Mount Carmel Secondary School
King's Inns Street, Dublin 1

Whole School Assessment Policy

Roll number: 60853T

1. **Whole School Policy on Assessment**

School Name	Mount Carmel Secondary School
Date of Ratification of Policy by Board of Management	April 11th 2024
Date of Scheduled Review of Policy by Board of Management	August 2026

2. Introduction

This Assessment Policy was developed to outline the different types of Assessment that takes place in our school. This policy will enhance communication on all aspects of assessment, for all members of the school community.

3. Relationship of Assessment Policy to the School's Mission Statement

Mount Carmel Secondary School is a voluntary Catholic secondary school for girls under the patronage of the Religious Sisters of Charity. In the spirit of our foundress, Mary Aikenhead, we endeavour, by working together as a school community, to educate the whole person by fostering a growth in knowledge and integrity in a safe and secure environment.

Mount Carmel Secondary School is committed to quality education at second level we seek to enrich student's lives and empower them for life's challenges. This is done in a caring atmosphere of good order and discipline and in partnership with staff, students, parents and the wider school community.

This Assessment Policy will play a key role in ensuring that each student realises their full potential while a student in this school.

4. Characteristics of Good Practice in Assessment

Promotes and Supports Learning	• Identifies what students know, understand, and can do • Enables consistent monitoring of student progress • Identifies individual learning styles and strengths and challenges • Encourage Progression in Learning
Informs Teaching	• Assists lesson planning and informs review of content and skills • Promotes a variety of teaching methodologies • Enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress • Encourages self -reflection
Formative and Summative	• Promotes a shared learning culture & provides clear and effective feedback • Diagnoses learning difficulties • Measures student performance • Identifies clear and shared targets for student progress • Promotes differentiation by outcome • Informs subject choice and career decision making • Provides effective and progressive student records & informs regular reporting to Parents/Guardians
Uses appropriate and diverse strategies	• Is both formal and informal & accommodates a variety of Learning styles • Test a range of skills • Encourages effective and standarised marking procedures • Is both quantitative and qualitative & is carried out in a range of contexts
Recognises ALL student progress and achievement	• Rewards progress, effort, and achievement • Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning

	• Creates opportunities for self-direction & fosters self-esteem and social development
Develops the capacity for Self-Assessment	• Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria & gives sensitive and constructive feedback • Supports students in self and peer assessment activities • Engages students with realistic target setting
Fosters a shared involvement and responsibility between School and Home	

5. What is Assessment?

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. The term "Assessment" refers to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs. Assessment is an integral part of good learning and teaching. Educators can use assessment to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.

6. Types of Assessment at Mount Carmel

This policy covers Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment), Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment) and Assessment Instruments/tests for Guidance and for Additional Educational Needs (SEN/EAL).

An explanation of each of these is outlined in this policy document.

Type of Assessment	Carried out by
Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)	All Teaching Staff

Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment)	All Teaching Staff
Assessment Instruments/Assessments for (CL 0001/2023)[1]	SEN Department

1 https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/11e67-advice-on-the-use-of-assessment-instrumentstests-for-guidance-or-for-additional-and-special-educational-needs-sen-in-post-primary-schools/

7. Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)

Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment) is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through providing feedback, highlighting success, and highlighting areas for improvement.

Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
All Teaching Staff	- Learning Intentions/Outcomes - Success Criteria - Wait time - Questioning - Worksheets, Homework & classwork - Reading and writing in class - Essays and assignments - Sample exam questions - Observations in class - Presentations - Practical work - Research - Discussion and debate - Self-Assessment - Peer Assessment - Comment only Feedback - Oral Presentations sing the Oral Literacy Rubric (Journal) - Classroom Based Assessments for Junior Cycle (CBAs)

8. Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment)

Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment) is carried out at the end of a period of learning and is used to measure performance and clearly identified a standard of student achievement.

Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
All Teaching Staff	- End of Unit/Chapter Class Exams - Christmas Exams - Summer Exams - Mock Examinations - State Examinations - Assessment Tasks for Junior Cycle (ATs)

9. Assessment Instruments/Tests

Assessment Instruments/tests for Guidance and for additional and special educational needs (SEN).

- During your child's education in Mount Carmel they will have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of assessment activity as part of normal teaching and learning.
- Other specialist tests may also be administered to support your child's educational development and learning as well as their career development. Examples of such tests are outlined below.
- There may also be occasion to administer tests on an individual basis to your child to support their learning, progress, and achievement. Such tests will only be administered following consultation with parents/guardians.

Type of Assessment	Carried out by	Some Examples in the Classroom
Assessment Instruments/tests CL 0001/2023	SEN/Guidance Departments	- Pre -Entry/Post Entry to Post Primary School Assessment Tests - Standardised Ability Assessments, Standardised Attainment/ Achievement Assessments - Diagnostic Assessments - Guidance Interest Assessments

10. Assessment	Test Type & Components	When	Purpose	How
CAT 4	Ability Verbal, Non-Verbal, Mathematical Spatial reasoning.	Incoming 1st Year March prior to entry	To plan and support mixed ability teaching. To screen for potential learning difficulties.	In-person Online Group
WIAT III-T	Attainment Reading Written Language Mathematics Oral Language Spelling	1st-6th year Throughout school year	RACE – Reasonable Accommodations in State Exams Irish exemptions Identifying AEN issues	Paper-and-pen 1:1 Spelling test – class delivery
DASH	Handwriting Fine Motor Precision	1st-6th year Throughout school year	RACE	Paper-and-pen 1:1
PPADD[3]	Attainment Word Reading Spelling Comprehension Reading Speed Writing Samples Reading speed Single word spelling	Available as an alternative test method to WIATT III-T	Literacy Screening Irish Exemptions	Paper-and-pen Group (Word Reading is 1:1)
STAR READING	Attainment Tracks reading progression	1st Year -3rd Year Beginning & end of year	To support reading skills and literacy development.	Online Group
EAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST	English Language Proficiency	All incoming students presenting with English language difficulty	Supports appropriate EAL provision	Paper-and-pen Group

CLASSROOM GUIDANCE & CAREER PORTAL	Interests Profiling	TY LCA 1 & 2 LC	For college courses that suit the skills, personality, and interests	Online Individual Student Accounts

11. Definition of Assessment Instruments for the purposes of this policy

Mount Carmel recognises that information from ability tests, attainment tests, teacher observations, the Education Passport, the Student Support File, parental reports as well as the views of the student are important aspects of a thorough assessment. This evidence-based approach facilitates the identification of individual students' strengths, interest, values, motivation and learning needs and helps to inform the actions and interventions that best address those needs.

Results of any one standardised test are not used in isolation, nor used as baseline data for predicting student's future achievements, nor for solely informing decisions regarding the provision of interventions or targets within learning plans for students.

Defining Ability and Achievement tests
Ability tests are designed to establish what a student can know, while achievement tests measure what is known and has been learned or achieved to date.

A standardised ability test is designed to be curriculum-independent and measure more enduring and long-term traits than the attainment of learning. They measure what a student can know rather than what is known.

A standardised attainment test (sometimes referred to as achievement tests) measure what a student knows and can be used to assess, for example, students' knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and to determine progress in these areas.

On foot of information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, further information may be gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests to provide a more detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.

A diagnostic test is designed to provide specific information about a student's strengths and needs in some aspect of learning, for example, word identification skills or understanding of number concepts.

In addition, guidance counsellors may use the outcomes of ability, interest, values and motivation tests to guide and to support students' decision-making regarding subject choice and senior- cycle programme options and to support their career development, including planning for further and higher education, training, apprenticeships and the world of work.

12. Using Assessment Instruments within the Guidance and SEN Departments of Mount Carmel

Rationale for using Assessment Instruments in our School	Information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, and further information gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests provide a detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.
How will Informed Consent be obtained?	Information is provided to parents and students regarding the purpose of the assessment and with whom the assessment results may be shared and why. The consent of parents (for students under 18 years of age) and assent of students over 18 is obtained in advance of the assessment instrument being administered, in line with the school's assessment and data protection policies.
Selection of Assessment Instrument	Assessments instruments are selected for use in Mount Carmel based on the suitability, reliability and validity of the instrument and resulting data. It is ensured that the versions in use are the most up-to-date and appropriate for Administering to the specific student cohort. Mount Carmel considers the qualifications required to administer, score, interpret and provide feedback on the test prior to selection. The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) provide information and advice on the use and appropriateness of certain assessment instruments/tests. Mount Carmel engages with the relevant primary and post-primary schools to inform decisions around the selection and timing of assessments for students new to post-primary education or transferring from another post primary. The Student Support File and the Education Passport4 are key elements in supporting the sharing of relevant data, including assessment results, as students transfer from primary to post-primary school.
Administration of Assessment Instrument: Where Assessments will take place (location in the school)?	- The SEN Department - The Guidance Department - Computer classrooms
Administration of Assessment Instrument – Under what conditions will Assessments take place	- As directed by the test developers - Breaks given periodically

Administration of Assessment Instrument: Names of suitably qualified staff administering the Assessment Instruments	Some assessments, such as standardised group achievement tests, may be administered under the supervision of a suitably qualified person such as the EAI/SEN/Guidance Counsellor. Other tests are administered and interpreted by appropriately qualified personnel depending on the nature of the instrument used. Mount Carmel complies fully with the test publisher on the specific qualifications required for each instrument used. The administration of ability tests in schools is restricted to appropriately qualified personnel who have been specifically trained in specialised psychometric testing, including the selection and administration of such assessment instruments, interpretation of assessment results, scoring and feedback. In the case of psychometric instruments of general ability (and individually administered achievement tests), such personnel will be qualified special education teachers with appropriate qualifications to administer specific tests. School personnel engage in on-going training and continuing professional development.
Provision of Feedback to Parents/Guardians/Students	Mount Carmel ensures that appropriate, accurate and constructive feedback is provided in a timely manner to students and parents by appropriately qualified personnel, (SENCO or other suitably qualified teachers.) Students are provided with the opportunity to explore their assessment results in the context of the educational options available to them in the school and to inform their future educational and vocational development, career choices and decision making. Students and parent/Guardian(s) are made aware of the limitations of the results of standardised tests during this discussion and the importance of other factors including the students' interests, motivation, talents and experiences, and information available from other sources.
Interpretation of results	In planning interventions to meet a student's needs, the results of any one standardised test is used in conjunction with other information available on the student. The results of any one test are not used as baseline data for predicting a student's future achievements, or for solely informing decisions regarding the

	provision of interventions or targets within learning plans for students.
GDPR **Storing of Assessment Data**	Mount Carmel ensures full compliance with all requirements of current GDPR legislation, and is cognisant of GDPR data processing and retention requirements, for example, ensuring compliance in relation to who controls and has access to the data, the purposes for which this data is used, the retention of the data and where the data is stored i.e. within or outside the EU.

13. Whole School Roles and Responsibilities for Assessment

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	Use assessment procedures and processes to drive whole school improvement by: - Ensuring that all teachers know what is expected of them in assessing students - Helping teachers make well-founded judgements about students' attainment and progress - Monitoring that assessment for learning is a key factor in planning for teaching and learning - Monitoring the accuracy of the information provided to parents about their child's attainment and progress - Tracking the attainment and progress of individual/groups of students over time - Using assessment information when planning staff training and CPD - Comparing the progress made by different groups of students to ensure that no group is disadvantaged - Ensuring flexibility in assessment expectations facilitating individual departments to adopt processes that are most conducive to progress in their particular subject - Ensuring students are supported in making informed curriculum choices - Using assessment and monitoring to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of students

	• Ensuring that any pedagogical developments in assessment practice are implemented where appropriate
Year Head	• Monitoring the accuracy of the information provided to parents about their child's attainment and progress • Tracking the attainment and progress of individual/groups of students over time • Ensuring students are supported in making informed curriculum choices • Using assessment and monitoring to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of students • Liaise with SLT and/or SEN/EAL Departments regarding student progress • Report to Parents/Guardians as required
Subject Coordinator	• Lead subject teachers in planning assessment opportunities for students • Lead subject teachers in preparing standardised assessments at Christmas & Summer.
Subject Teacher	• Liaise with Year Head and/or SLT and/or SEN/EAL Department regarding student progress • Prepare assessment opportunities for students • Mark and evaluate assessments from students in a positive, accurate, meaningful, and diagnostic way • Compile and maintain individual student records • Provide constructive feedback to students • Report to Parent/Guardian as required
Student	• Understand that everyone has the potential to learn and succeed • Accept responsibility for learning & value learning • Help foster a positive learning environment through positive behaviour • Set personal goals and targets for learning • Active engagement in learning activities • Preparation for Assessments • Act on feedback provided on learning • Ask for support and help
Parent/Guardian	• Support their child in interpreting the results of Assessment

	• Affirm the positives and encourage their child to ask for help and support around challenges
	• Support their child's learning by attending & contributing positively at Parent-Teacher meetings
	• Schedule meeting with school personnel if concerned about their child's progress

14. Reporting to Parent/Guardian(s) on Student Progress following Assessment Processes

Type of Assessment	Formative or Summative	Scheduled Dates for Assessments in School	Results available to Parent/Guardian(s) on/from
Christmas Report	Summative	November/ December	December /January
Mock Examinations	Summative	February	March
Summer Reports	Summative	May/June	June
JCAP	Summative & Formative	Assorted dates 2nd & 3rd Year	Autumn post exams
Student Progress Report carried out by Year Head/ Teachers	Formative	As requested by Parents/Guardians At Parent/Teacher meetings	At a meeting with Year Head and Parent/Guardian
LCA Key Assignment	Summative & Formative	LCA 1 – Jan/May LCA 2 – Jan/May	Parent Teacher Meetings Issued by DES end each module (twice yearly)
LCA Tasks /Interviews	Summative & Formative	LCA 1 – Jan/May LCA 2 – Jan/May	Issued by DES end each LCA 1 & in LCA Results for LCA 1 & 2

RATIFICATION:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Mount Carmel Secondary School at its meeting on April 11th 2024 and will be reviewed on a regular basis.