Scoil San Treasa
Board of Management

The Rise, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin A94EK75

Assessment Policy

Section A: Overview

Introduction

At Scoil San Treasa, our mission is the provision of primary education of the highest quality for all our pupils in a happy, safe, Christian environment. Acknowledging that their parents are the primary educators of our children, we are inspired by a shared vision of excellence and we espouse a partnership approach in its pursuit. Our assessment policy reflects and supports our mission statement and our assessment practices help us to gather information about pupils, assist us in sharing information with the relevant stakeholders, most importantly pupils.

Rationale

Meaningful assessment is collaborative and integral to high-quality learning and teaching. Involving children, teachers, parents, and others, it provides information which enhances teaching and informs and supports progression in children's learning across the curriculum.

'Assessment is a collaborative process involving children and teachers and, at times, parents and other stakeholders, as they gather, record, interpret, use, and report information about a child's progress and achievement in developing knowledge, concepts, competencies, skills, and dispositions' Primary Curriculum Framework 2023

Policy Aims

Assessment in our school is about

- Promoting an agreed whole school approach to assessment for learning and assessment of learning
- Using a range of assessment tools
- Generating baseline data to monitor pupil learning progression
- Identifying and supporting identified learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils in order to provide prevention and intervention strategies
- Recording and sharing information with relevant stakeholders
- Facilitating pupil agency in their learning through the promotion of self-assessment
- Supporting teachers to reflect the effectiveness of their teaching approaches and to adjust them accordingly for improved learning outcomes and inform planning
- To identify pupils with exceptional ability who may benefit from extension activities
- To keep pupil records that will inform the reporting process
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis

Principles guiding assessment in our school

Assessment is focused on the daily interactions between the teacher and child, which includes moment-by-moment conversations, observations and actions. When engaged in formal and informal assessment teachers in our school...

- Take account of the developmental variability displayed by individual children, while being aware of the accepted milestones in children's development
- Take account of the contextual basis of a young child's learning, and the degree to which school experience differs from home and pre-school experience
- Allow time in each classroom day for observation of children and for listening to children in addition to the normal use of observation in the learning process, in order to construct as full a picture as possible of each child's progress and development
- Make judgements over a period of time, and avoid snapshot judgements
- Use assessments which are appropriate to the child's age and stage of development
- Fulfil the minimum requirement of administering standardised tests in literacy and numeracy, at the second class, fourth and sixth classes
- Ensure vigilance in identifying learning difficulties in particular children, noting whether these relate to individual learning styles, and use assessment information in providing appropriate intervention/support

- Maintain close and consistent contact with parents, in order to share information about children and to explore the interpretation of children's attitudes, actions and learning styles.
- To facilitate the active involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own learning and of their peers. Providing children with regular time to talk about their learning and to identify and reflect on their next steps thus contributing to their self-identity as learners, while peer assessment and other collaborative learning enable children to support and extend each other's learning.

Dimensions of the pupils' learning and development assessed
In addition to assessing progression and achievement across all curricular areas, teachers take account of the assessment of the following dimensions:
- Cognitive dimension - development of the child's literacy and numeracy skills, and mastery of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills
- Creative dimension - the child's capacity for creative expression and response, the ability to develop insights, and interpretations in responding to their environment
- Affective dimension - the child's sense capacity for expressing ideas and emotions in artistic form. It will also take account of the moral and spiritual development of the child
- Physical dimension - the child's development of fine and gross motor skills and the gradual development of bodily control and coordination
- Social dimension - the child's interpersonal and intrapersonal development, including the behaviour, attitudes and social values developed throughout engagement with the Primary School Curriculum.

Section B: Policy Content
Two interrelated and complementary assessment approaches are used by all teachers to support pupil learning and progression.

1. **Assessment for Learning (AfL) - Formative assessment**. The teacher uses evidence on an ongoing basis to inform teaching and learning. Depending on the pupil stage of readiness, teachers may use one or more of the following strategies to promote AfL with their class.
   - Provide the 'Learning Outcomes' and 'Success Criteria' at the start of a lesson. This may take the form of *'We are learning to'* (WALT); *'What I'm looking for'* (WILF). Provide effective verbal and written feedback which is clear and focused and is linked to the WALT and WILF.
   - Use effective questioning during the lesson. *Refer to *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for Schools. NCCA 2007 p.86-88 – Bloom's Taxonomy of questioning*
   - Promote self-assessment where pupils see themselves as owners of their own learning.
   - Pupil metacognition – *'what am I learning; how am I doing, how can I improve, what's the next step'*
   - Pupil portfolios - Depending on the child's age, teachers facilitate pupils to assemble portfolios of checklists, assignments, work samples and projects.
   - Peer Assessment – pupils are instructional resources for each other.

2. **Assessment of Learning (AoL) - Summative assessment.** AoL is summative and, as such, is mostly done at the end of a lesson, project, task, unit of work etc. It is designed to provide evidence of learning progression to parents, other teachers, the pupils themselves and sometimes to external bodies (e.g. DE Inspectorate; post-primary schools).

Assessment Continuum
In tandem with the above Assessment Approaches, the Primary curriculum advocates that assessment is a continuum ranging from *'intuitive'* to *'planned interactions'* to *'assessment events'*. The three types of assessment are complementary and are necessary to gain a comprehensive picture of a child's progress and achievement. Across the continuum, the child is viewed as an active agent who makes choices, and whose

actions shape assessment practices in both anticipated and unexpected ways. Having a clear understanding of child development is a significant factor in teachers' professional capacity to support children's progression in learning. All children develop in their own unique way, and yet, certain patterns can be identified as children develop. Such knowledge and awareness contribute to the effectiveness of teachers' assessment of and reporting on that progress.
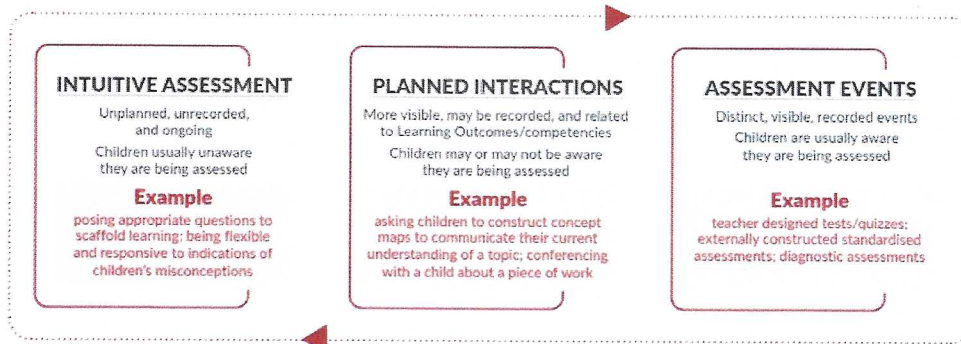
- **Intuitive assessment** occurs naturally and on an ongoing basis during learning experiences. It is integrated into pedagogy, can be invisible, yet still intentional to the teacher, and is a very real part of the process.
- **Planned interactions** are a little more explicit and include practices such as having conversations with children, questioning, asking children to construct concept maps, and following up on intuitive assessments or assessment events.
- **Assessment events** differ from other types of assessment in that (1) they are distinct events, (2) they almost always involve producing a record of the outcomes of the assessment, and (3) children are aware they are being assessed. Used correctly, these assessments can inform and enhance learning and teaching. Standardised testing falls into this category and, while important, it is not more important than other types of assessment. Teachers can use different ways to document assessment information, such as notes, photographs, videos, and learning stories.

Providing an openness for such contingency moments, and capitalising where appropriate on insights gleaned from children's responses, questions, problems and tasks, can allow for very rich assessment data.

Assessment tools used to support 'intuitive assessment', 'planned interactions' and 'assessment events' are outlined in the NCCA Guidelines on 'Assessment in the Primary Classroom' pg12-13 (www.ncca.ie). See diagram below.
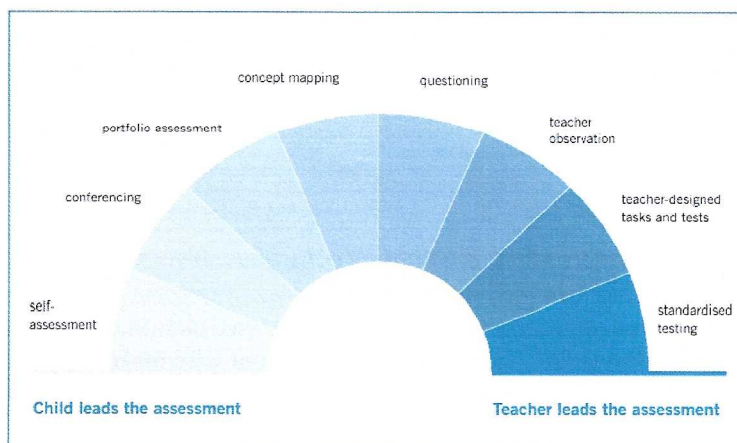
Peer and self-assessment methods

Teachers also use strategies to support children to engage in peer and self-assessment and rely to a lesser degree on extrinsic affirmation and motivation. An open, respectful and collaborative classroom culture and learning environment is essential to support children to think about their own learning and that of others.
Children can work in pairs or small groups in order to facilitate group reflection and feedback sharing.
Peer and self-assessment can also be promoted by:

- allowing time and space for children to reflect on and discuss their learning
- making explicit to children what they are going to learn, how they might build on prior knowledge
- suggesting criteria for children to use in monitoring their progress
- promoting and celebrating respectful and open collaboration, reflection and sharing.

Assessment and the early identification of pupils with special educational needs

To assist in identifying children with specific difficulties and/or Special Needs a range of tests is available for administration by the Special Education Teacher (SET). Parental permission is sought for direct intervention and testing by SET, over and above routine class engagement. This bank of tests is updated and augmented as needs and resources allow. Teacher observation, standardised tests and routine class work and assessment will also be utilised in this regard.

Please refer to the school's Special Education Policy for details about the comprehensive set of assessment tools and procedures employed by the school to support the early identification and intervention for pupils with special educational needs. These procedures support the school's implementation of the Continuum of Support model. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator in liaison with the principal, will identify if a psychological assessment or other assessment e.g. Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist is required. The SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from external agencies. Information about the screening and diagnostic tests in use is available as an appendix to this policy. *(The Special Education Team in Scoil San Treasa maintains a bank of appropriate assessments and checklists, and seeks to augment and update those as resources allow and as needs and opportunities emerge.)*

Standardised Testing

Standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy are administered to all pupils from 1st to 6th class annually in May. The raw score, standard score, percentile rank, and STen scores are recorded. The Special Education Teacher (SET) and the class teacher are involved in the analysis of results for individual classes and the SET team and principal are involved in the analysis of results at the whole school level. As part of on-going review, aggregate data is shared with staff and the Board of Management.
The standardised test scores are also used to identify pupils who may require further diagnostic testing. Furthermore, they have bearing on the allocation of SET hours as part of the continuum of support.
Pupils who score below the 15th percentile are prioritised for SET support.
Results of the standardised tests are communicated to parents in the end of- year report card. The Standard Score is used to communicate the results. An explanatory NCCA produced note is enclosed with the end of year report. Pupils are exempted if they meeting the criteria set out by the DE.

Educational Psychological Assessment and other Agencies

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) is available to the school. In practice, however, the NEPS psychologist is assigned to a large number of schools and as such, time allocated to an individual school is quite limited. Accordingly, referral or consultation is not immediate. While mindful of the importance of the staged approach to such assessment, cognisance is also taken of critical needs that may emerge at any time. Parents are consulted with reference to any such assessments and permission is sought. Referrals for Speech and Language assessment through the HSE can also be made through the school. Again, this is a very limited service and the waiting period tends to be long.
A staged / layered approach is used by the individual class teachers before recourse to diagnostic testing / psychological assessment. If a psychological assessment is warranted, and if circumstances permit it, parental permission will be sought and a consent form will be completed.

Section C Assessment Data

Recording Assessment Information

The results of assessments are recorded in different forms, including marks, grades, checklists, profiles, and narrative comment. The results of standardised tests are included as a STEN score/Standard Score.

While every curriculum subject in our school is assessed, some subjects such as Literacy or Numeracy lend themselves to be assessed in a more formalised manner than other areas of learning. Teachers include assessment sections within their own short and long term planning and overall record keeping. Teachers will also have one or more of the following in their classrooms to track assessment in the various areas of learning:

- a specific assessment folder
- a section within their own plans for recording of assessment
- portfolio of work from children and/or work samples
- records re observations
- electronic medium for recording assessment
- reference in Cúntas Míosúil to assessment approaches. Such records will vary from class to class as needs determine.

Reporting/Sharing Assessment Information

The sharing of assessment information with children themselves, parents, other teachers, other schools, and other professionals concerned with the children's education is done. The school uses a variety of methods to support this reporting.

- Parents - at the annual parent-teacher meeting held in Term 1 to discuss the child's progress and development; in the annual NCCA pupil report cards shared close to the end of the school year. A 6th class version is also used as part of the Education Passport.
- Next relevant teacher to whom the child/ren will transfer by ensuring that a formal record of each class teacher's assessment of individual children is available to the next teacher to whom the children. This usually takes the format of the Pupil Profile which includes the end-of-year report card. A formal meeting time is also provided as part of the Croke Park hours for the teachers to share pupil information.
- Next school to which the pupil will transfer by sharing the Education Passport with the post-primary school or the most recent end-of-year report card with a primary school.
- In line with the Department of Education's (DE) Literacy and Numeracy Plan, the school must send data on DPRT and DPMT to the Department of Education, although no child is identified individually in these data reports.
- DPRT, DPMT and DPST results are reported to parents in line with DE guidelines. End-of year reports and parent-teacher meetings are useful means of sharing information relating to pupils' progress. Homework notebooks and homework exercises, as appropriate, are also useful in this regard.
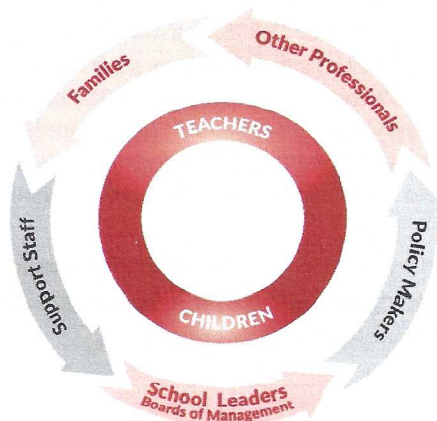
Managing Assessment Data

As a data controller, the school recognises its key responsibilities as per the eight principles of Data Protection as set out in the Data Protection Acts 1998 to 2018 and GDPR. Please refer to the School's Data Protection Policy. At whole-school level, records of the following assessments are kept:

- End-of-year reports
- Standardised Test Results
- Professional reports relating to assessments
- Records related to Special Educational Needs
- Student Support Files

Other examples of records that teachers may keep include:

- End-of-term maths and literacy assessment
- Teacher observation notes made throughout the year
- The results of assessments are recorded in different forms, including marks, grades, checklists, profiles, and narrative comment.

At the end of each school year, a teacher will pass on relevant assessment information to the next relevant teacher/s. This is usually by means of a formal meeting in which oral and/or written records may be shared. Observations may include educational needs of class and individual children. All other non relevant assessment data is destroyed at the end of the school year.

Section D Roles and Review
Roles and Responsibilities
The Principal, Deputy Principal, class teachers and special education teachers will have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Success Criteria of the Policy
This policy will be successful when:

- All of the staff are familiar with and implement the procedures outlined
- All of the staff understand and recognise their responsibilities and carry out the assessment of pupils'
- work continually
- The transfer of assessment data between teachers is systematic and efficient at the end of the school year
- Each pupil has been presented with the opportunity of assessment from the range of assessment strategies

Implementation, Review and Communication
This policy was initially drafted and ratified by the Board of Management in March 2015. It was reviewed by staff
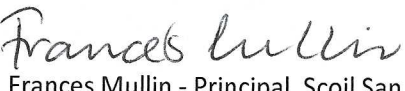and approved by the Board of Management on 18th April 2025.

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy and amend as required..

This policy will next be reviewed in the school year 2026/2027.

18/3/25

Eoin O'Neill - Chairperson, Board of Management

Frances Mullin 18/3/25.

Frances Mullin - Principal, Scoil San Treasa

Section E Appendices
Appendix 1 Schedule of Formal Assessments (Screening and Diagnostic)

Screening			Diagnostic
Class	Assessment	Time of Year	Assessment
Junior Infants	Teacher observation is a central part of assessment in all classes. This is particularly the case in Junior Infants. This is enriched further via information gleaned from relevant reports that may be available (such as Speech and Language assessment; Assessment of Need; Mo Scéal and Occupational Therapists reports), information provided by parents, and interactions with the child.		
	Teacher-designed checklists (e.g.: May Screening) and work-sampling will inform planning around how the child's learning and skill development can be enhanced, and can form part of a process for further support. Screening at Junior Infant level includes teacher observation and work samples related to literacy and general learning. ALPACA - Assessing Letter & Phonemic Awareness	Ongoing	In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to administer specific tests to individual children such as the Belfield Infant Assessment Profile.
Senior Infants	The Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) is administered by class teachers PM Benchmark Kit ALPACA - Assessing Letter & Phonemic Awareness	End of the fifth term of schooling i.e. the end of the second term of senior infants.	Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy Screening (DTEN) Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy Screening (DTEL)
First Class	QUEST Screening (Number and Reading) Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT) Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST)	September May	The QUEST Diagnostic Tests (Number and/or Reading), and other diagnostic tests (as available and as deemed appropriate) may be administered by Special Education or class teacher
Second Class	Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT) Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) *Star Reading Assessment* - a reading comprehension assessment, which is both a screening and progress monitoring tool - is administered to pupils on a half-term basis as part of the *Accelerated Reader Programme.*	Drumcondra Online Testing System (DOTS) – May	WIAT-III UK-T: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test for Teachers (3rd UK Edition)
Third Class	Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT)		

Screening			Diagnostic
Class	**Assessment**	**Time of Year**	**Assessment**
	Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) *Star Reading Assessment* - a reading comprehension assessment, which is both a screening and progress monitoring tool - is administered to pupils on a half-term basis as part of the *Accelerated Reader Programme.*	Drumcondra Online Testing System (DOTS) – May	WIAT-III UK-T: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test for Teachers (3rd UK Edition)
Fourth Class	Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT) Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) *Star Reading Assessment* - a reading comprehension assessment, which is both a screening and progress monitoring tool - is administered to pupils on a half-term basis as part of the *Accelerated Reader Programme.*		
Fifth Class	Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT) Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) *Star Reading Assessment* - a reading comprehension assessment, which is both a screening and progress monitoring tool - is administered to pupils on a half-term basis as part of the *Accelerated Reader Programme.*		
Sixth Class	Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT) Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (DPMT) Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST) *Star Reading Assessment* - a reading comprehension assessment, which is both a screening and progress monitoring tool - is administered to pupils on a half-term basis as part of the *Accelerated Reader Programme.*		

Note: *As new testing materials become available, as new needs emerge and as opportunities to address the teaching and learning needs in our school present themselves, other testing materials/approaches not specifically listed above may be integrated into the school's practice.*

primar
developments

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS   **STANDARD SCORE**

→ Parents → Primary → Assessment

What do my child's standardised test scores mean?

What do standardised tests measure?

Standardised tests in **English reading** and **maths** measure your child's achievement compared to other children in **all schools** at the same class or age level. The standardised test in **Irish reading** measures a child's achievement compared to other children in Irish-speaking schools at the same class or age level.

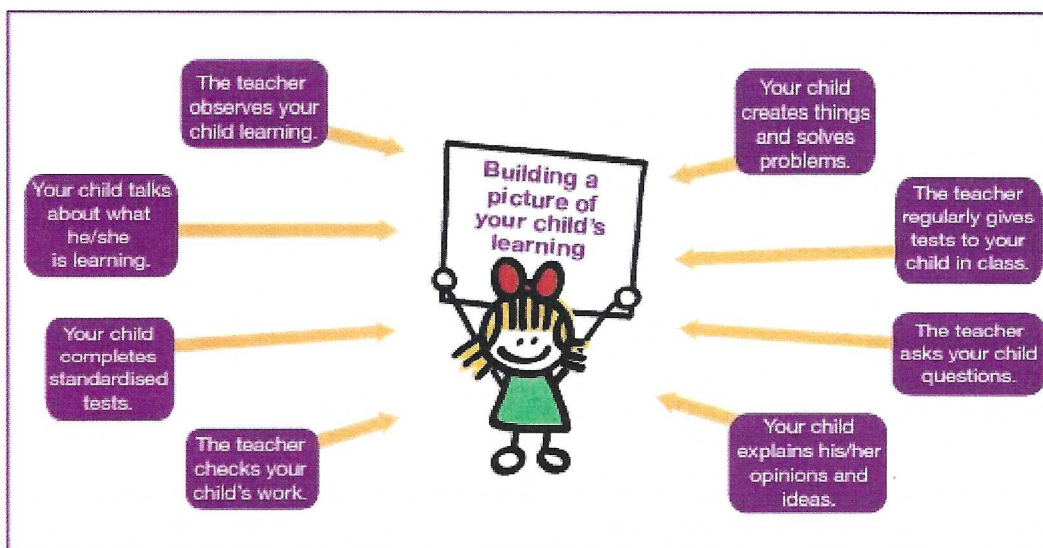## When does my child complete standardised tests?

Your child completes standardised tests towards the end of **2nd, 4th and 6th classes**. Your child only completes a standardised test in **Irish reading** if he/she attends an Irish-speaking school. Some schools choose to use standardised tests with more classes.
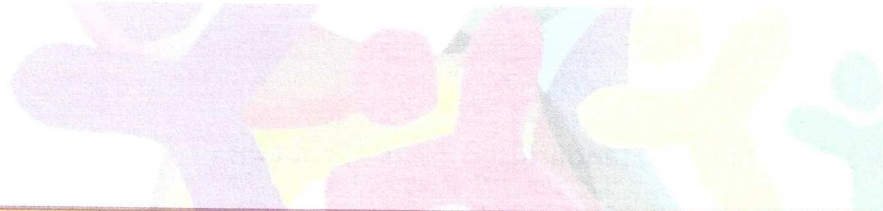
Do all children take standardised tests?

Your child's teacher will decide which children will take the tests. For example, if your child's first language is not English, the teacher may decide that he/she should not take the English reading test. Your child may, however, take the maths test. If your child has a learning or physical disability, the teacher may decide to use a different way to measure your child's progress.

Are standardised tests the only way of gathering information about my child's learning?

No. The diagram below shows how the teacher uses **many** different ways to build a **picture of your child's learning** during the year. The teacher uses the picture to **celebrate** your child's achievements and to plan the **next steps** needed to build on progress made.

The teacher observes your child learning.

Your child talks about what he/she is learning.

Your child completes standardised tests.

The teacher checks your child's work.

Building a picture of your child's learning

Your child creates things and solves problems.

The teacher regularly gives tests to your child in class.

The teacher asks your child questions.

Your child explains his/her opinions and ideas.

What do my child's test scores mean?

The teacher used standard scores to tell you how your child did in the tests. Standard scores usually go from 55 to 145. The table below describes what the different standard scores tell you about your child's achievement in the tests.

Standard score	What does the standard score mean?	Approximate percentage of children who get this score
130 and above	Very high	2%
120 - 129	High	7%
110 - 119	High average	16%
90 - 109	Average	50%
80 - 89	Low average	16%
70 - 79	Low	7%
Below 70	Very low	2%

If your child's standard score is between 90 and 109 for example, you will know that his/her performance on the test is average. The table shows that about half of children in Ireland have standard scores in this range. You can also see that some children have standard scores above and below the average.

Scores for children with English as an additional language may not always reflect progress being made in class. Similar care is needed when interpreting scores for children with special educational needs.

If my child's score is low, what does this tell me?

A low standard score (for example, 80) suggests that your child *may* have difficulties in one of the areas tested. Other assessments may be used to determine if this is the case. Information about your child's learning and development at home e.g. homework, may also be helpful to the teacher. Teachers at your child's school may decide that your child would benefit from extra support. If so, your child's teacher will talk to you about this.

If my child's score is high, what does this tell me?

A high score *may* suggest that your child is a high achiever in the area tested. As with low scores, one high score is not enough to confirm this. Your child's teacher will use information from other classroom assessments to understand more clearly how well your child is doing in maths, English reading or Irish reading. The teacher may talk to you about extra learning opportunities that you and the school can provide for your child.

What can affect my child's test score?

As with other tests your child does in school, the score on a standardised test can be affected by how he/she feels on the test day or by worry or excitement about a home or school event. This means that each test score is an **indication** of your child's achievement. Remember that you play an important role in encouraging and supporting your child regardless of test results. You may like to arrange to meet with your child's teacher if you have any concerns about his/her scores.

How can I help my child?

The NCCA has developed some online resources to help you to support your child's learning in primary school. Many of these are available in various languages and new resources are regularly added to the parents' page at **www. ncca.ie/parents**. Take a look at the resources for your child's class.

DRUMCONDRA STANDARDISED TESTS

FIRST CLASS

Note: This relates to *First Class* only.

As in previous years, classes from first to sixth engage in standardised testing during May. We are using standardised Drumcondra Tests in Reading and Maths from the Educational Research Centre.

The standardised tests that we use at this level are designed to be used as screening tests i.e. the primary purpose of these tests is to identify pupils who may be at risk of difficulties so that further assessment can be carried out and their needs addressed. As such, they focus on the key concepts and skills at this level. They are not intended to capture the full range of mathematical achievement of any child.

The outcome of the child's screening test at the first-class level is presented in one of the following three 'descriptors' - *criterion reached; approaching criterion; criterion not reached*. These descriptors will be included in the end-of-year report at the first-class level. The table below explains what each of these descriptors is intended to mean:

Criterion-referenced Descriptor	General explanation of descriptor
Criterion reached	*Within or above the average range for pupils in First Class in Ireland*
Approaching criterion	*In the low average range. May need monitoring*
Criterion not reached	*Likely to be at risk of difficulties; follow-up diagnostic testing may be useful.*

More generally, it is important to remember that standardised tests such as these form only one part of the 'jigsaw of information' about your child's overall progress. Results should always be framed in a broader context. The school gleans much important information from a variety of valuable sources e.g. routine observation, class/individual tasks, class participation, various assignments/homework, teacher-designed tasks and tests, other tests/reports/feedback. All of this information helps us to plan and work around optimising your child's learning.

In the usual way, your child's teacher will be in touch should a need for further monitoring or support be identified.

(Note: the Drumcondra *Spelling* Test completed by First Class will continue to generate a STen score and this will be shared with parents in the child's end-of-year report card at the end of term. You will find further information about that STen score in the 'Parents' section of our website, www.sstreasa.ie)

Appendix 4 References

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2009). Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. Dublin: NCCA. Available at: https://curriculumonline.ie/Early-Childhood/

- Government of Ireland (2021). Preparation for Teaching and Learning – Guidance for All Primary and Special Schools. Dublin: Government of Ireland. Available at: https://ncca.ie/media/5016/ preparation-for-teaching-and-learning.pdf

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2023). *Primary Curriculum Framework.* Primary Curriculum Framework 2023

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2023). *Primary Mathematics Curriculum.* Primary Maths Curriculum 2023

- Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum – Guidelines for School NCCA 2007

- Government of Ireland. (2024). *Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024–2033: Every Learner from Birth to Young Adulthood.* Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024-/2033

- DE Circular 0056/2011 Numeracy and Literacy Strategy

- DE Circular 0138/2006 Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools