

Grange PPS Assessment Policy



Introduction

This Assessment Policy was developed in partnership with all members of the Grange Post Primary School school community. It recognises the school's requirement to evaluate students regularly and periodically reports the evaluation results to the students and their parents, as set down by the Education Act 1998. This Assessment Policy will be reviewed periodically, as directed by the Board of Management.

Ethos Statement

Grange PPS under MSLETB is a state, co-educational, multidenominational school underpinned by core values of Excellence, Care, Equality, Community and respect. The Board of Management of Grange PPS is publishing this document as the official policy for assessment in Grange PPS. MSLETB as patron of the school, has approved this publication.

Link to Mission Statement

Grange Post Primary School is a partnership of Staff, Students and Parents, enabling each student to achieve their full potential. We aim to inspire a Love of Learning in all our students, irrespective of ability and through personable and enthusiastic encouragement to lead all on to develop as Caring, Respectful Individuals in a challenging world.

This policy is designed to reflect our mission statement by promoting personable and enthusiastic encouragement via approaches to homework; that will support learning and help students to positively engage with school work towards reaching their academic potential.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The primary aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To facilitate improved teaching and pupil learning.
- To create a consistent and standardised assessment procedure for monitoring and reporting achievement in the school
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures within departments on a whole school basis
- To develop a whole school approach to assessing students' work and recording and reporting of same.

Assessment for Learning & Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning or summative assessment is used to evaluate student learning e.g. to determine a student's level of performance on a specific task or after a unit of teaching and learning. Teachers will use the information gained from this kind of assessment when reporting.

Assessment for learning or formative assessment is a continuous process as part of teaching and learning with a particular focus on the student having an active role and leading towards improvement.

Both assessment forms have merit and value and will be used as appropriate by teachers in this school to enhance the learning process.

The Purposes of Assessment

- To evaluate what a student has learned in a particular area
- To provide feedback to students in a timely and constructive manner
- To provide feedback to teachers on the success of specific teaching methodologies in the learning process
- To highlight difficulties and shortcomings in the learning process to develop intervention strategies
- To identify students who may require additional learning support, curriculum modification etc
- To enable the SEN Coordinator and Examinations Secretary to identify students requiring RACE and apply accordingly
- To identify students who require differentiated class materials including extension activities
- To encourage and increase the skills of self-assessment
- To keep records of attainment that will inform parents through the school's reporting process
- To support monitoring the progress of students over time
- To raise expectations and standards
- To encourage students to take responsibility for their learning for them to become a driving force in their own education
- To help students to identify an appropriate level of study in subject areas e.g. Higher, Ordinary or foundation level
- To facilitate target setting for individual students in the respective subject areas.

Forms of Assessment

1. Formative Feedback

Formative feedback is an integral part of teaching and learning. It contributes to learning by providing a roadmap for improvement i.e. what is good about a piece of work and why it is good; where is improvement needed and how can it be improved. Effective formative feedback will support learning by:

- Helping students to understand the criteria of evaluation before an assignment is begun
- Helping them to identify what they have done well and what they could improve on
- Helping them to specifically identify how to improve their work
- Using examples of work to identify the criteria and level expected
- Inform effective planning for teachers
- Actively involves students in the learning process
- Fosters positive respectful relationship between teachers and students
- Recognises all educational achievement and progress at every level

Assessment for Learning involves a range of strategies designed to give students, teachers and parents information about students' understanding and progress in a subject. Grange Post Primary School has adopted the Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach to help learners improve their learning and to inform, shape or guide the next steps in learning. It is about 'learning to learn'. Teachers are encouraged to use their professional expertise and discretion to identify Assessment for learning practices that suit the particular demands of their subject.

Assessment for learning practices are used informally and regularly in classrooms by individual teachers to support student learning in their subject. Timely formative feedback and constructive advice are vital components of this process.

Teachers will keep records of assessments where appropriate to provide insight into a student's progress over time and fully inform the learning process.

AFL strategies and other informal assessments methods may also include –

- Kahoot quiz
- Observations –in class/in support groups/practical settings/during break times
- Student whiteboard/ traffic light system
- Worksheets & written classwork
- Questioning in class
- Project work
- Practical work
- Essays/ assignments
- Reading & writing in class
- Sample exam questions
- Homework – written or learned

Summative Assessment

A summative assessment is a formal assessment of the student's learning. The primary purpose of summative evaluation is to grade and certify students' achievement. The expectation at Grange PPS is that students sit all relevant summative assessments. The onus is on the parent/guardian to notify the school's exam co-ordinator of any planned absences (e.g. medical appointments).

Methods of Summative Assessment used in Grange Post Primary School include:

- **Class Tests**– Individual subjects may decide to administer a test upon completing units of work or chapters. These tests may take the form of a written test, assessment of work completed over a module/ unit of learning or a practical element. As these are summative tests the results will be recorded (e.g. in the student's journals, in the teachers' diary or on the school's management system etc). Subject teachers may request the Principal to 'open' this facility for their subject.
- **House Exams (Non-exam classes)** – 1st, 2nd, TY and 5th Years sit formal exams twice per year i.e. Christmas Exams in December and Summer Exams at the end of May. The Examinations secretary will draft the Exam timetable in consultation with the Principal. Formal exams in non-exam years will mimic State Examinations conditions as much as possible to help prepare students for these. The same rules that apply to the state examinations will apply to the mock examinations e.g smart phones and watches are not allowed.
- **House Exams/ Mock Exams (Exam classes)**- In-Class tests will take place for all 3rd and 6th years in each subject up to November. Mock examinations will be held at the end of January/ start of February each year. This is a trial run ahead of the State Examinations designed to highlight where student is at, expose them to

the format of exam papers, expose them to State Exam conditions; as well as help them to identify the level they should take in subjects for State Exams i.e. Higher/ Ordinary/ Foundation. Mock exams also highlight where RACE accommodations may be required that have not been come to light previously. Mock exams will match State exams as closely as resources allow. The same rules that apply to the state examinations will apply to the mock examinations e.g smart phones and watches are not allowed.

- **State Exams** – The school will liaise with the State Exams Commission (SEC) to ensure that all 3rd and 6th Year students have equal access to participate in the many assessments that make up the Junior Cert, Leaving Cert exams; including written exams, oral exams, coursework, practical work and portfolio work. All regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission will be adhered to at all times. RACE applications will be processed in line with the guidelines set by the State Examinations Commission. This may include administration of approved standardised tests.
- **Diagnostic Screening Tests**– students new to Grange PPS will be administered screening tests by the SEN Team/ Career Guidance Counsellor in September. These tests include approved Literacy, Numeracy and Cognitive Ability tests to identify baseline data for students, to identify potential Learning difficulties, to identify dominant learning styles and to help teachers identify learning targets/ expectations/ appropriate differentiation levels for individual students in their subject area. Examples of tests currently used include CAT IV, NGRT, WRATS and DASH. Further information can be accessed on our Diagnostic Testing Policy at www.granepps.ie.
- **Other Summative Assessments**

All TY/5th Years will undertake a CATS assessment to assist in their investigation of possible college and career choices when they proceed to Senior Cycle. This data may also be used by the SEN team to contribute to Individual Educational Planning (IEP) and/ or may form part of RACE applications.

NEPS psychologist will conduct psychological tests on one student per year. The student is identified on a priority basis annually in consultation with management, SEN team, NEPS psychologist, outside agencies and parents as appropriate. Information from the report will be used to support their learning plan.

Private assessments- Whereby a student cannot access an assessment via the school, a recommendation will be given by the school to the parent to consider accessing a private assessment. Where the school identifies that further assessments i.e. ASD/ ADD/ ADHD/ OT/ Speech and Language/ Vision/ Hearing etc. may be required, we will advise the parent accordingly i.e. the school have no means to organise these. Where private assessments have taken place, parents are asked ensure they submit a copy of the reports to the school to support students plans and help us to ensure we are meeting the students' needs, within our available resources.

Junior Cycle Assessment:

- **Classroom-Based Assessments (CBA)**- are part of the new Junior Cycle for all subjects and short courses. They are designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and skills and their ability to apply them. Students will undertake two CBAs in each subject and one CBA in each short courses. All CBAs are common level. The assessments associated with CBAs can include oral tasks, written work, practical work, designing and making tasks, artistic performances, scientific experiments, problem-solving, project work etc.

Individual subject teachers evaluate the CBAs and engage in a process of moderation with other subject members i.e. Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings (SLAR) to finalise marks and ensure consistency.

Where practical work is demonstrated/ produced i.e. Home Economics, Music, Art, Engineering and Woodwork- the State Examinations Commission mark this assessment.

Students carry out CBAs within class time in line with a timetable designed at school level, which meets Department guidelines for all subjects while spreading CBAs over the years to minimise stress on students.

CBA results will be reported to parents via Tyro and also synched to the Departments portal under the following four descriptors:

- Exceptional
- Above Expectations
- In-Line with Expectations
- Yet to Meet Expectations

All materials associated with CBAs will be stored in line with GDPR regulations.

- **Assessment Task:**

Students complete a formal written Assessment Task to be submitted to the State Examinations Commission for marking. Each department plan will indicate the details of the assessment task specific to their subject. The staff member assigned management resource hours will notify the teaching staff of dates relating to the assessment tasks, and a calendar will be devised and shared.

Key considerations for Subject Departments:

The type of assessment and the frequency of assessment used will vary depending on the specific subject involved and the purpose assessment plays in each area of their subject- subject Department should as part of the planning process- Design an assessment plan; in line with the underlying principles identified in this policy; that best suits the needs of their particular subject area. This should be reflected on as part of an annual review and altered accordingly.

Assessment forms should be differentiated appropriately to meet the needs of individual students in classes. This could include differentiated tests, visual aids, hearing aids, spelling waivers, increased time, use of dictionary etc as appropriate, in collaboration with the SENCO. This is particularly important where RACE accommodations have been granted as these should be in place for all school assessments where possible.

Where feasible, common assessments across a year group should be used within subject areas. This will increase cooperation and create a standard benchmark across each subject area. Subject Departments should address this as part of the annual planning process and decide how best to proceed.

Student Behaviour around assessment:

Students are expected to treat all assessments with respect and abide by the rules. Any student who fails to respect/ disrupts assessment rules in the school will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. Students who fail to engage with assessments may be referred to SEN/ Student Support/Year Head as appropriate.

Assessment and Reporting

Reporting of assessment enables parents:

- To be actively involved in their child's learning
- To understand and encourage the progress their child is making
- Identify additional out of school supports that may be required for their child
- To monitor their child's progress throughout their time at Grange Post Primary School
- To support their child in making decisions about their progression on after second level

The following reporting mechanisms are used in Grange PPS:

Tyro: This is the main hub for reporting to parents in Grange PPS. All parents are all provided access to their child's account on the school's management system Tyro on entry in first year. Tyro allows parents live access to terms reports, class assessments, attendance and behaviour data. Parents should monitor this a minimum of weekly for updates. Note, once your child is over 18yrs they must give permission for this to continue under GDPR regulations.

Formal written reports are uploaded to Tyro twice during the academic year i.e. 1st/ 2nd/ TY, 5th year students will receive their Christmas Report in December/ January and a Summer Report in June. Parents/guardians of the 3rd and 6th will receive a Report in November/ December. They will receive a report in April with the results of their Pre-Junior and Pre-Leaving Cert Exams i.e. Mocks.

Student Journal – students can record all continuous assessment results in their journals for all subjects. Class teachers may communicate the outcome of class tests to the parents/guardian of a student via a note in the student's journal. Parents should check student diaries weekly for notes.

Direct Contact -a teacher may decide to contact the parent/guardian directly concerning the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student. This is only in circumstances whereby the teachers has concerns with regard to the students' performance and a conversation with the parents is required.

Signature of Parent on Assessment – the teacher may send the corrected assessment home with the student to be viewed and signed by the parent/guardian.

Parent-Teacher Meetings – Parent Teacher Meetings for all Year Groups will be held 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, as part of discussion on student's progress.

The Board of Management has ratified this policy at its meeting on the 9th March 2026

Next review date: 2027-2028