

Parents of children in Rang 2/3/4/5/6 re. Standardised Tests / STen Scores.

A Thuismitheoirí, a chairde,

It is that time of year again when standardised tests are being administered in schools as the Department of Education requires standardised tests be carried out annually and the results reported to parents and to the Department itself.

Standardised Tests are revised after a number of years as research shows that tests generally get easier over time as familiarity with content increases. Also, there have been improvements nationally in both literacy and mathematics achievement levels among our pupils in recent years. It is important to be aware that this year's Drumcondra Standardised Tests have been revised and so are *new*, having being piloted in a number of schools throughout the country in 2018.

Therefore, the results this year may differ from previous years but ***you should not be concerned if the results this year are lower (or higher) than previous years***. It is important to remember when comparing results this year with last years or previous years, you are *not comparing like with like* as these are *new* tests with *new* standardised norms. (Please see the following link for further information).

<http://www.erc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Letter-for-parents-New-Drumcondra-tests.pdf>

We also wish to inform you that your child's "Tuairisc Scoile" (School Report) will be given to your child in a sealed envelope on **Wednesday, 19th June**. We suggest that you instruct your child **not to open the report in advance of you seeing it first**. There has been a tendency for both children and parents to focus particularly on the STen scores achieved, since it has become practice to issue the STen scores on the Tuairisc Scoile.

Previously, we gave this information to parents at our annual Parent / Teacher Meetings, where teachers were able to explain the results face-to-face.

We must bear in mind that a STen score is achieved from a once-off specific, c.2 hour test at the end of each year. A child may do well or poorly in that test on the day, for a variety of reasons. Unfortunately, the tests do not take any outside influences into account or the child's work in school or at home throughout the year. We hope that you, as parents, would take the emphasis off such results and encourage your child to do likewise. We also hope that the results will be kept *private* between you and your child as standardised tests are only one of a wide range of assessment tools used by teachers and results should not be interpreted in isolation.

Any concerns regarding your child's progress in any area, be it academic or social, would have been flagged by your child's teacher when the concern arises. Likewise, we would expect that if you had concerns about your child's progress, you would make an appointment with the class teacher to address those concerns.

We recommend that greater attention and emphasis be placed on the *comments* made by your child's teacher in the reports rather than on results of tests. However, if you have any queries / concerns regarding any aspect of the report, please **make an appointment** to meet the teacher to discuss the issue.

The staff of our school has the *whole* development of each child at heart and strives, at all times, to assist each child in reaching his / her full potential, as our *Vision Statement* states.

Finally, we'd like to express our sincere thanks to you for the interest you show and the encouragement you give to your child and the support you give to us in the school. Such support is, I assure you, greatly appreciated, as our *Mission Statement* states, "Ní neart go cur le chéile – Together, everyone achieves more".

Le gach dea-ghuí,