

COLÁISTE ABBÁIN

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# Assessment Policy 2020

## Mission Statement

***Colaiste Abbain endeavours to provide quality education for all students in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. We aim to prepare students for life and responsible citizenship and motivate them towards the achievement of their full potential.***

## Aims & Objectives

The primary aims and objectives of this assessment policy are:

- To facilitate improved pupil learning and teaching.
- 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.

## Why Assess?

Assessment is part of good learning and teaching and takes place for the following reasons:

- To monitor a student's progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in progressing the student's learning and adapt her / his teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
- To provide the students and parents with information regarding progress.
- To establish baseline data in relation to a student's attainments in certain subjects.
- To identify students' for levels in all subjects at Junior and Senior Cycle.
- To assess a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
- To assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- 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 particular teaching methodologies in the learning process.
- 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 measure the progress of students over time.
- To raise expectations and standards.
- To act as an incentive for students in the learning process.

## Assessment for Learning & Assessment of Learning

Assessment **of** learning is assessment for accountability purposes, to determine a student's level of performance on a specific task or at the conclusion of a unit of teaching and learning.

Assessment **for** learning, is a continuous process where advice to the student towards further improvement is given (this may be combined with a grade).

Teachers are expected to apply both forms of assessment throughout the school to all students.

## Types of Assessment

The form that these assessments will take, are dependent on the subject area being assessed and will vary from subject to subject. Certain forms of assessment may often times be specific to a particular subject. All forms of assessment above will strive to meet the additional needs of students in the classroom when they arise. Classroom strategies such as differentiated assessment, visual aids, hearing aids, spelling waivers, increased time and dictionaries amongst others, may be used from time to time, as determined by the individual subject teacher and needs of the learner.

Students are expected to treat all forms of assessment with respect. Any student who willingly fails to participate fully, or who acts in a disrespectful way towards any form of assessment in the school will be dealt with accordingly.

## Informal Assessment

The most common forms of assessment used in the school are of an informal nature, and these take place regularly in the classroom.

These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers who will use them constructively for learning to take place. Where appropriate, teachers will keep records of these assessments to provide an insight into a student's progress over time and to fully inform the learning process. All students in Coláiste Abbáin have progress charts in their student diaries to enable them to plot their progress in subject areas during the academic year (numeracy in assessment).

Informal Assessments methods include –

- Worksheets & written classwork
- Questions and answers in class – verbal and written
- Essays & assignments
- Reading & writing in Class
- Sample exam questions
- Homework – written or learned
- In-class demonstration
- Evaluation of practical work – peer/self-assessment
- Formative feedback after tests.

## Formal Assessment

**Cat4 assessments** for incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year students to help students and their teachers understand how they learn and what their academic potential might be. It assesses how students think in areas that are known to make a difference to learning.

Incoming 1st Years will undertake a CAT4 assessment, which will be used as a basis to form mixed ability 1st Year classes. This assessment will offer an early indicator to the school of a

student's potential. All 1st Years will be screened by the SEN Department to investigate the possible provision of additional help where necessary.

When the results of the tests become available:

- Guidance Counsellors meet with the SEN teachers.
- Students with particular needs are identified.
- Contact is made with parents/guardians of students to discuss the extra resources available for those students.
- An agreed programme is devised by the SEN department depending on timetable and availability of learning support staff.

**CAT4 G assessment** for Transition Year students in Feb /March to help students and parents make informed decisions about subject choices in senior cycle and to help predict ability in different subject areas.

**Maths Competency Test** and **New Group Reading Tests** are administered in the first term in first year.

**Monthly/End of Topic Test** – These forms of assessments will be conducted at the discretion of the teacher on a monthly or end of chapter basis. Constructive feedback will be given by teachers to students who partake in these tests.

#### House Exams

**1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year** students will follow Continuous Assessment throughout the year and will sit Christmas and Summer exams. 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. Where a student sits a CBA the result from this will count as the assessment.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Year** students will undertake Christmas, Pre-Junior mock exams in February each year to prepare them for their state exams in June. Results will be uploaded on VSWARE and sent out to parents in preparation for the Parent-Teacher meetings for exam students.

**5<sup>th</sup> year** students will undertake progress reviews in September, October, Christmas (November), Mid – term (February), Easter and Summer.

**6<sup>th</sup> year** students will undertake monthly assessments in September, October, Christmas (November), Pre Leaving Cert mock in February to prepare them for the state exam in June.

All house exams will follow the same operating rules as state exams. The results of these Exams will be communicated to parents via School Reports.

#### State Exams

All 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students participate - as directed by the State Examinations Commission - in the many assessments that make up the Junior Certificate/Cycle and

Leaving Certificate exams. These assessments, which may include oral, course work, practical work, portfolio work amongst others, will be operated in accordance with the regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission. These include any upcoming assessments as set down by the department as part of the new Junior Cycle.

The new Junior Cycle assessment process consists of assessment in the form of two Classroom Based Assessments (CBA) and a further Assessment Task followed by a final examination in June.

The CBAs will be reported via the student's ability to *not meet, meet, above or of an exceptional standard*. The Assessment Task will also be completed in class and will be sent to and marked by the SEC and included in the student's overall grade.

### Other Assessments

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.

We also access the **NCSE** visiting teacher service assessment for Deaf/ visually impaired students. Visiting teachers are qualified teachers with particular skills and knowledge of the development and education of children with varying degrees of hearing loss and/or visual impairment. They offer longitudinal support to children, their families and schools from the time of referral through to the end of post-primary education.

### Reporting

There are different methods whereby the results of formal and informal assessments will be reported to parents.

**Student Diary** – students may record all continuous assessment results in their journals for all subjects. The teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parents/guardian of a student by writing a note in the student's 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/ Student Parent Teacher Meeting** – 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 generates an accurate picture of the student's progress.

**Written reports** – Formal written results reports are posted to the parents/guardians of students on several occasions during the academic year, depending which year group they are in. 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5th Year parents/guardians will receive their Christmas Report in December before the Christmas holidays and Summer Report during the Summer holidays. Parents/guardians of 3rd and 6th will receive a progress report in October, a results report in December and will then receive another report with the results of their Pre-Junior and Pre-Leaving Cert Exams in March.

School Reports will include exam results along with relevant constructive feedback from the teacher on the student’s overall performance in class. This feedback will include recommendation from the teacher on recommended practices for improvement.

**JCPA Certificates** – the school will complete and distribute the official Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) certificates at the Christmas Celebration or Summer Awards each year. It will report on a student’s achievements in all relevant areas of learning including subjects, classroom-based assessments, short courses, wellbeing, priority learning units and other areas of learning.

#### Junior Cycle New Grading and Assessment Statements

CBA statements of achievement:

- Yet to meet expectations
- In line with expectations
- Above Expectations
- Exceptional

Final Grading changes:

|  | Junior Certificate |                  | Junior Cycle  |                    |
|--|--------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Level  | Percentage         | Grade Descriptor | Percentage    | Grade Descriptor   |
| Higher,<br>Ordinary,<br>Foundation/<br>Ard, Gnath,<br>Bonn | ≥ 85 to 100        | A                | ≥ 90 to 100   | Distinction        |
|  | ≥ 70 and < 85      | B                | ≥ 75 and < 90 | Higher Merit       |
|  | ≥ 55 and < 70      | C                | ≥ 55 and < 75 | Merit              |
|  | ≥ 40 and < 55      | D                | ≥ 40 and < 55 | Achieved           |
|  | ≥ 25 and < 40      | E                | ≥ 20 and < 40 | Partially Achieved |
|  | ≥ 10 and < 25      | F                | ≥ 0 and < 20  | Not Graded (NG)    |
|  | ≥ 0 and < 10       | NG               |               |                    |

## JCSP

All Junior Cycle students participate in the Junior Certificate Schools Programme. Each subject teacher will confirm completion of each JCSP target statement throughout that time. After a three-year assessment period, students are presented with formal profiles of achievement in each subject (DES).

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2020**