



Marking and Feedback Policy

Introduction

At Willow Brook Primary School, we recognise the importance of feedback as an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle and aim to maximise the effectiveness of its use in practice. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to all stakeholders so that there is a consistent approach to feedback and marking throughout our school. All members of staff should have high, but realistic expectations of the work that each individual can achieve and will strive to ensure that the quality, quantity and presentation of work meets the standards required. Above all, ensuring that each individual is motivated to achieve and progress is evident in their responses is key.

Rationale

In devising this policy, we are mindful of the research surrounding effective feedback and the workload implications of written marking, as well as research from cognitive science regarding the fragility of new learning. Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other expert organisations. The Education Endowment Foundation research shows that effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a sharp goal
- Be specific, accurate and clear
- Encourage and support further effort and achievement
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- Put the onus on students to correct their own mistakes, rather than providing correct answers for them
- Alert the teacher to misconceptions, so that the teacher can address these in subsequent lessons.

Notably, the Department for Education's research into teacher workload has highlighted written marking as a key contributing factor to workload. As such we have investigated alternatives to written marking which can provide effective feedback in line with the EEF's recommendations, and those of the DfE's expert group which emphasises that marking should be: Meaningful, Manageable and Motivating. We have also taken note of the advice provided by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics) that the most important activity for teachers is the teaching itself, supported by the design and preparation of lessons.

Key Principles Our policy on feedback has at its core a number of principles:

- The sole focus of feedback should be to further children's learning
- Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process; we do not provide additional evidence for external verification
- Feedback should empower children to understand how to take responsibility for improving their own work; it should not take away from this responsibility by adults doing the hard thinking work for the pupil.
- Written comments should only be used as a last resort for the very few children who otherwise are unable to locate their own errors and after guidance from the teacher has been given.
- Children should receive feedback either within the lesson itself or it in the next appropriate lesson.

- The 'next step' is usually the next lesson.
- Feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aims to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- New learning is fragile and usually forgotten unless explicit steps are taken over time to revisit and refresh learning. Teachers should be wary of assuming that children have securely learnt material based on evidence drawn close to the point of teaching it. Therefore, teachers will need to get feedback at some distance from the original teaching input when assessing if learning is now secure.

Within these principles, our aim is to make use of the good practice approaches outlined by the EEF toolkit to ensure that children are provided with timely and purposeful feedback that furthers their learning, and that teachers are able to gather feedback and assessments that enable to adjust their teaching both within and across a sequence of lessons. As such, strategies can include marking, but will mainly be verbal or corrections highlighted as feedback during the lesson.

Why do we give good feedback during the lesson?

- To assess and discuss with children what they are learning
- To intervene in a timely way if children have not understood work and to further challenge them if they have
- To motivate further by praising current achievements
- To inform the next step in learning so that children know what they need to do in order to improve.
- To provide ourselves with feedback on how well pupils have understood the current work so that we can plan the next stage of teaching and learning.
- To enable teachers to make judgments about pupil attainment, particularly in regard to assessment levels to support ascertaining standards

By giving timely feedback, teachers demonstrate to children that their efforts are valued; this gives additional purpose to pupils' work. If children are not given constructive, specific feedback, they will not know whether their work is good/poor/indifferent and may lose interest or not produce work of such quality in future.

Feedback and marking in practice

It is vital that teachers evaluate the work that children undertake in lessons, and use information obtained from this to allow them to adjust and consider their teaching.

Feedback occurs at one of four common stages in the learning process:

1. Immediate feedback – at the point of teaching
2. Summary feedback - at the end of a lesson/task
3. Next lesson feedforward – further teaching enabling the children to identify and improve for themselves areas for development identified by the teacher upon review of work after a previous lesson had finished
4. Summative feedback – assessments and tasks planned to give teachers definitive feedback about whether a child has securely mastered the material under study

Teachers and TA's will use an agreed marking colour so that their comments and corrections inform others of the interventions they have made during (or after) the lesson. They will acknowledge each piece of work to indicate that it has been read and used to inform future teaching and learning. Weekly extended writing sessions will provide additional assessment opportunities to guide pupils' composition and affect their progress.