



November 2021

BCS Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement:

The Assessment Policy describes student assessment procedures in Blackwater Community School.

Scope:

This policy refers to the assessment of students in Blackwater Community School and it is relevant to the whole school community.

Rationale:

Regular assessment is necessary for learning to take place. Provision of feedback on the progress of students to the students themselves and parents/guardians contributes to the learning process, while taking into consideration each student's potential and uniqueness. The policy maintains the status and integrity of the state examinations.

Relationship to School's Mission Statement:

The policy is rooted in the mission statement of the school which states that Blackwater Community School is committed to the provision of an inclusive broadly based education, where mutual trust and respect facilitate personal, social, vocational, academic, and spiritual development.

Goals/Aims:

- To inform teaching and learning.
- To clarify each student's standard of work and ability.
- To enable detection of any unidentified difficulty that a student may have.
- To plan a differentiated curriculum.
- To enable teachers to give feedback to the students/parents/guardians on student progress.
- To encourage motivation, application, and commitment to the realisation of each student's potential.
- To uphold and maintain the status and standing of the state examinations.

Roles and Responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy.

Board of Management

- To ensure policy is developed, evaluated, and reviewed.
- To approve policy.
- To receive reports from Principal on implementation of policy.

Principal, Deputy Principal and Senior Management

- To monitor the implementation and evaluation of the policy.

Staff

- To implement and evaluate the policy.
- To keep assessment records for students.
- To advise on appropriate exam levels based on assessment results and performance in class.
- To update and upskill regarding requirements for Classroom Based Assessment's (CBA's) required for the new Junior Cycle Award.
- To become upskilled re SLAR and Assessment Task requirements.
- To monitor students' academic ability and potential through the newly introduced Athena Tracker

Parents

- To study policy by providing suitable conditions for study.
- To discuss reports/assessment results with their children and with teachers by their attendance at PT meetings.
- To bring concerns to the attention of teachers through phone or email.
- To have daily access to their child's performance through online access.

Students

- To study and prepare for assessments
- To actively engage in assessments
- To engage in discussions with teachers and parents on receipt of assessment result.
- To evaluate their learning in light of assessment feedback.
- To avail of school wide availability of Studyclix as a valuable student resource.
- By attending their regular mentoring meeting in 6th year.

Content:

- Incoming 6th class students complete a CAT4 Entrance Assessment.
- Junior Cycle students complete the DATS Test at Christmas to assist with subject choice.
- Voluntary testing is done in other areas relating to careers. This includes eirquest in TY.

Special Needs Related

- For the AEN department the following assessments are carried out early in 6th class. These include NGRT2 in Feb which is a reading screening test and WRAT4 in Maths. Further diagnostic testing takes place as and when required for individual students or groups.
If required, The Educational Psychologist carries out educational assessments for individual students based on the data collated from these tests.
- Differentiation will be incorporated where and when appropriate bases on test findings.

Class/Careers Related

- Homework is set and assessed by the teacher.
- Continuous assessment of student work takes place throughout the year.
- Class tests are given on a regular basis at the teacher's discretion. These tests may be written, oral, aural, or practical.

- Cognitive ability assessments are administered to the students of 1st and 5th yr. as required.
- Attainment assessments are administered, as necessary.
- Formal in-house exams take place at Christmas and in the Summer. Pre-Junior Cert and Leaving Cert exams take place in February. Individual subjects CBA requirements may cause local subject specific changes.
- Reports are issued via VS-Ware at Halloween, Christmas, Easter, and Summer. These are uploaded to Athena tracker.
- Subject departments set common tests where possible.
- The class teacher corrects all assessments. Pre-exams may be corrected externally.
- The class teacher keeps a record of all assessment results and consults with students, parents, pastoral care team, guidance counsellor, year heads, Deputy Principals and Principal as appropriate.

Impact of Assessment on Teaching:

- Assessment, formal and informal, formative, and summative, enables teachers to evaluate teaching methods and to then make adjustments to suit the varying capabilities and needs of the students.

Impact of Assessment on Learning:

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and thus:

- Clarifies each student's standard of work.
- Gives the student a realistic view of his/her abilities/quality of learning and allows him/her to set attainable goals. This also involves the analysis provided by Athena Tracker
- Gives the student opportunities to improve and to motivate themselves.
- Promotes positive competition.
- Encourages self-assessment, which identifies strengths and weaknesses in the student's own learning.
- Prepares students for further education.
- Empower students to take more responsibility for monitoring their own progress and setting future targets.

Links to other Policies:

The Assessment Policy is linked to Individual Subject Plans, to the Mentoring Programme, to the Homework Policy, to the Numeracy and Literacy Policy, to the Guidelines for in house Exams for students and teachers and the Special Educational Needs Policy.

Success Criteria

- Subject department analysis of state exam results, including comparison to national averages.
- Academic tracking of student results to ensure that students achieve to the best of their own ability.
- Athena Tracker is a guide and tool for teaching staff to evaluate the academic potential of their students.

Person(s)/groups responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy:

Teachers, Year Heads, Deputy Principal, Principal, Board of Management.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed, as necessary.

Last reviewed Monday 17th Sept 2018

Date of ratification by Board of Management **November 16th, 2021**