



## **Assessment Policy**



St John's College, De La Salle

Le Fanu Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10

Roll number: 60510M

School Patron: Le Chéile Schools Trust clg

### **Mission Statement**

St John's College is a member of the Le Cheile Trust, under the care and direction of a dedicated management and staff in partnership with parents and guardians, provides a Catholic Lasallian education which strives to develop students spiritually, academically, physically and socially through the promotion of a comprehensive range of academic programmes and a wide variety of non-academic activities.

### **Scope of the Assessment Policy:**

The term "Assessment" refers generally to the gathering, collating, reporting and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and areas of learning that need addressing.

### **Assessment Policy Statement:**

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

This Assessment Policy outlines the importance of assessment and the key role students, parents and teaching staff play in supporting this policy document.

Aims of the Policy: This Assessment Policy aims to

- i. Explain the rationale and importance of assessment
- ii. List the different types of assessments
- iii. Detail the annual schedule of assessments

- iv. Detail the reporting procedures post assessments
- v. Outline Roles and Responsibilities in terms of assessment practices
- vi. GDPR Considerations

### **1. Rationale and importance of Assessments:**

Assessment is an essential part of good teaching and learning for the following reasons:

- Assessments enable the teacher to monitor a student's progress and make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in advancing the students learning and adapt teaching strategies and learning activities as appropriate.
- Assessments encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and to set and achieve realistic important goals.
- Assessments encourage parents to take an active role in and shared responsibility for their son's learning and education.
- Assessments help parents to understand and support the progress their son is making and to monitor their son's progress throughout their time in the school.
- Assessments help to identify appropriate subject levels for students in the Junior Certificate/Cycle Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations.
- Assessments help identify students who may need additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
- Assessments assist in the identification of students that may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for further assessment or direct intervention.
- Assessments assist school management in identifying students, subjects, classes and areas of the curriculum that require further timetabled support.
- Assessments play an important role in subject choice, career guidance and progression to third level and further education.

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### 3. Types of Assessment

#### *Formative Assessment*

Formative Assessment refers to a wide variety of methods that teachers use to conduct evaluations of students comprehension, learning needs and academic progress during a lesson, a unit, or course. Formative assessments help teachers to identify concepts that students are struggling to understand, skills they are having difficulty acquiring, or success criteria they have not yet achieved, so that adjustments can be made to lessons, instructional techniques and strategies, and academic support.

The general goal of formative assessment is to collect detailed information that can be used to improve instruction and student learning while it's happening. What makes an assessment 'formative' is not the design of the test, technique, or self-evaluation, per se, but the way it is used, ie.to inform in-process teaching and learning modifications.

Examples of Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies that may be used for Formative Assessment in St John's College include;

- Success Criteria
- Projects
- Target Setting
- Peer/ Self Assessments
- Group work
- In- class discussions
- Homework Assignments
- Graphic Organisers
- White boards
- Traffic Lights
- Think Pair Share
- Observations
- Effective Questioning

- Quizzes
- Reflection
- Presentations /Performances
- Surveys
- IT related assessments, for example, Kahoot/Mentimeter quizzes
- Statements of Learning which are completed by students participating in the JCSP Programme

### *Summative Assessment*

Summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period—typically at the end of a project, unit, course, review, term , programme, or school year. Summative assessments are therefore generally evaluative, rather than diagnostic. Summative tests, assignments, or projects are used to determine whether students have learned what they were expected to learn and results are recorded as scores or grades and form part of the student’s academic record.

### Examples of Summative Assessments used in St. John’s College

- House Examinations
- Mock Examinations
- Oral Exams
- Maths and Reading Age Tests
- Practical performance tests
- Leaving and Junior Certificate, and Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations Assessments
- Portfolio Interviews (TY)

### **3. Schedule of Assessments**

When appropriate, and as determined by each department plan, common assessments across a year group may be used in each subject area. This will provide for increased collaboration and a common benchmark across each subject area.

#### **Classroom-Based Assessments**

Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses the student using the specific tasks set out in the subject specification. The tasks are clearly described, as are the criteria for assessment to support the teacher judgement. The criteria are found in the Features of Quality linked to each Classroom-Based Assessment. Although the assessment is similar to the formative assessment that occurs every day in class, in the case of Classroom-Based Assessment the teacher's judgement is recorded for Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR), and is used in the school's reporting to parents and students.

#### **Assessment Task**

The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time, which is not marked by the class teacher, but is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based.

#### **House Exams**

House examinations occur twice yearly in St John's College.

Christmas Examinations are taken at by all years including TY and LCA Students

Summer Examinations are sat by all years with the exceptions of those sitting state examinations in June (3<sup>rd</sup> Years, 6<sup>th</sup> Years & LCA Year 2 students).

The purpose of these exams is to measure student learning and attainment in each subject area, and to give students experience in sitting formal exams similar in nature to the state exams. With this in mind, the setting and examination environment will be similar to that of the State Examinations.

Reports on examination results are sent to parents

The duration of house examinations are as follows:

#### ***Christmas Exams:***

1<sup>st</sup> Years- 1 hour

2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Years- 1.5 hours

4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Year Students: 1.5 hours

### ***Summer Exams:***

1st Years: 1.5 hours

2nd & 3rd Years: 2 hours

4th, 5th & 6th Years: 2 .5 hours.

LCA Students: Varies between 1 hour and 1.5 hours

Duration of house exams may be adjusted from time to time.

Students with SEN, who qualify for reasonable accommodation, may be allocated to a special centre for the duration of their examinations, so that they can avail of support in the completion of their examination.

### **Mock Examinations**

Will sit mock examinations in February/March of each school year. to prepare them for their state exams in June. The Mock Examinations are set externally and corrected internally. These Mock Examinations are very beneficial to the students in measuring their progress in their Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate years. Students will gain valuable experience in time management, answering technique and choosing appropriate levels through sitting these Mock Examinations.

### **Transition year students**

Transition Years are continuously assessed throughout the year based on a credit system. Their Christmas and Summer Reports summarise the credits awarded to the students to that date. The credit system is determined by each subject department in their subject area at the beginning of the year. As Transition Year is focused on experiential learning and personal development, the forms of assessment used may vary from the standard practices used in other years. Transition Year assessments may involve the following: external certification for work experience, portfolio, projects, oral presentations, interviews and mock interviews assess. Credits are also awarded for attendance, behaviour and participation throughout the TY year. These credits are decided in collaboration with the TY Co-ordinator and the Year Head for TY students. The credit system may change from time to time. This will be decided annually by the TY team.

### **State Exams**

The Junior Certificate/Cycle, Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations begin the first Wednesday after the June Bank Holiday Monday each year. The exact timetable of examinations is usually available from the previous January.

The school will strive to ensure that all 3rd and 6th Year and LCA students participate (as directed by the State Exams Commission) in the many assessments that make up the Junior Certificate/Cycle, Leaving Certificate and Leaving Cert Applied Examinations. These assessments, which may include orals, aural examinations, course work, practical work, portfolio work, CBA'S, Assessment Tasks, amongst others, will be conducted in accordance with the regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission.

### **Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).**

The JCPA will reward achievement across all areas of learning as applicable: Subjects, Short Courses, Wellbeing, Priority Learning Units, Other areas of learning. The JCPA will draw upon and report on achievement across all elements of assessment including ongoing, formative assessment; Classroom-Based Assessments: and SEC grades which include results from the state –certified examinations and the Assessment Tasks.

The JCPA will be compiled by the school and received by the students in the autumn following third year, when all assessment results from the SEC and the school are available and confirmed.

### **Standardised Assessment**

**Standardised Cognitive Assessment:** This is currently carried out as part of the entrance assessment. We are hoping to administer the CAT-4 assessment for all first years from September 2021.

**Standardised Numeracy Assessment** in First year and Third year. These may be administered on other occasions to inform student planning. Diagnostic assessments are administered when necessary.

Standardised Literacy Assessments (Including Reading age, Performance in relation to peers, Spelling, Reading Comprehension and Reading Accuracy). These standardised tests are administered at various points throughout a student's time at school. Currently we are using standardised Literacy assessments

- As part of the entrance assessment
- At the beginning of First year
- At the beginning of Third year
- At the beginning of Fifth year
- On other occasions where necessary (To inform RACE, Learning Support, etc)

#### **Entrance Assessment:**

Entrance examinations in St John's College usually occur in January/February of the previous school year. The Entrance Exam is not used for enrollment purposes but to provide accurate data on a student's educational profile. Incoming first years will undertake assessments in English, Mathematics, Reading and IQ (CAT 4 ) which will be used as a basis to form mixed ability first year classes. This assessment will offer an early indicator to the school of a student's academic potential. Assessment procedures for in-coming 1<sup>st</sup> years are as follows;

- Visiting primary schools and collecting psychological reports with parental consent
- The identification of students with special needs
- Collaboration with parents
- Visiting primary schools and collecting psychological reports with parental consent
- The screening of all students enrolling in the school
- The planning of educational provision for all first year students
- Liaising with outside agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS and NCSE if necessary

Assessment procedures for in-coming students may go through five stages;

#### *Stage One –*

The initial screening procedure is by means of an entrance/assessment test held in February prior to admission. In addition to general tests in Irish, English and Maths, students also

complete a group reading test (NGRT) and a non-verbal reasoning test (NRIT). Results are collated and students in need of learning support in literacy are identified.

### *Stage Two-*

Further in depth assessment is carried out by the SET Team in September. Standardized spelling and mathematical tests and in some cases, an individual reading test, are administered. Tests used may include;

-NGRT

-MALT

-WRAT Spelling

-Diagnostic Reading Test.

### *-Stage Three*

The results of the school-based examinations are monitored to identify students who are underachieving and those at risk of failure in state examinations

### *-Stage Four*

Collaboration between subject teachers, tutors and Year Heads with the learning support teacher takes place and is a valuable resource in identifying students who are in need of educational support

### *Stage Five-*

The SET Team may engage the support of NEPS to gain advice, guidance and support with a view to supporting individual students.

### *Diagnostic Testing*

The following diagnostic procedures are available in St John's College;

Diagnostic Testing Procedures

NGRT II NFER Nelson

WRAT IV Spelling, Maths, Reading Accuracy and Comprehension

MALT Diagnostic Test

DRA

Edinburgh Reading Test

Bangor Dyslexia Test

Dyslexia Screening Test

Phonological Assessment Battery

NRIT

Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency 6-18

DASH Speed of Writing test

### *Standardised Testing*

The following standardised tests are available in St John's College

1. NGRT Group Reading Tests
2. WRAT Wide Range Achievement IV Professional Manual
3. Edinburgh Reading Test 11.7-16+ Group
4. Diagnostic Reading Analysis 7-16+ Individual test
5. MALT Profile of Mathematical Skills Level 1 & 2) Teacher's Guide
6. Cloze Reading 1-4
7. Cloze Reading Test 1
8. NARA Neale Analysis of Reading Ability – Revised Manual for Schools
9. Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency 6-18
10. PAB Phonological Assessment Battery Manual and Test Materials
11. Non Reading Intelligence Tests Level 1 – 3
12. Aston Index a classroom test for screening and diagnosis of language difficulties Age from 5-14

13. Aston Portfolio Classroom Techniques and activities for creating individual teaching and remedial programmes in reading, writing

### **Learning Support Assessments:**

All first years will be screened by the Resource/Learning Support Department to investigate the possible provision of additional help where necessary. Screening will be conducted by SET Team and will include visits to the students' primary schools. Relevant reports will be sought from the primary school and interventions put in place for those who qualify for additional support.

If, during the school year, a student is suspected of having a learning need/difficulty that was not identified by the primary school, the SET co-ordinator may apply to the National Education Psychological Service. The school's NEPS psychologist, in consultation with school management, may carry out psychological assessments and other assessments on students at different times throughout the year.

Classroom strategies such as differentiated assessment, team teaching, in-class support, SNA Support, increased time and dictionaries amongst others, may be used from time to time, as determined by the SET Team in consultation with individual subject teachers/departments. Learning Support provided to students should be detailed in the Student's IEP.

#### *4. Reporting Procedures post -Assessments*

There are many different methods whereby the results of Formative and Summative assessments will be reported to students and parents.

#### Formative Assessment Reports

- Student Journal – the teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parents/guardian of a student by writing the result or a note in the student journal. The parent/guardian is expected to acknowledge receipt of this note by countersigning it.
- Direct Contact - the teacher may decide as they see fit to contact the parent/guardian directly with respect to the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student

- Signature of Parent on Assessment – the teacher may send the corrected assessment itself home with the student to be viewed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- Parent Teacher Meetings – there are Parent Teacher Meetings for all year groups throughout the academic year. At these meetings it will be possible for teachers to relay the outcomes of varying assessments to parents/guardians of individual students that generate an accurate picture of the student’s progress.

### Summative Assessment Reports

Formal written reports are posted to the parents/guardians of students on two occasions during the academic year. A mark and grade are awarded along with a brief comment will form the report for each subject..

Teachers are required to fill in a comment on all these formal written reports. . It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure the accuracy of these marks/grades and comments.

A zero grade should not be entered for students who are absent, instead a comment explaining that the student was absent for the test should be written in the comment box.

If a student has been given a differentiated test, a comment explaining this should also be entered.

All reports are signed off by the Year Head and a general comment may be made on progress to date. The Year Head may also comment on issues relating to attendance and behaviour.

Reports of the results of Christmas Examinations will be sent to parents no later than January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Reports of the results of Summer Examinations will be sent to parents no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers are responsible for:

- Monitoring and formatively assessing student learning on an ongoing basis
- Setting and marking assessments
- Preparation of student reports

- Providing clear feedback to students in relation to how they can improve their performance
- Providing clear feedback for parents/guardians in relation to their son's progress: progress reports, VSW records, House Exam reports, parent teacher meetings and one to one meetings with parents.
- Liaising with other teachers in their subject department/programme to coordinate assessments where appropriate

Subject Coordinators are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the review of departmental procedures used for assessment throughout the year

The Principal is responsible for:

- Overseeing the completion of school reports
- Organising training and support for staff in areas related to assessment when required

The Deputy Principal is responsible for:

- Organising the logistics of house examinations

The Examination Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Organising the logistics of State Examinations and liaising with the State Examinations Commission when required

The LCA Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing the completion of Key Assignments and Tasks
- Liaising with the State Exam Commission for the purposes of Task Interviews, Orals, and practical performance tests
- Inputting credits for students of LCA twice yearly

The Guidance Counsellor is responsible for:

- Administering and collating the results of Career Guidance Assessments

The SEN Co-ordinator and SET Team are responsible for:

- Organising the assessment needs of in-coming 1<sup>st</sup> years
- Identifying students with particular needs
- Testing SEN students and liaising with external agencies
- Liaising with relevant staff about the needs of particular students
- Developing student support files
- Overseeing the development for IEP#s for individual students
- Assisting and guiding learning support/resource teachers with to devise a suitable programme of support for individual students

Parents have a responsibility to:

- To encourage attendance
- To familiarise themselves with key dates for assessment
- To engage in active and positive communication with teachers when necessary and appropriate
- To support teachers in their work to help students reach their full potential
- To be actively involved in their son's education
- To ensure their son completes homework and to sign the student journal each night
- Attend parent- teacher meetings to receive reports on their sons learning
- To monitor their son's progress

Students has a responsibility to:

- Have a good record of attendance
- Be aware of key dates for assessment
- Complete all work assigned by teachers, including homework, in the time designated
- Put in an effort required for their studies. Learn and revise work on an ongoing basis and follow the advice and guidance of class teachers on how best to reach their full potential

- Ask for help if needed
- Behave in a way that is conducive to learning taking place in class

## 6. GDPR Considerations

St John's College assessment procedures and storing of assessment data is stored in line with the schools obligations under the following regulations

- The Freedom of Information Act 1997
- The Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2013
- The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
- GDPR, 2018

Signed: Ann Marie Leonard

Date: November 10th, 2020

On behalf of the Board of Management, St John's College

Review Date: November 2021