



Whole School Assessment Policy

Date of Ratification of Policy by Board of Management

September 2022

Date of Scheduled Review of Policy by Board of Management

October 2023

Introduction

This Assessment Policy was developed in partnership and consultation with all members of the school community including students, staff, and parents/guardians.

This Assessment Policy was developed to outline the different types of assessment that takes place in our school. This policy will enhance communication on all aspects of assessment for all members of the school community.

Relationship of Assessment Policy to the School's Mission Statement

Pobalscoil Iosolde is a co-educational community school located in Palmerstown, Dublin 20.

Our mission is to provide an inclusive learning environment, happy, safe and secure, which would enable students to develop

Our Mission Statement states that Pobalscoil Iosolde is committed to quality education. This Assessment Policy will play a key role in ensuring that each student realises their full potential while a student in this school.

Characteristics of Good Practice in Assessment

Promotes and Supports Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies what students know, understand and can do• Enables consistent monitoring of student progress• Identifies individual learning styles and strengths and challenges• Encourages progression in learning
Informs Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assists lesson planning and informs review of content and skills• Promotes a variety of teaching methodologies• Enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress• Encourages self -reflection

Is both Formative and Summative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes a shared learning culture & provides clear and effective feedback • Diagnoses learning difficulties • Measure student performance • Identifies clear and shared targets for student progress • Promotes differentiation by outcome • Informs subject choice and career decision making • Provides effective and progressive student records & informs regular reporting to Parents/Guardians
Uses appropriate and diverse strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is both formal and informal & accommodates a variety of learning styles • Tests a range of skills • Encourages effective and standardised marking procedures • Is both quantitative and qualitative & is carried out in a range of contexts
Recognises ALL pupil progress and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewards progress, effort, and achievement • Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning • Creates opportunities for self-direction & fosters self-esteem and social development
Develops the capacity for Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria & gives sensitive and constructive feedback • Supports students in self and peer assessment activities • Engages students with realistic target setting
Fosters a shared involvement and responsibility between School and Home	

<h2 style="margin: 0;">What is Assessment?</h2>
<p>In education, the term assessment refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.</p> <p>Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using, and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems which relies on several instruments and methods.</p>

Types of Assessment at Pobalscoil Iosolde

This policy covers Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment), Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment) and Assessment Instruments/tests for Guidance and for additional and special educational needs (SEN).

An explanation of each of these is outlined in this policy document.

Type of Assessment	Carried out by
Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)	All Teaching Staff
Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment)	All Teaching Staff
Assessment Instruments/Assessments for Guidance (CL 0001/2023) ¹	Guidance Department &/or AEN Department

¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/11e67-advice-on-the-use-of-assessment-instrumentstests-for-guidance-or-for-additional-and-special-educational-needs-sen-in-post-primary-schools/>

Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)

Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment) is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through providing feedback, highlighting success, and highlighting areas for improvement.

Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
All Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Intentions/Outcomes • Success Criteria • Wait time • Questioning • Worksheets, Homework & classwork • Reading and writing in class • Essays and assignments • Sample exam questions • Observations in class • Presentations o Practical work • Research • Discussion and debate • Self-Assessment o Peer Assessment • Comment only Feedback • Delay the Grade • Classroom Based Assessments for Junior Cycle (CBAs)

Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment)

Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment) is carried out at the end of a period of learning and is used to measure performance and clearly identified a standard of student achievement.

Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
All Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Unit/Chapter Class Exams • Christmas Exams • Summer Exams • Mock Examinations • State Examinations • Assessment Tasks for Junior Cycle (ATs)

Assessment Instruments/Tests²

Assessment Instruments/tests for Guidance and for additional and additional educational needs (AEN).

- During your child’s education in Pobalscoil Iosolde they will have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of assessment activity as part of normal teaching and learning. ○ Other specialist tests may also be administered to support your child’s educational development and learning as well as their career development. Examples of such tests are outlined below.
- There may also be occasion to administer tests on an individual basis to your child to support their learning, progress, and achievement. Such tests will only be administered following consultation with parents/guardians.

Type of Assessment	Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
Assessment Instruments/tests CL 0001/2023	AEN/Guidance Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre -Entry/Post Entry to Post Primary • School Assessment Tests • Standardised Ability Assessments, • Standardised Attainment/Achievement/Assessments • Diagnostic Assessments • Guidance Interest Assessments

Assessment	Test Type & Components	When	Purpose	How
CAT 4	Ability Verbal, Non-Verbal, Mathematical Spatial reasoning.	Prospective 1st Year Feb prior to entry TY Students Dec 2023	To plan and support mixed ability teaching. To screen for potential learning difficulties.	Group
DASH	Handwriting Fine Motor Precision	3rd years Oct - Jan	RACE	Paper and-pen 1:/Group1

² List is subject to change.

PPADD E	Attainment Word Reading Spelling Comprehension Reading Speed Writing Samples	1st Year Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small group JCSP intervention to support literacy ○ Irish exemptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literacy screening 	Paper and- pen Group (Word Reading is 1:1)
WRAT 5	Attainment Word accuracy Reading Comprehension Reading speed Single word spelling.	Prioritize 3rd years for RACE and other students if concerns raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Race – Reasonable Accommodation in State Exams ○ Irish exemptions 	Paper and- pen 1:1
EAL Language Proficiency Test	English Language Proficiency	All incoming students presenting with English language difficulty	Supports appropriate EAL provision	Paper and- pen Group

Definition of Assessment Instruments for the purposes of this policy

Pobalscoil Iosolde recognises that information from ability tests, attainment tests, teacher observations, the Education Passport, the Student Support File, parental reports as well as the views of the student are important aspects of a thorough assessment. This evidence based approach facilitates the identification of individual students' strengths, interest, values, motivation and learning needs and helps to inform the actions and interventions that best address those needs.

Results of any one standardised test are not used in isolation, nor used as baseline data for predicting student's future achievements, nor for solely informing decisions regarding the provision of interventions or targets within learning plans for students.

Defining Ability and Achievement tests

Ability tests are designed to establish what a student can know, while achievement tests measure what is known and has been learned or achieved to date.

A standardised ability test is designed to be curriculum-independent and measure more enduring and long-term traits than the attainment of learning. They measure what a student can know rather than what is known.

A standardised attainment test (sometimes referred to as achievement tests) measure what a student knows and can be used to assess, for example, students' knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and to determine progress in these areas.

On foot of information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, further information may be gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests to provide a more detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.

A diagnostic test is designed to provide specific information about a student's strengths and needs in some aspect of learning, for example, word identification skills or understanding of number concepts.

In addition, guidance counsellors may use the outcomes of ability, interest, values and motivation tests to guide and to support students' decision-making regarding subject choice and senior- cycle programme options and to support their career development, including planning for further and higher education, training, apprenticeships and the world of work.

Using Assessment Instruments within the Guidance and AEN Departments of Pobalscoil Iosolde³

<p>Rationale for using Assessment Instruments in our School</p>	<p>Information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, and further information gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests provide a detailed view of a student’s learning strengths and needs.</p>
<p>How will Informed Consent be obtained?</p>	<p>Information is provided to parents and students regarding the purpose of the assessment and with whom the assessment results may be shared and why.</p> <p>The consent of parents (for students under 18 years of age) and assent of students over 18 is obtained in advance of the assessment instrument being administered, in line with the school’s assessment and data protection policies.</p>
<p>Selection of Assessment Instrument</p>	<p>Assessments instruments are selected for use in Pobalscoil Iosolde based on the suitability, reliability and validity of the instrument and resulting data. It is ensured that the versions in use are the most up-to-date and appropriate for administering to the specific student cohort.</p> <p>Pobalscoil Iosolde considers the qualifications required to administer, score, interpret and provide feedback on the test prior to selection.</p> <p>The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) provide information and advice on the use and appropriateness of certain assessment instruments/tests.</p> <p>Pobalscoil Iosolde engages with the relevant primary and post-primary schools to inform decisions around the selection and timing of assessments for students new to post-primary education or transferring from another post primary. The Student Support File and the <i>Education Passport</i>⁴ are key elements in supporting the sharing of</p>

³ <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/e86f9-advice-on-the-use-of-assessment-instrumentstests-for-guidance-or-for-additional-and-special-educational-needs-sen-in-post-primary-schools/>

⁴ <https://ncca.ie/en/primary/reporting-and-transfer/>

	relevant data, including assessment results, as students transfer from primary to post-primary school.
Administration of Assessment Instrument: Where Assessments will take place (location in the school)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AEN Office / classrooms • The Guidance Department inc. offices • Classrooms
Administration of Assessment Instrument – Under what conditions will Assessments take place	As directed by the test developers
Administration of Assessment Instrument: Names of suitably qualified staff administering the Assessment Instruments	<p>Some assessments, such as standardised group achievement tests, may be administered by subject teachers, under the supervision of a suitably qualified person. Other tests are administered and interpreted by appropriately qualified personnel depending on the nature of the instrument used. Pobalscoil Iosolde complies fully with the test publisher on the specific qualifications required for each instrument used.</p> <p>The administration of ability tests in schools is restricted to appropriately qualified personnel who have been specifically trained in specialised psychometric testing, including the selection and administration of such assessment instruments, interpretation of assessment results, scoring and feedback.</p> <p>In the case of psychometric instruments of general ability (and individually administered achievement tests), such personnel will be qualified guidance counsellors or teachers of special education with appropriate qualifications to administer specific tests.</p> <p>School personnel engage in on-going training and continuing professional development.</p>
Provision of Feedback to Parents/Guardians/Students	<p>Pobalscoil Iosolde ensures that appropriate, accurate and constructive feedback is provided in a timely manner to students and parents by appropriately qualified personnel, (guidance counsellors or other suitably qualified teachers.)</p> <p>Students are provided with the opportunity to explore their assessment results in the context of the educational options</p>

	<p>available to them in the school and to inform their future educational and vocational development, career choices and decision making.</p> <p>Students and parent/Guardian(s) are made aware of the limitations of the results of standardised tests during this discussion and the importance of other factors including the students' interests, motivation, talents and experiences, and information available from other sources.</p>
Interpretation of results	<p>In planning interventions to meet a student's needs, the results of any one standardised test is used in conjunction with other information available on the student. The results of any one test are not used as baseline data for predicting a student's future achievements, or for solely informing decisions regarding the provision of interventions or targets within learning plans for students.</p>
GDPR	<p>Pobalscoil Iosolde ensures full compliance with all requirements of current GDPR legislation, and is cognisant of GDPR data processing and retention requirements, for example, ensuring compliance in relation to who controls and has access to the data, the purposes for which this data is used, the retention of the data and where the data is stored i.e. within or outside the EU.</p>
Storing of Assessment Data	<p>Pobalscoil Iosolde ensures full compliant with all requirements of current GDPR legislation, and is cognisant of GDPR data processing and retention requirements, for example, ensuring compliance in relation to who controls and has access to the data, the purposes for which this data is used, the retention of the data and where the data is stored i.e. within or outside the EU.</p>
RACE	<p>From 2019 it is no longer necessary to administer cognitive ability assessments for the purpose of RACE. Any changes to this will be included in this policy document⁵</p>

⁵ [Reasonable Accommodations at the 2023 Certificate Examinations](#)

FAQ document for Parents/Guardians	An updated FAQ document on assessment instruments is available on the school's website or by emailing the main office of the school at office@palmerstowncs.ie
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Whole School Roles and Responsibilities for Assessment	
SLT	<p>Use assessment procedures and processes to drive whole school improvement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring that all teachers know what is expected of them in assessing students o Helping teachers make well-founded judgements about students' attainment and progress o Monitoring that assessment for learning is a key factor in planning for teaching and learning o Monitoring the accuracy of the information provided to parents about their child's attainment and progress o Tracking the attainment and progress of individual/groups of students over time o Using assessment information when planning staff training and CPD o Comparing the progress made by different groups of students to ensure that no group is disadvantaged o Ensuring flexibility in assessment expectations facilitating individual departments to adopt processes that are most conducive to progress in their particular subject o Ensuring students are supported in making informed curriculum choices o Using assessment and monitoring to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of students o Ensuring that any pedagogical developments in assessment practice are implemented where appropriate

Year Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring the accuracy of the information provided to parents about their child’s attainment and progress ○ Tracking the attainment and progress of individual/groups of students over time ○ Comparing the progress made by different groups of students to ensure that no group is disadvantaged ○ Ensuring students are supported in making informed curriculum choices ○ Using assessment and monitoring to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of students ○ Liaise with SLT and/or AEN Department regarding student progress o Report to Parents/Guardians as required
Subject Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lead subject teachers in planning assessment opportunities for students ○ Lead subject teachers in preparing standardised assessment at Christmas & End of year.
Subject Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liaise with Year Head and/or SLT and/or AEN Department regarding student progress ○ Prepare assessment opportunities for students o Mark and evaluate assessments from students in a positive, accurate, meaningful, and diagnostic way ○ Compile and maintain individual student records o Provide constructive feedback to students o Report to Parent/Guardian as required
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand that everyone has the potential to learn and succeed ○ Accept responsibility for learning & value learning o Help foster a positive learning environment through positive behaviour ○ Set personal goals and targets for learning o Active engagement in learning activities o Preparation for Assessments o Act on feedback provided on learning o Ask for support and help
Parent/Guardian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support their child in interpreting the results of Assessment o Affirm the positives and encourage their child to ask for help and support around challenges ○ Support their child’s learning by attending & contributing positively at Parent-Teacher meetings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule meeting with school personnel if concerned about their child's progress
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Reporting to Parent/Guardian(s) on Student Progress following Assessment Processes				
Type of Assessment	Formative or Summative	Scheduled Dates for Assessments in School	Results available to Parent/Guardian(s) on/from	Access to Report on Compass
Christmas Report	Summative	14-21 Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Yes
Mock Examinations	Summative	23/1 – 09/2/2024	March 2024	Yes
Summer Reports	Summative	29/5 – 2/6/2023	June 2024	Yes
JCPA	Summative & Formative	Assorted dates 2 nd & 3 rd Year	Autumn post exams	No
Student Progress Report carried out by Year Head	Formative	As requested by Parents/Guardians	At a meeting with Year Head and Parent/Guardian	Written Report provided during meeting with Parent/Guardian

Benefits of Reporting on Assessment Processes to Parent/Guardian(s)

- Enables Parents/Guardians to be involved in their child's learning
- Provides an overview for the Parent/Guardian regarding how their child is progressing o Provides opportunities for Parent/Guardian to reaffirm progress and hard work by their child
- Enables Parent/Guardian to discuss education/career paths with their child and assist them in working towards the next stage of the educational path/career
- Highlights any challenges which their child may be encountering and can open a discussion on additional supports their child may need
- May encourage Parent/Guardian to schedule additional meetings with the school to support their child in reaching their potential
- Enables Parent/Guardian to monitor and track the progress during the transition period from primary to post primary schooling

Monitoring and Tracking Student Performance

Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent Teacher Meetings provide Parent/Guardian with an opportunity to meet with their child's teacher(s) to obtain an update on their progress in the class/subject(s). The teachers in Pobalscoil Iosolde maintain records of attendance, formative feedback, summative feedback and results of assessments for each student throughout an academic year and the parent teacher meeting provides all with an opportunity to determine how the student is progressing both academically and socially and what challenges they may be facing. The Parent Teacher meeting provides the teacher(s) with an opportunity to hear more about the student from a parent's perspective and this can assist in differentiating support for the student going forward.

Processes and procedures for Parent Teacher Meetings in Pobalscoil Iosolde

Parent Teacher Meetings are held once per year for each Year Group

- The schedule of Parent Teacher Meetings is outlined in the school journal and is available to all partners at the beginning of the school year
- Reminder texts regarding Parent Teacher Meetings are sent before the event o Parent/Guardian(s) are requested to bring a copy of their child's teachers to the PT meeting
- Parent/Guardian(s) are encouraged to have a copy of the child's most recent school report
- Parent Teacher Meetings commence at 4.15 PM and end at 6.45 PM
- Students are encouraged to attend all or part of each PT meeting with their Parent/Guardian o Please be mindful that the time available for individual meeting is limited as each teacher has many students, Should there be a particular issue that you wish to discuss with a teacher/AEN coordinator/guidance counsellor at the school an additional appointment may be scheduled by contacting the school office at office@palmerstowncs.ie
- After the meeting Parent/Guardian(s) are encouraged to spend time with your child highlighting the positive feedback you received and discussing the challenges remaining.
- Please remind your child of the supports available to them in school and that everyone is working together to ensure they can get the best outcome from their time in school in order that they can progress to the next stage of their education and/or career