



Assessment Policy

Mission Statement.

As a community school we foster a safe and positive learning environment where we can all realise our potential as citizens of the 21st Century. Community, personal responsibility & belonging is at the heart of all that we do in Gorey Community School.

What is assessment?

The term "Assessment" refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

Why assess?

Assessment is part of good teaching and learning and takes place to,

- assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- assess a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary
- establish baseline data in relation to a student's attainments in certain subjects.
- monitor a student's progress.
- provide the teacher with information to inform decisions about what and how students are learning.
- provide students and parents with information regarding progress
- inform potential subject choices at senior cycle.

Legislation:

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

Gorey Community School's Assessment Policy is informed by this legislation and current best practice.

Models of Organization in GCS:

Junior Cycle:

The subjects of English, Irish and Maths are studied at higher and ordinary level. All other Junior Cycle subjects are studied at common level.

Students going into 2nd year are organised into higher or ordinary level for maths and Irish. This allocation is based on examination results from First Year. Subject levels for all other subjects are decided during the course of 3rd year. Parents may consult with the school as appropriate

Senior Cycle:

Students can study their subjects at higher level or ordinary level. Levels are based on previous results and levels taken at Junior Cycle. Parents may consult with the school as appropriate

It is school policy that students are assessed in all subject areas regularly.

Formative Assessment:

(1) Definition:

Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process, and this is used to adapt teaching to meet student needs. Assessment for learning covers all of the aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning.

Gorey Community School has adopted a formative assessment approach to teaching and learning. Its purpose is to use the whole process of assessment to help learners improve their learning. It is formative because its intention is to form, shape or guide the next steps in learning, i.e., 'learning to learn'. We recognise, however, that not all aspects of this approach are of benefit in all curriculum areas and the discretion of the teacher is advised to adapt assessment theory and practice to suit the particular demands of the subject.

In line with the demands of the syllabus and subject specifications in each curriculum area, teachers set regular homework in line with formative assessment practices, and GCS homework policy.

Ongoing Assessment:

As part of their classroom work, students engage in assessment activities that can be either formative or summative in nature. Teachers assess as part of their daily practice by observing and listening as students carry out tasks, by looking at what they write and make, and by considering how they frame, ask and respond to questions. Teachers use this assessment information to help students plan the next steps in their learning. Periodically, assessment will be in more structured, formalised settings in order to make decisions on future planning and report on progress. This may involve students doing projects, investigations, case studies and/or tests.

Subject specific assessment procedures follow individual subject specification guidelines as laid down by the NCCA.

Summative Assessment:

(1) Definition:

Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of a period of learning. The purpose is to summarize students' achievements and to determine whether and to what degree, the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by assessing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality.

(2) Modes of Assessment:

1. End of Term Examinations:

All students with the exception of transition year take formal structured examinations twice yearly, during terms 1 & 3. This enables the school to monitor their academic performance. Common tests are set in each subject area and marking schemes are clearly identified. Reports containing results of the end of term exams are available online. All reports are signed by the Principal and records of the results are kept in the school in accordance with GDPR.

2. Mock Examinations:

These are held for 3rd and 6th Year students during term 2. The purpose of these is to further prepare students for the Junior and Leaving Cert examinations.

3. State Examinations:

Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations are run in accordance with SEC regulations in June. Reporting is as per Department of Education guidelines.

4. Entrance Assessments:

Prior to entry, incoming 1st Year students who have already accepted a place in Gorey Community School take a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4).

The results of these tests enable the school to,

- identify students who may be in need of additional support when they join the school.
- identify exceptionally able students.

5. Aptitude Tests:

All transition year students undertake an assessment and/ or a timetabled module on aptitude and career choices. This process assists in their investigation of suitable subject choices for senior cycle. It also informs their investigation of career and college choices.

Reporting:

Gorey Community School reports to parents/guardians in relation to student progress through,

- a) Student Journal – teachers may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parent/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.
- b) Direct Contact - the school may contact the parent/guardian directly with respect to the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student.

- c) Signature of Parent on assessment – on some occasions, an assessment may be cosigned by a student, parent/guardian.
- d) Parent-Teacher Meetings –Take place for 1st ,2nd,3rd , TY,5th ,6th year students throughout the academic year.
- e) Written Reports – formal written reports are made available to parents/guardians. The report template is computerised and allows for a level, mark, grade, description and comment as appropriate.
- All students in GCS receive a Christmas report.
 - 1st, 2nd, TY, 5th year students receive a Summer report.
 - Parents/guardians of 3rd and 6th year students receive a report following their mock examinations.
 - The SEC, facilitated by the school, are responsible for informing students of their results in the state examinations.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:

Date: _____

Signed: _____

This policy will be due for review in _____.