



SCOIL CARMEL JNS

Assessment Policy

www.scoilcarmeljns.com

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1. Introduction

Assessment has always been recognised as an integral part of primary school life in Ireland and has been given statutory recognition under Section 22 (2) (b) of the [Education Act](#) (1998), which requires schools to “regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents.” In formulating this policy, the school understands assessment to be “the process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a pupil’s progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes,” as outlined by the [Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools](#), published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). Scoil Carmel JNS recognises assessment as a key element in supporting effective teaching and learning.

2. Rationale

The core principle underpinning this policy is that all pupils in Scoil Carmel JNS should experience success at school. The policy aims to motivate pupils and encourage them to achieve to the best of their ability. It also seeks to identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, pupils who may have learning difficulties and to ensure that an effective whole-school response is put in place to support their needs. An effective assessment policy is therefore essential in promoting pupil progress, achievement, and inclusion.

3. Relationship To Our School Ethos

In Scoil Carmel JNS, our mission statement states we strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure environment. In this school there is a recognition and value of the uniqueness and needs of all our pupils, parents and partners and that every pupil has an opportunity to be happy, safe and able to learn. The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each pupil and the enhancement of teaching processes. We believe that an effective assessment policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that relative success, increased confidence and raised self-esteem is achieved for all pupils.

4. Aims & Objectives

Assessment refers to all activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. This school is focused on best practice for assessment both “of learning” and “for learning.” The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To facilitate reflective teaching and enhance pupil learning
- To create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- Identify areas of concern
- To track learning processes which assist the long- and short-term planning of teachers
- To highlight difficulties in learning which inform intervention strategies
- To identify gifted and able or talented pupils who require extension activities
- To keep records of attainment that will inform the reporting process
- To use validated assessment data to inform target setting and to raise expectations and standards

5. Guiding Principles Of Assessment

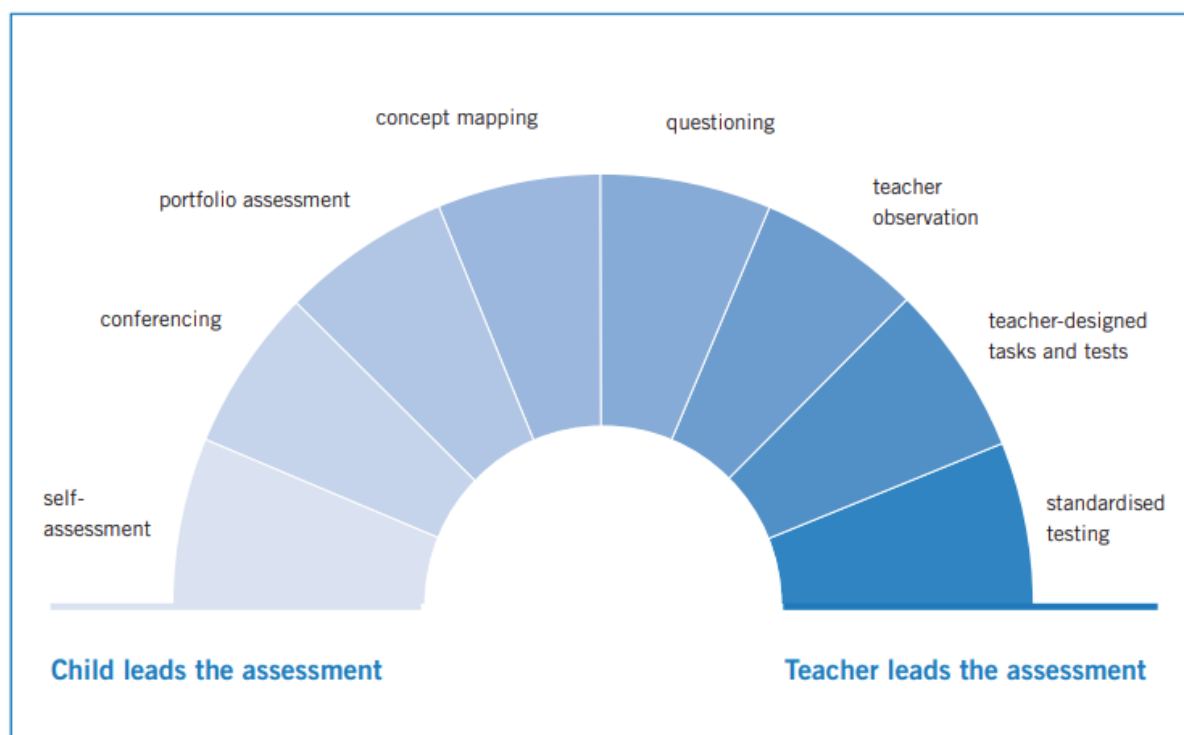
Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to



reflect the whole curriculum and learning opportunities. The main purpose of assessment is to facilitate progress in a pupil's learning. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool. The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organisation, which encourages pupils to work independently while the teacher is concentrating on a small group. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress. We recognise the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success, which encourages further study. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should not be administratively burdensome.

6. Assessment Methods

As part of the assessment process, teachers in Scoil Carmel JNS select a range of assessment tools in line with NCCA guidelines. These methods are presented along a continuum, as shown in the image below, and are used to provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school. In addition to the specific tests outlined in this policy, a variety of assessment approaches is used throughout the school, appropriate to pupils' age and curricular areas and includes both formal and informal assessment as well as pupil-led and teacher-led approaches.



6.1 Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Assessment for Learning (AfL) emphasises the pupil's active role in his/ her own learning. This level of involvement, in shaping their own learning, can heighten pupil's awareness of themselves as learners and encourage them to take more personal responsibility for, and pride in, their learning. By interacting with the pupils in such a way, the teacher can gain invaluable information as to how best to deliver the curriculum in their classroom. Every interaction has the potential to provide the teacher and pupils with a better idea of what they



do or do not understand or can and can't do. Many of these interactions are informal and are a continuous part of everyday classroom activities, in all classes, across the full curriculum. They are used to identify what pupils have achieved, what might be affecting their progress and what strategies will best support their future learning. The information that such an assessment provides will also enable teachers to evaluate their own practice and make changes.

6.2 Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of Learning (AoL) generally involves assessing a pupil's learning at the end of a given period, such as the end of a unit of work, a week, a term or a year. AoL is more formal and is about measuring a pupil's cumulative progress towards objectives, often in the form of a score. AoL also helps the teacher to plan future work, to set new targets and to provide feedback and information for end-of-year assessment.

6.3 Self-Assessment

Pupils are supported to practice and engage in self-assessment as part of AfL by reflecting on their work, identifying strengths and areas for improvement and setting personal learning goals. This develops skills such as questioning, reflection, problem-solving, comparison and communication and is appropriate for all ages and abilities across all subjects.

Self-assessment is supported through whole-class discussion, group work and one-to-one conferencing, helping to place assessment at the centre of teaching and learning and encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils may record their reflections through work samples, portfolios and learning logs.

Teachers also use self-assessment to reflect on and evaluate their teaching, supporting ongoing improvement in curriculum delivery and classroom practice alongside. This reflective practice, coupled with other methods of AfL and AoL mentioned earlier, help to inform teachers as to what was successful and if any adjustments may improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

6.4 Intuitive Assessment/ Planned Interactions/ Assessment Events

AfL and AoL are supported through a continuum of assessment that includes intuitive assessment, planned interactions and assessment events. These approaches are complementary and provide a comprehensive picture of each pupil's progress and achievement.

- **Intuitive assessment:** refers to the ongoing, informal judgements teachers make through observation, questioning, and daily classroom interactions
- **Planned interactions:** are structured, pre-arranged conversations or group discussions designed to gather specific information about learning
- **Assessment events:** are formal, scheduled assessments using agreed tools or tests carried out at set points in time

Across this continuum, pupils are active participants in their learning and contribute to the assessment process. Teachers' understanding of pupil development supports accurate interpretation of progress and individual learning needs. Together, these approaches inform teaching, support feedback, and enable effective reporting of progress.



6.4.1 AfL and AoL In Junior Infants

Intuitive Assessment	Planned Interactions	Assessment Events
- Targeted questioning, higher and lower order - Thumbs up, Thumbs down - Pupil picks own best area of work in a lesson - Use of mini whiteboards - Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work - Teacher observation of all learning activities - Anecdotal records - Work samples - Scrapbooks - Conversations - Questioning	- Checklists for phonics/ heart words - Learning logs - Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work - Fine motor exercises - Copybooks - Textbooks - Weekly reading activity with wordless books progressing to decodable books	- Individual pupil maths assessments (termly) - Individual pupil maths screeners - Free writing samples (termly) - Alpaca Phonemic Awareness (termly) - Heart words checklist - Jolly Phonics sounds and digraphs assessment

6.4.2 AfL and AoL In Senior Infants

Intuitive Assessment	Planned Interactions	Assessment Events
- Targeted questioning, higher and lower order - Thumbs up, Thumbs down - Pupil picks own best area of work in a lesson - Use of mini whiteboards - Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work - Teacher observation of all learning activities - Anecdotal records - Work samples - Scrapbooks - Conversations - Questioning	- Checklists for phonics/ heart words - Learning logs - Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work - Fine motor exercises - Copybooks - Textbooks - Weekly reading activity with decodable books	- Individual pupil maths assessments (termly) - Individual pupil maths screeners - Free writing samples (termly) - Alpaca Phonemic Awareness (termly) - Heart words checklist - Jolly Phonics sounds and digraphs assessment - Dictation (weekly) - DTEN (Standardised numeracy assessment Term 3) - DTEL (Standardised literacy assessment Term 3)

6.4.3 AfL and AoL In 1st Class

Intuitive Assessment	Planned Interactions	Assessment Events
Targeted questioning, higher and lower order	Checklists for phonics/ heart words/ Dolch words	Individual pupil maths assessments (termly)



• Thumbs up, Thumbs down • Pupil picks own best area of work in a lesson • Use of mini whiteboards • Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work • Teacher observation of all learning activities • Anecdotal records • Work samples • Scrapbooks • Conversations • Questioning • Book Creator	• Learning logs • Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work • Copybooks • Textbooks • Weekly reading activity with readers suited to each pupil's reading fluency	• Individual pupil maths screeners • Free writing samples (termly) • Heart words checklist • Dolch words checklist • Jolly Phonics sounds and digraphs assessment • Dictation (weekly) • Reading fluency assessments (termly) • Drumcondra Screening Test in Maths (Standardised numeracy assessment Term 3) • Drumcondra Screening Test in Reading (Standardised literacy assessment Term 3)
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6.4.4 AfL and AoL In 2nd Class

Intuitive Assessment	Planned Interactions	Assessment Events
• Targeted questioning, higher and lower order • Thumbs up, Thumbs down • Pupil picks own best area of work in a lesson • Use of mini whiteboards • Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work • Teacher observation of all learning activities • Anecdotal records • Work samples • Scrapbooks • Conversations • Questioning • Book Creator	• Checklists for phonics/ heart words/ Dolch words • Learning logs • Individual/ pair/ class discussion of own work • Copybooks • Textbooks • Weekly reading activity with readers suited to each pupil's reading fluency	• Individual pupil maths assessments (termly) • Individual pupil maths screeners • Free writing samples (termly) • Dolch words checklist • Dictation (weekly) • Reading fluency assessments (termly) • Drumcondra Screening Test in Maths (Standardised numeracy assessment Term 3) • Drumcondra Screening Test in Reading (Standardised literacy assessment Term 3)

7. Early Intervention and Supplementary Teaching

Scoil Carmel JNS places a strong emphasis on early intervention in literacy and numeracy from the infant classes onwards. Where a pupil shows signs of difficulty or a gap emerges between chronological age and attainment, the class teacher will consult with the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and Special Education Teacher (SET) to discuss



the pupil's needs. A meeting will then be held with parents/ guardians to share concerns, plan support and consider the need for further assessment.

Where it is agreed that the pupil will receive additional support through the [Continuum of Support](#), parental consent will be sought via the Aladdin Connect app, and the SENCO will inform the Principal. Following this, the SET, in collaboration with the class teacher and Principal, will carry out screening and/ or diagnostic assessments to identify strengths and underlying learning needs. The information gathered will inform the development of a Classroom Support, School Support Plan or School Support Plus Plan, as appropriate, with SMART targets to guide specific interventions for the pupil.

In the case where a child is selected for school support but the parents do not wish for the child to receive such support, a written letter from the parents will be sought outlining that while the school made them aware of the difficulty their child was experiencing and while supplementary teaching was made available, they have decided that they do not wish the child to avail of this support.

8. Standardised Tests

In Scoil Carmel JNS, standardised tests are used to assess pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy in a consistent way against national norms. They help teachers monitor progress, identify pupils who may need additional support, inform teaching and school planning and contribute to reporting to parents. These tests are administered under standard conditions to ensure reliable and comparable results across classes and schools. The standardised test we administer annually are:

- Senior Infants: DTEN (Numeracy)/ DTEL (Literacy)
- 1st Class: Drumcondra Reading and Mathematics
- 2nd Class: Drumcondra Reading and Mathematics

The class teacher administers the standardised tests in term 3 and inputs the results on our secure database, Aladdin. Results are then analysed at whole school level and at individual class level and the information gathered from the tests will be used to inform teaching and learning. The results will help determine the priority needs when allocating SET hours in the school and the nature of the support provided. Results of these tests in 1st and 2nd Class are reported to parents using the end of year report card.

9. Screening Assessments

In Scoil Carmel JNS, we use screening assessments to identify pupils who may be at risk of learning difficulties, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Administered to whole classes or year groups at set times during the year (ALPACA) and small groups or individuals, as required, to support educational planning and pupil progress. They act as an early indicator of potential difficulties rather than a detailed diagnostic tool. Their purpose is to support early intervention by helping teachers plan targeted support and, where necessary, refer pupils for further diagnostic assessment through. The screening assessments used to identify learning strengths and needs by class teachers and SET in our school are:

- ALPACA for early literacy skills in Junior and Senior infants
- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP) in Junior Infants
- Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) for English language proficiency



- Dyslexia Portfolio

10. Diagnostic Assessments

In Scoil Carmel JNS, we use diagnostic assessments to identify a pupil's specific strengths and learning needs in greater detail where concerns have been highlighted through classroom observation, screening or assessment results. Diagnostic tests will be administered by SET to small groups or individuals, as required, to support educational planning and pupil progress. The results will be recorded, analysed and used to inform support plans. The screening assessments used to in our school are:

- MALT 5 & 6 for Maths in 1st & 2nd Class
- Other diagnostic tests may be purchased or rented and administered when deemed appropriate

11. Educational Psychological Assessment

When a child is prioritised for an educational psychologist assessment, a meeting will be held with the parents to discuss this procedure. The SET team in conjunction with the Principal will organise the assessment. The assessment will inform the development of the support plan for the child. The psychological reports can only be accessed by relevant personnel as outlined in the NCCA assessment guidelines. These reports are stored securely in locked filing cabinets.

12. Continuum Of Support

The Continuum of Support is a framework used in Irish schools to ensure that all pupils receive the level of support they need to help them learn and thrive. Decisions about which level of support a pupil may require are guided by both the formal and informal assessments outlined in this policy. Support begins with classroom support for all pupils, moving to additional school support for those who need targeted intervention and where necessary, more intensive support involving outside professionals. The aim is to identify needs early, provide appropriate support and monitor progress over time. The three levels of support are as follows:

- **Classroom Support:** Early, low-level support provided by the class teacher within the classroom through differentiated teaching and targeted strategies
- **School Support:** More focused support involving collaboration between the class teacher and SET, with a structured plan and targeted interventions for the pupil
- **School Support Plus:** Intensive, individualised support for pupils with more complex or significant needs, involving a detailed support plan and often input from external professionals

13. Recording and Storage of Assessment Information

In Scoil Carmel JNS, we maintain assessment records in line with the [Education Act \(1998\)](#) to support pupils' learning and communicate progress with parents. The records include:

- **Teacher records:** day-to-day observations, anecdotal notes, and assessment information used to inform teaching and support individual pupils
- **Pupil files:** a record of each pupil's learning, progress, strengths, needs and relevant assessment information, including standardised test results and support plans where applicable
- **Report cards:** reports shared with parents outlining pupils' progress, achievement,



strengths, and areas for development.

13.1 Mainstream Class Teachers

Each class teacher from Junior Infants to 2nd Class will maintain an assessment folder for their class. The purpose of this folder is to record, monitor and track pupil progress and achievement and to inform teaching, learning and support planning. The assessment information stored in these folders are directly linked to the intuitive assessment, planned interactions and assessment events that take place at each class level as outlined above in section 6.4. They will include checklists and test scores any narrative comments should be clear, consistent, objective and phrased positively to support pupils' ongoing learning and development.

The assessment folder will contain a section for each pupil that will include:

- My Thoughts About School questionnaire
- Teacher observations and anecdotal records
- Results of teacher-designed assessments
- Checklists used to monitor pupil progress
- Samples of pupil work demonstrating progress and attainment
- Screening/ diagnostic assessment results, where applicable
- Notes from parent-teacher meetings relating to pupil progress
- Records of any additional assessments administered to inform teaching and learning
- Classroom Support Plans, where applicable
- The assessment folder will contain a section for the whole class that will include: running records for supplementary readers and any class tests results e.g. ALPACA or standardised test results

13.2 SET/ Special Class Teachers

SET and Special Class teachers will maintain similar assessment folders for the pupils they support. The purpose of these folders is to record, monitor and track pupil progress and achievements specific to the identified strengths, needs and targets of each pupil receiving School Support or School Support Plus.

The assessment folder will contain a section for each pupil that will include:

- My Thoughts About School questionnaire
- Teacher observations and anecdotal records
- Results of teacher-designed assessments
- Checklists used to monitor pupil progress
- Samples of pupil work demonstrating progress and attainment
- Screening/ diagnostic assessment results, where applicable
- Notes from parent-teacher meetings relating to pupil progress
- Records of any additional assessments administered to inform teaching and learning
- School Support and School Support plans

13.3 Student Support Files (SSF)

- All children who are on School Support Plus will have a Student Support File (SSF)
- The school maintains 2 SSFs for each pupil, one is for the mainstream class teacher and one is for the SENCO on behalf of the principal
- These files will have the School Support Plus plan for the pupil along with any official



- reports from outside agencies
- The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that both the class teacher copy and SENCO copy are all updated with copies of revised School Support Plus plans/ reviews and reports from outside agencies

13.4 Storing Assessment Folders

- Assessment folders for teachers in all settings are kept in a secure filing cabinet in their classrooms
- SSFs are kept in in a secure filing cabinet in the mainstream classroom and SENCO room
- Any pupil who is on a Classroom Support/ School Support/ School Support Plus will have their individualised plan uploaded onto their profile on the Aladdin database by either the class teacher or SET and these will be reviewed and updated periodically throughout the year
- The 'Log of Actions' on Aladdin for these pupils will be updated to reflect any assessment events that help to inform planning for the pupil
- All standardised assessment results are uploaded by the class teacher on the Aladdin database and as the pupil progress through the school, these records will be maintained and updated annually
- The records of report cards and standardised assessments are stored electronically on Aladdin and are password protected

14. Transfer of Assessment Information

In June, current class teachers will meet with the teachers of the following year's classes to hand over their Teacher Assessment Folder and any relevant assessment information. The outgoing class teacher should remove and securely shred any information that is no longer required. As the school year progresses, the new class teacher will use their professional judgement to review the contents of the folder and securely dispose of any out-of-date or surplus information in accordance with the school's data protection procedures.

In term 3 of the school year, the SENCO and teachers from Scoil Carmel JNS will meet with the SENCO and teachers from Scoil Treasa SNS to discuss the handover of information for pupils transferring to the senior school. Assessment results of standardised testing in 2nd Class and SSF for pupils on School Support Plus will be given for pupils enrolling in Scoil Treasa.

When a new pupil joins a class during the school year, class teachers may ask the parent/ guardian for previous school report cards support plans and relevant assessments on the pupil to help with the transition to a new school and ensure minimal learning loss.

15. Reporting Assessment Information

Assessment results are communicated to parents twice each school year. The first takes place at the annual Parent – Teacher Meeting, held in November. The second takes place at the end of the school year with the annual report card sent via Aladdin. In addition to these formal reporting arrangements, informal communication between teachers and parents may take place as needed.

16. Sharing Assessment Information

Under the [Data Protection Act \(2003\)](#) and the [Education Act \(1998\)](#), parents of pupils under



18 and pupils aged 18 or over, have the right to access personal and assessment records held by the school. Schools are also required to share relevant assessment information, where appropriate, with teachers, other schools, educational professionals and agencies involved in supporting the pupil's education and wellbeing including the Inspectorate of the Dept. of Education and Skills, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENsOs), Educational Welfare Officers (EWOs), Tusla and other professionals such as speech and language and occupational therapists with the permission of the parents/ guardians. Where assessment information is shared, confidentiality is maintained between the school and the receiver of the information.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the School

- Use a range of assessment methods to monitor pupils' progress and inform teaching and learning
- Identify pupils' strengths and areas for development and provide appropriate support where necessary
- Maintain clear, accurate, and confidential assessment records in line with school policy and data protection requirements
- Communicate assessment outcomes to parents in a timely and accessible manner
- Ensure assessment practices are fair, inclusive, and aligned with the curriculum and Department of Education guidelines

Role of Parents/ Guardians

- Support their child's learning and development at home
- Engage with assessment information shared by the school, including report cards and parent-teacher meetings
- Communicate with the school where concerns or additional information relevant to the child's learning arise

Role of the Pupil

- Participate in assessment activities to the best of their ability
- Engage in learning and reflect on their progress where appropriate
- Use feedback from teachers to support improvement and learning

18. Success Criteria

We will know this policy has succeeded when:

- A range of informal and formal assessment modes are used to place assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching
- Procedures run smoothly and efficiently because there is clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for the different aspects
- Transfer of information from teacher to teacher happens efficiently at the beginning and end of the school year
- Each child has been presented with the opportunity of assessment from the spectrum of assessment tools mentioned above
- Improved student outcomes when assessment data is analysed year on year

19. Review

This Assessment Policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains effective and aligned with current legislation and best practice. Reviews may also



be prompted by changes to Department of Education or NCCA guidelines, new assessment practices, School Self-Evaluation (SSE) or inspection findings or emerging needs within the school community.

20. Ratification

This policy was approved and ratified by the Board of Management on:

Signed: Maria O'hare

Date: 09/06/2026

Chairperson

Signed: Irene Quinn

Date: 09/06/2026

Principal