - Data Protection
6. Success Criteria
7. Implementation and Review
8. Ratification
9. Appendix

1. Introduction

St. Peter Apostle Junior School is a junior primary school catering for classes ranging from Junior Infants to Second Class. In addition, we have four pre-school Early Start classes, and three classes for children with autism. Our staff is made up of 27 full-time teachers, 17 SNAs and 2 childcare workers, who endeavour to welcome all children, regardless of their medical and/or special educational needs. We pride ourselves on seeking to ensure that all children in our care have equality of opportunity to derive positive outcomes from their educational experience. In doing so, we endeavour to create an inclusive learning environment that caters for the diverse needs of all different types of learners. As such, we strive to align our practice to the Department of Education's philosophical standpoint that "effective provision for pupils with special education needs is situated within an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all."

Mission statement of St. Peter Apostle Junior National School

As a staff we seek to:

- Craft a caring, supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment in which children's social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual development is catered for
- Develop children's interests, talents, and hobbies by providing a wide range of learning experiences
- Harness the collective talents of all staff to ensure that all children, irrespective of their medical status and/or special educational needs feel cherished and thrive in in dynamic educational settings
- Provide tailored learning experiences for children who present with special educational needs (gifted or otherwise) by meeting children where they are at and building upon their strengths
- Collaborate with colleagues and outside agencies to ensure focused and effective supports are in place to advance the social, emotional, and cognitive development of all the children in our care
- Build strong and collaborative relationships with parents with a view to fine tuning and augmenting the supports children receive in both the home and school
- Promote a culture of inclusivity by ensuring that children across the school settings integrate as appropriate during tuition time, yard breaks and school events
- Create an environment where all have freedom and opportunity to reach their full potential

Rationale for an assessment policy

In line with the Education Act, 1998 and a bid to ensure that all children in our school achieve to the best of their ability, we believe it is imperative that children's learning needs are identified at the earliest opportunity. Assessment provides the teacher with information to make timely decisions about what and how the child is learning. This information in turn enables the teacher to identify the next steps in progressing the child's learning and adapt his/her teaching strategies and/or the

learning activities, as appropriate. Using assessment information to inform teaching and learning in this way can make learning a more enjoyable and challenging experience for the child and can contribute to a more enriching and rewarding professional experience for the teacher.

The relationship between our Assessment Policy and the school's Mission Statement

Our Assessment Policy reflects and supports the overall aims of Mission Statement by enabling us to:

- Create systematic approaches to the assessment of learning by providing a framework within which we can ascertain the gains that children have made in their learning
- Facilitate assessment for learning by using assessments to determine what the child needs to learn next. In this way our assessment policy enables us to plan for optimum learning opportunities that are pitched at the level of the child
- Identify and support the needs of all children, ranging from children who may experience barriers to learning to children who have exceptional ability
- In line with the Welfare Act (2000), share relevant information with relevant stakeholders (DES, NCSE, SENO, Education Welfare Board, parents, new school, NEPS etc) in a bid to secure the necessary resources and supports that may enhance the child's experiences in school
- Secure, to the best of our ability, positive outcomes for the child

Aims

Our Assessment Policy aims to:

- To benefit children's learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
- To involve parents and children in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- To assist teachers long and short-term planning
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis
- To emphasise the importance of early identification of children with additional needs through establishing relevant baseline data, which in turn can be used to monitor progress over time
- To outline strategies for monitoring the progress of children over time

2. Assessment: Key concepts

Definition of assessment

The “Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum- Guidelines for School”, is the document that was published by the NCCA to assist school personnel with assessment in schools. In this document the NCCA assert that:

Assessment is the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using, and reporting information about a child’s progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Purposes of assessment:

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data on an individual basis and at class/whole school level
- To identify the particular learning needs of a child/groups of children in class and in learning support including the exceptionally able
- To inform the School Support Plan and School Support Plus Plan
- To contribute to the school’s strategy for improvement of learning outcomes
- To monitor and compile records of an individual child’s progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes to ensure that the learning needs of individual children/groups are being addressed
- To facilitate communication between parents and teachers about children’s development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of children in assessment of their own work
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies and to inform approaches to differentiation
- To fulfil our obligations to the DES

Two overarching approaches to assessment

Assessment for learning (AfL)

Assessment for learning is when we seek to identify the next steps needed to help a child progress. It takes into consideration a child’s strengths and weaknesses. It enables continuous reflection on what children know and what they need to learn next. It also promotes immediate intervention and enables teachers to meet the needs of individual children more effectively. AfL involves the learner actively. Teacher and child agree what the outcomes of the learning should be and the criteria to judge as to what extent these outcomes have been achieved. The teacher can share the learning intention with the children, which involves the children discussing with the teacher what it is that they are about to learn.

AfL often takes place in the day to day, minute by minute interactions between teachers and children. Everything children say, do and make – asking questions,

working on a project or task alone or collaboratively, playing, designing or making a model etc has the potential of providing the teacher and the children themselves with information about what they do and can't do and what they do and don't understand. Gathering information for AfL is generally part of the classroom routine and does not break the flow of teaching and learning. The teacher can also use AfL to evaluate their teaching. Based on information gathered from students the teacher can make changes to their planning, organisational strategies, teaching methodologies and differentiation in order to make learning more successful for children.

Assessment of learning (AoL)

Assessment of Learning provides a summary judgement of what has been learned at a point in time. Assessment of learning compares children to externally agreed criteria and standards. It identifies gaps in children's knowledge and understanding. Teachers therefore use evidence on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning. AoL generally involves assessing a child's work after a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term or an academic year. The teacher can use a variety of assessment tools such as teacher designed tasks and tests, pupil profiles, teacher observation, portfolios, and standardised tests.

The emphasis in AoL is measuring a child's cumulative progress towards curriculum objectives. AoL provides information which will help the teacher plan future work, set new targets, collaborate with, and report to other teachers and provide feedback for parents/guardians at parent-teacher meetings and end of year reports. The teacher can also use methods such as questioning and observation of a child's learning. The teacher leads the assessment and the child is often aware that they are being assessed. A variety of assessment methods will be used in each subject as outlined in the curriculum plans for each subject. These will form a continuum ranging from the less structured forms of assessment to more highly structured methods taking into consideration the age and or level of the children. Teachers choose from a variety of assessment methods in each subject.

The most common form of assessments used in our school are teacher observation and teacher designed tests. These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers. Records of the tests are kept by the individual teacher in his/her assessment folder which is locked in his/her filing cabinet in his/her classroom. The results of these assessments are communicated to parents/guardians at parent-teacher meetings. The outcomes of these assessments also inform the content of the school report issued for the child at the end of each academic year.

Given the idiosyncratic nature of teaching children, each teacher has the discretion as to the format, administration, and frequency of in-class testing. Teachers engage in on-going assessment for learning and on-going assessment of learning by using a selection of the strategies that are detailed below in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

| Method | Explanation | Example |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Teacher observation | <p>Teacher observation is part of classroom work. It includes listening and watching, and requires the teacher to notice, recognise and respond to the child's thinking and actions. Observation may focus on an individual child or on a group, but not all children will need the same level of observation at all times.</p> <p>Teacher observation provides the teacher with information about how the child interacts and works with others. It also helps the teacher to assess not only the child's ability to transfer skills and knowledge across the curriculum but also his/her ability to use learning materials and resources.</p> | <p>English: focused teacher observation on child's ability to decode unfamiliar words in text and identify the cues used to do so.</p> <p>Mathematics: Daily oral maths activities, daily/weekly problem solving using individual/group tasks, daily/weekly/termly written tests of numerical competence, revision and consolidation tasks based on the concepts and skills addressed in any given period</p> |
| Conferencing | <p>Conferencing in the context of assessment means that those concerned with the child's learning share their knowledge and understanding of the child's work, its processes, and outcomes during a planned or intuitive meeting. At designated times during the school year the child's work and progress can be the subject of meetings between the child and his/her teacher, or the teacher and parents, or teacher and SEN teacher, or all parties together.</p> <p>Conferencing provides an opportunity to share information in order to increase understanding about the child's learning. The conference is an assessment activity. When the conference is between teacher and child, about the work in a portfolio for example, the teacher talks to the child about his/her strengths and achievements and makes suggestions about where and how learning can be improved. Through conferencing the teacher listens to the child's ideas about what he/she finds easy or difficult in learning, and encourages this kind of openness in the child.</p> | <p>Cross curricular type questions that will support teacher and child</p> <p>What did you find easy to do? Was there anything you found difficult? What part do you find especially difficult? Where do you think you need more help?</p> |
| Self-assessment | <p>Children are involved in self-assessment when they look at their own work in a reflective way, identify aspects of it that are good and that could be improved, and then set personal learning targets for themselves. Self-assessment involves metacognition—the process of being aware of and reflecting on one's own learning.</p> | <p>Cross curricular type questions that the child will ask him/herself</p> <p>What did I do well?, Where did I have a difficulty, What can I do better next time?</p> |

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| | <p>Self-assessment skills include effective questioning, reflection, problem-solving, comparative analysis, and the ability to share thoughts in a variety of ways.</p> <p>Self-assessment can be used by children of all ability levels and in all areas of learning. In age-appropriate ways, it can be used throughout the primary school and across subjects. Whole class discussions, group situations or one-to-one conferencing are all platforms for self-assessment.</p> | |
| <p>Concept mapping</p> | <p>Concept mapping (also known as semantic networking) is a process used to make spatial representations of ideas and the relationships between these ideas. The concept maps (or semantic networks) are similar to graphs containing ideas and labelled lines which describe the relationships between them. The purpose of the maps is to help the child show what and how he/she thinks about an idea. While there are different kinds of concept maps, they all help the child to organise and represent his/her thinking. In this way, the maps are graphic organisers or picture summaries of the child's understanding of ideas and the relationships between ideas.</p> <p>Concept mapping helps the teacher to see inside the children's thoughts. This information can give rich insights into what and how children are learning—the connections they are making between ideas. Concept mapping is also very beneficial to the children themselves. The process engages children in more meaningful learning by helping them to integrate new information into prior knowledge and provide evidence of this understanding.</p> | <p>Science: Living things</p> <p>At the start of the lesson, the teacher invites the children to create a concept map based on what they already know/understand about hedgehogs</p> |
| <p>Questioning</p> | <p>Questioning underpins all classroom assessment methods in our school. Teachers regularly ask children oral questions about their work to find out what they have done and why. Teachers use these questions to assess knowledge and understanding and to guide children in their learning.</p> <p>In St. Peter Apostle JNS, we use many different types of oral questions. These range from closed</p> | <p>Mathematics: posing a variety of closed questions e.g decrease your number by 5, 2 and open questions e.g In pairs can you identify any shapes with lines of symmetry in classroom?</p> |

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| | <p>questions in which the teacher anticipates a single, factual answer to open questions which encourage a more critical, analytical response, and which facilitate multiple solution paths.</p> <p>We as a staff recognise that children also use questions to help them to learn, for example they ask their teacher and their peers questions. Part of the teacher's work in using questioning as an assessment method is to model good questioning. This in turn helps children to become more skilful at asking good questions to aid their own learning.</p> | |
| Portfolios | <p>A portfolio is a (hard/electronic) collection of the child's work, reflecting his/her learning and development over a period of time. It can provide evidence of progress in learning in a curriculum area, a subject, a strand, or across a number of these, using a topic or theme as the focus.</p> <p>Depending on its purpose, the portfolio can be used over a year, a term, or a shorter period. 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.</p> | <p>Visual arts: Involving the child identifying work samples illustrating various print techniques explored – could be scanned/photographed and retained in an ePortfolio</p> |
| Teacher designed tasks and tests | <p>Tasks and tests in our school can take the form of written or oral assessments or practical assignments developed by the teacher to assess children's learning. They can be used throughout the school year as a basis for continuous assessment (AfL). Tasks and tests can also be used at the end of an academic year or at the end of a period of learning about a certain topic for the purpose of AoL. However, tasks and tests can serve both AoL and AfL at the same time, since teachers may firstly report the results of tasks and tests and then use the results to decide what they should teach and how they should approach each topic</p> | <p>Mathematics: Daily oral maths activities, daily/weekly problem solving using individual/group tasks, daily/weekly written tests of numerical competence, revision and consolidation tasks based on the concepts and skills addressed in any given period</p> |
| Standardised testing | <p>Standardised tests are used in term three in first and second class to measure a child's reading and mathematical skills, and to determine children's progress in those areas. Information from the tests is important given the vital role of literacy</p> | <p>SIGMA-T and MICRA-T are administered in May and the results are shared with the parents using the standard reporting form</p> |

and numeracy in enabling children to access the full curriculum.

A standardised test is an assessment instrument that contains standardised procedures for its administration and scoring and for the interpretation of its results. In other words, the test is administered, scored and interpreted the same way no matter when or where it is used.

Standardised tests are normed, which means the tests allow the teacher to compare a child's performance on the test with the performance of children of that class level or age in Irish primary schools

Standardised Testing

In St Peter Apostle JNS, we use Micra T and Sigma T standardised tests for Literacy and Numeracy respectively. First and Second Classes are tested. The tests are usually administered in May by the class teacher. Standard and percentile ranking scores are recorded on the class record template and stored by each individual teacher with a copy held in the administration office. Results of standardised tests are reported to parents/guardians using the end of year report card. The STEN score is used to explain results to parents. Other pertinent factors when planning and preparing for testing include:

- The test booklets are kept in a locked cabinet in the office for 12 months after which time they are shredded.
- Results of all tests for each class are kept in the Test Results folder in a locked press in the office until the children leave sixth class. Once the class leave the school the class files are transferred to the storeroom. The results are destroyed once the youngest person in the class has reached the age of 25
- Generally, the parents will be asked to give permission for a SEN teacher to carry out further tests and their use is detailed in the Special Education Needs Policy.
- Children who attend SEN supplementary classes may have their tests administered on an individual basis rather than in a group setting. This needs to be considered when organising all testing sessions. The suitability of standardised tests for SEN children will be assessed on an individual basis. This will be organised by the class teacher in consultation with the SENCO
- After the tests the SEN team may carry out diagnostic tests with children whose performance in the standardised test is a cause for concern e.g., a child who drops a standard deviation or more from one year to the next or who drops to or below the 12th percentile
- After testing and at the beginning of each school year individual and class results are looked at by the principal and/or SENCO in consultation with the SEN team and the relevant class teachers as part of the formation of groups for additional support.

- After testing the SEN team will put together class and whole school graphs of standardised test results in Maths and English

Screening

First step in identifying pupils who may need School Support in Literacy or Numeracy is for the class teacher or member of the SEN team to administer screening tests. The particular screening measures that are administered will depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils. In Infants Early Intervention Testing may include the BIAP or RENFREW. In the summer term of Senior Infants the M.I.S.T test is administered by class teacher and SEN teacher. The results of end of year testing are included in end of year reports. The NRIT Screening test is carried out each year with First Classes. This test usually takes place in the autumn term. A variety of screening tests have been developed to check for Emotional and Behavioural difficulties, Social Skills, ADHD, ASD (Australian Checklist for Autism).

Diagnostic Testing

Diagnostic tests have an important role to play in identifying children with additional learning needs. The administration of such tests from Junior Infants is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is used by individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing. Diagnostic Tests administered include:

- Diagnostic Spelling test age 5 – 12, Crumpler & McCorty
- YARC – York Assessment of Reading & comprehension 5 – 11
- BPVS

Newer and more up to date tests are being reviewed by the SENCO and SEN team.

3. Continuum of Support- Set practices in relation to assessment

As per the Continuum of Support and issued by the Department of Education assessments in our school fall under three categories:

1. Support for all
2. School support
3. School support plus

The assessment “of” and “for” the learning of all children in our school is conducted in the following formal/semi-informal ways.

3.1 Class Support: Support for all

Table 1.2

| Class Support: Support for all | |
|---|------------|
| Early Start – Early Start ASD Class | |
| Informal assessment tools as listed in Table 1.1 | Year-round |
| Junior Infants – Junior ASD Class | |
| Informal assessment tools as listed in Table 1.1 | Year-round |
| Renfrew language test | Term 3 |
| Maths Recovery Screening Test | Term 3 |
| Senior Infants – Junior ASD Class | |
| Informal assessment tools as listed in Table 1.1 | Year-round |
| MIST | Term 3 |
| Literacy DEIS test | Term 3 |
| Numeracy DEIS test | Term 3 |
| Maths recovery screening test | Term 3 |
| First Class and Senior ASD Class | |
| Informal assessment tools as listed in Table 1.1 | Year-round |
| NRIT | Term 1 |
| MICRA-T | Term 3 |

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|---|------------|
| SIGMA-T | Term 3 |
| Maths Recovery screening test | Term 3 |
| Literacy DEIS test | Term 3 |
| Numeracy DEIS test | Term 3 |
| Second Class and Senior ASD Class | |
| Informal assessment tools as listed in Table 1.1 | Year-round |
| MICRA-T | Term 3 |
| SIGMA-T | Term 3 |
| Maths recovery screening test | Term 3 |
| Literacy DEIS test | Term 3 |
| Numeracy DEIS test | Term 3 |

If the information yielded from assessment at the “support for all” stage indicates that further intervention and assessment is required, the child will move to school support /stage two assessments.

3.2 School support

Table 1.3

| | |
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| School Support: Support for Some | |
| Early Start/Early Intervention/Early Start ASD Class | |
| Language | Observation by SLT |
| Motor skills and/or concentration | Observation by an occupational therapist |
| Junior Infants and Junior ASD Class | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Language | BPVS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming vocabulary Renfrew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language screener for infants Demonstration model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by an SLT |
| Motor skills and/or Concentration | Demonstration model resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by an Occupational Therapist |
| Behaviour | Observation Nurture assessment Incredible Years assessment |

Senior Infants – Second Class and corresponding ASD Classes

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Language | Renfrew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language screener for infants BPVS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming vocabulary Demonstration model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by an SLT |
| Literacy | Reading Recovery suite of tests- Observation Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter identification • Concepts about print • Word reading test • Hearing and recording sounds in words • Word writing test • Running records Test 2R <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter name knowledge • Word reading ability • Non-word reading ability • Phonemic awareness • Naming speed • Phonic knowledge • Reading fluency • Spelling skills • Auditory verbal memory • Auditory discrimination skills • Motor skills The Wechsler Individual Achievement Test Bangor Dyslexia Test Dyslexia Screener Cloze Reading Tests 1-3 Aston Index COTPP 2 Centre for the Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to the Centre for the Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI)- Literacy Assessment |

| | |
|--|---|
| Maths | Maths Recovery assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening test for each class level Centre for the Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to the Centre for the Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI)- Numeracy Assessment |
| Motor skills and/or concentration | Demonstration model resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by an Occupational Therapist |
| Behaviour | Observation Checklist Nurture assessment Incredible Years observation |

If the data yielded at the school support stage indicates that further intervention and assessment is warranted the principal will contact the parents for permission to seek advice and/or intervention from NEPS (National Educational Psychological service) and/or a clinical psychologist. This advice will inform the subsequent level of intervention and possible progression to school support plus.

3.3 School support plus

Table 1.4

| School Support Plus: Support for a Few | |
|---|--|
| Education psychologist | The school has access to the services of an educational psychologist with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS). If the need arises, candidates for our educational psychological assessments are ranked in order of priority, and our allocated quota of assessments are conducted. |
| Clinical psychologist | On occasion, when the need arise, the school may refer the child for a clinical assessment. Particularly if the child is presenting with possible EBD, and a special school placement may be a consideration for parents. |
| Global concerns | HSE-Assessment of Need Early Intervention Disability team |
| Speech and Language | Health Service Executive (HSE) Speech and Language Therapist |
| Motor skills | Health Service Executive (HSE) Occupational therapist |

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| Emotional/Psychological concerns | CAMHS (Parents will need to secure a letter from their GP) Primary Psychology Art therapist Drama therapist Play therapist |
|---|--|

4. Role and Responsibilities

While overall responsibility of the school lies with the principal, teachers, SETs, the SENCO and the principal share different levels of responsibilities at the different stages of the continuum of support. These responsibilities are detailed in the following Tables 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7.

Table 1.5

| Stage 1: Class Support – Support for All |
|---|
| <p>The mainstream teachers' responsibilities are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on suspicions if he/she believes that a child is presenting with special educational needs (including barriers to learning and exceptional abilities) • Inform parents of his/her belief about the child in question • Initiate the opening of the support file • Initiate interventions to address the identified needs • Monitor/review the outcomes of interventions with the child's parents and determine if further supports are required i.e. the child moves to school support <p>Teachers can use the following assessment methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of informal assessment methods: Teacher led assessment • Teacher observation of child's learning and behaviour • Periodic teachers' opinions and observations and feedback (e.g. literacy stations/numeracy stations etc.). • Teacher designed tasks and tests • Work samples, portfolios, and projects. • Questioning |

Table 1.6

| School Support: Support for Some |
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| <p>If, after an agreed period of time, concerns remain, the responsibility at this stage becomes shared with the SEN team. The responsibilities play out in the following ways:</p> |

- If the child is deemed to be in need of school support, the mainstream teacher must bring the case to the attention of our Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO)
- The mainstream teacher should provide the child's support file and explain the outcomes of the measures that have been taken thus far
- Further information may be gathered using a range of checklists:
 - a. From the pupil: the child's perception of his/her difficulties and or what might help.
 - b. From the parent: information on child's development/health or on other factors that might contribute to any difficulties. information on the child's behaviour/learning at home
 - c. From other sources: previous school/pre-school/previous class teacher and present periodic class teachers e.g. literacy/numeracy stations teachers, outcomes of vision/hearing tests, other agencies
 - d. Having received parental permission, a member of the SEN team will administer an appropriate diagnostic/screening test(s), results/outcomes will be recorded on the child's Support File. These will be used to inform further planning for the child. Supplementary teaching will be arranged (either in-class or on a withdrawal basis) if the assessment indicates it would be beneficial.
- The SENCO then makes provision for the child with a member or members of the support team who has/have the skillsets best placed to meet the child's needs
- The mainstream teacher along with his/her allocated Special Education teacher(s) share responsibility for planning, implementing, monitoring, recording, and reviewing of the interventions that will best serve the child's needs. These should be recorded in the child's support file
- The SEN team will have regular meetings with the SENCO to brief her/him on progress. These meetings are also held with a view to reviewing and enhancing practices in relation to SEN
- Upon reviewing the progress of the child with his/her parents, the SET and mainstream teacher must determine if the child should move to school support plus
- The SENCO meets with the principal to keep her/him abreast of developments in SEN

Table 1.7

Stage 3- School Support Plus

The SENCO and/or Principal assume a primary role. If Stages 1 and 2 fail to deliver hoped for outcomes, parents will be contacted by either the Principal, or the SENCO. The necessity for an educational/behavioural assessment or Assessment of Needs will be discussed and parents'/guardians' permission sought. (The HSCL teacher's role is to act as a support to parents and staff in the whole

process.) The principal/SENCO will take all necessary steps to ensure that the assessment is carried out by relevant personnel. Depending on the outcomes of an assessment a School Support Plus file will be drawn up by all the teachers working with the child and in consultation with the parents. These roles play out as follows:

- The principal and/or SENCO will communicate with outside agencies (e.g. NEPS, Clinical Psychologist, Early Intervention) to secure possible assessments for the child
- The principal and/or SENCO will liaise with SENCO to secure possible resources for the child such as SNA access
- The principal and/or SENCO will liaise with parents and advise them as to the documentation they might need and the actions they need to take
- The principal and/or SENCO will support parents in filling forms and navigating the public health systems
- The principal, where necessary, will harness the support of other professionals such as doctors, psychiatrists, Tusla and social workers who work with the child to strengthen the child's access to the support he/she needs
- The principal and/or SENCO will liaise with principals in specialist schools to secure a place for the child, should the child's needs and parents' wishes warrant such measures

5. Record Keeping

In fulfilling the requirements of the Education Act (1998) we in St. Peter Apostle JNS create and maintain individual records of children's learning while they are attending school. Teachers are aware of the need to record comments in an objective and instructive manner. We do this in several ways.

a. Teacher's day-to-day records

- Teacher normally keeps his/her own day-to-day record of observations, remarks, incidents, etc. as they occur in the classroom and playground. This kind of record provides the teacher with additional information about the child, which helps him/her to meet the needs of individual children more effectively. It also informs the teacher's classroom organisation
- These notes are kept in the filing cabinet in the teacher's classroom and/or in password protected files on Aladdin

b. Pupil profile

- Pertinent information pertaining to each child such as home contact details, enrolment data, medical information, assessment outcomes, linkages to external agencies are kept on file. These files are stored in the office and/or electronically on Aladdin. Children's standardised test results and end of year reports are recorded on their individual files at the end of the year

- A profile is kept on every child, which records the outcome of all standardised tests annually. These results are used to set targets when drawing up DEIS plans and as baselines against which to measure progress. All information on a child, including informal testing mentioned in Table 1.1, should be retained on file and include teacher observation
- Individual teachers record the results of their own designed tests as part of their files

c. Support files

- A support file for every child receiving additional support (classroom, school support or school support plus) shall be opened
- Details of all the supports and actions taken to support the child shall be recorded in these files
- These notes are kept in the filing cabinet in the teacher's classroom and/or in password protected files on the One Drive

d. Report cards

- Every June, report cards are prepared and sent to the parents of each child in our school. When writing these reports that teachers strive to capture salient information about the child's educational progress and achievement (including interests, strengths and needs)
- As per circular 56/11, the results of all standardised testing are noted on End of Year Report cards. There is agreed terminology in place for recording and reporting information and results of standardised tests, which is used and understood by teachers. Explanations of these results are included with each report. If the parents request a meeting with the class teacher, this will be facilitated

e. Assessment and Support Log

- This is a whole class assessment and support checklist that travels with the class from Early Start to Second Class and is used as part of the transition pack each year between teachers
- It provides an overview of the assessments and supports a child has received and helps to inform the inputs, additional supports, and resources a child may need

f. Data protection

- The Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003, 2008 and 2018 establishes parents' rights to regular information on the progress and achievement of their children under the Education Act 1998. Parents have the right to access all data recorded by the school about his/her child.
- Legislation also requires the school to report assessment information when requested to other teachers, other schools and the children themselves, where appropriate. The school is also obliged to share assessment information with other individuals who are involved in the child's education. These include DES inspectors, National Educational Psychological Service (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

6. Success criteria

This policy is considered successful if:

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in the staged approach
- Transfer of information from class teacher to class teacher happens efficiently at the beginning/end of the school year
- Procedures are clear with roles and responsibilities clearly defined
- The Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between class teachers and SEN teachers, and between teachers and parents
- Assessment for learning (AfL) provides teacher and children with information which can enhance current and future learning.
- Evidence exists of positive collaboration between class teachers and special education teachers, based on information yielded from assessment

7. Implementation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in the school year 2025/2026. The principal will coordinate this review.

8. Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Vivion Powney (Chairperson of the BOM)

Date:

Laura Hannon (Principal)

Date:

Appendix 1

| | Planning and Organisation | Resources | Strengths |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Self-assessment | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Agree criteria for success.</p> <p>Develop children's self-reflection skills.</p> | <p>Prompt questions and tools for children.</p> <p>Time for children to reflect on their work.</p> | <p>Promotes the child's independence and motivation.</p> <p>Provides information from the child's perspective.</p> |
| Conferencing | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Organise learning activities for the rest of the children.</p> <p>Develop children's self-reflection skills.</p> <p>Identify appropriate language</p> | <p>Samples of children's work.</p> <p>Time to talk to the child, parent, guardian or colleague</p> | <p>Provides information from the child's perspective.</p> <p>Builds home-school links.</p> <p>Fosters collegiality – learning and sharing with colleagues</p> |
| Portfolio Assessment | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Develop children's self-assessment and conferencing skills.</p> | <p>Materials and/or software to create portfolios</p> <p>Storage space</p> <p>Time to talk to each child about his/her portfolio</p> | <p>Promotes the child's independence and motivation.</p> <p>Supports self-assessment.</p> <p>Provides samples of children's work as evidence of learning.</p> <p>Provides information from the from the child's perspective</p> |
| Concept Mapping | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Develop children's concept mapping skills.</p> <p>Select appropriate maps.</p> | <p>Materials and/or software to create the concept maps.</p> <p>Time to interpret the maps.</p> | <p>Provides visual representations of how and what children think.</p> <p>Provides evidence of changes in children's thinking over time.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Questioning</p> | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Formulate different types of questions.</p> <p>Decide the timing of questions.</p> | <p>Questions which support higher order thinking.</p> <p>Time to use different types of questions with different children.</p> | <p>Provides immediate feedback on children's learning.</p> <p>Usually requires few tangible resources.</p> <p>Models good questioning for children.</p> |
| <p>Teacher Observation</p> | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Plan suitable tasks for the children being observed.</p> <p>Organise activities for the children not being observed, which minimises interruption to the teacher.</p> | <p>Observation templates or checklists.</p> <p>Time during class to observe.</p> | <p>Provides immediate feedback on children's learning.</p> <p>Can be planned or spontaneous.</p> |
| <p>Teacher-designed tasks and test</p> | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Prepare test questions and tasks which demonstrate particular understanding or skills.</p> | <p>Resources for teacher designed tasks and tests.</p> <p>Time during class to observe tasks.</p> | <p>Provides evidence of learning in context (tasks).</p> <p>Provides samples of children's work as evidence of learning (tests).</p> |
| <p>Standardised Testing</p> | <p>Clarify the purpose; decide what information will be recorded and where.</p> <p>Read the test manual.</p> <p>Choose the appropriate day and time, organise the class.</p> <p>Plan activities for children not taking the test.</p> | <p>Test booklet per child.</p> <p>Test manual.</p> <p>Time to administer the test.</p> <p>Time to mark and interpret the results.</p> | <p>Indicates achievement compared to performance nationally.</p> <p>Helps to identify children's individual learning strengths and weaknesses.</p> |