ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Bilbrook CE (VC) Middle School

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'Let your light shine'

Matthew 5:16

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Bilbrook CE Middle School recognises the importance of feedback as an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle, and aims to maximise the effectiveness of its use in practice. We are mindful also 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 goal
- Be specific, accurate and clear
- Encourage and support further effort
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- Provide specific guidance on how to improve by placing 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**.

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 – as Dylan Wiliam said, ""…too many teachers focus on the purpose of feedback as changing or improving the work, whereas the major purpose of feedback should be to improve the student."
- Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their own work; adults still have a responsibility to identify errors and misconceptions;
- Feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective, and as such feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date;
- Feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- All pupils' work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest appropriate opportunity so that it might impact on future learning. When work is reviewed, it should be acknowledged in books.
- 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.

- It is based on a thorough understanding of individual pupils and their learning. Although this policy aims to reduce the amount of written comments made, we still expect that teachers spend time reading pupils' work regularly and carefully in order to identify misconceptions.
- Feedback should ultimately aim to improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding as opposed to simply improving the pupils' work.

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.

Types of Feedback

Timing of feedback can be categorised into the following three stages:

1. Immediate feedback - this takes place during a lesson and allows teachers to adapt their teaching and give feedback at the point of teaching.

2. Summary feedback - this may take place at the end of a lesson. It may involve some form of self/peer assessment.

3. Distance feedback - this takes place away from the lesson and provides feedback to the teacher about how well pupils have understood concepts. This, in turn, informs planning for future learning opportunities which includes the use of whole class feedback sheets to focus on the next steps for the whole class, groups or for individuals.

4. Summative feedback - tasks planned to give teachers definitive feedback about whether a child has securely mastered the material under study.

The stages are deliberately numbered in order of priority, noting that feedback closest to the point of teaching and learning is likely to be most effective in driving further improvement and learning, especially for younger pupils. As a school, we place considerable emphasis on the provision of immediate feedback. Where feedback is based on review of work completed, the focus will often be on providing feedback for the teacher to further adapt teaching.

Type	What it looks like	Evidence (for observers)
Immediate	***Takes place within lessons as part of teaching.*** • Includes teacher gathering feedback from teaching within the course of the lesson, including mini-whiteboards, bookwork, etc. • Takes place in lessons with individuals or small groups • Often given verbally to pupils for immediate action • May involve use of a teaching assistant to provide support of further challenge • May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task • May include highlighting/annotations according to the marking code. • Teachers make notes in their Whole Class Feedback book (see Appendix 1 for example)	• Lesson observations/learning walks • Some evidence of annotations or use of marking
Summary	***Takes place at the end of a lesson or activity*** • Often involves whole groups or classes • Provides an opportunity for evaluation of learning in the lesson • May take form of self or peer- assessment against an agreed set of criteria • May take the form of a quiz or test • In some cases, may guide a teacher's further use of review feedback, focusing on areas of need • For writing in particular, often a large part of the next lesson will be spent giving feedback to the class about strengths and areas for development, and giving time for development areas to be worked on and improved through proof reading and editing their work. • Errors and misconceptions are addressed in subsequent lessons. • Teachers record formative assessments on the assessment database.	• Lesson observations/learning walks • May be reflected in selected focus review feedback (marking) • Timetabled pre- and post- teaching based on assessment • Some evidence of self and peer- assessment • Quiz and test results may be recorded in books or logged separately by the teacher • Evidence in books of pupils editing and redrafting their work in pen • Use of Whole Class Feedback Book

Distance	*Takes place away from the point of teaching* • May involve written comments/annotations for pupils to read / respond to • Provides teachers with opportunities for assessment of understanding. • Adaptation of future lessons through planning, grouping or adaptation of tasks – teachers may group books into different piles to identify where 'group feedback' is required in the next session. • May lead to targets being set for pupils' future attention, or immediate action • Teachers record formative assessments on the assessment database.	• Acknowledgement of work completed • Written comments and appropriate responses / action • Adaptations to teaching sequences tasks when compared to planning • Use of annotations to indicate future groupings
Summative	• 'Check it' activities • End of unit or term tests or quizzes	• Check it activities in books • Quiz and test results
Whole Class Feedback	• Provided during the start of each lesson • Shares good work / examples, addresses common errors and misconceptions identified on whole class feedback sheet • Informs Bilbrook Challenge (retrieval practice)	• Children get 'Shout outs' • Bilbrook Challenge is adapted to meet the children's needs • Provides a positive start to the learning • Children are informed about their learning

Written marking and comments should be used where meaningful guidance can be offered when it has not been possible to be provided during the classroom session. In the case of groups of pupils having a common need, it may be appropriate for teachers to adjust planning or grouping rather than providing a written comment. Where a child has achieved the intended outcome and is well-prepared for the next stage in learning, this need not be annotated.

In most cases, written comments will be focussed on extended pieces of written work, or extended tasks. These will allow children's achievements to be recognised and provide further guidance for future learning. Any parts of work that the teacher would like to use as a teaching point with the class in the following lesson may be 'starred'. Any basic errors (e.g. GPS errors in English and number fact errors in maths) may be indicated by the teacher using the school's Marking Code. Teachers may add praise comments to indicate work that shows particularly good effort on the part of the student.

Guidance for teachers

Written feedback will model all aspects of our presentation / handwriting expectations.

Feedback when writing

Most writing lessons will be followed up with an editing lesson where children receive whole class feedback about strengths and areas for development and direct teaching to help them identify and address their own weaknesses.

Teachers will have looked at pupils' work soon after the previous lesson and identified strengths and weaknesses, looking at both the technical accuracy of the writing; spelling errors, punctuation omissions, and other transcription mishaps, as well as things to do with the sophistication of the writing; the actual content. The editing lesson will be divided into two sections

- Proofreading - changing punctuation, spelling, handwriting and grammar mistakes.
- Editing - improving their work to improve the composition.

The proofreading section will usually be short: about 10 minutes or so, whereas the editing element may take the rest of the lesson. The teacher will share extracts from pupils' work, using either the visualiser or by typing out a couple of lines and displaying them on the interactive whiteboard, at first showing good examples of work. For example, within the proof reading section, the teacher might showcase someone whose letter heights have the ascenders and descenders just right, then asking pupils to look at their work and rewrite one sentence from it, really making sure they are paying attention to letter heights. Then s/he might share a section of text with poor punctuation (usually anonymously) and reteach the class the various punctuation rules. They might then point out some spelling errors that several children are making, and remind children of the correct spelling and how to remember it. Children will then have a short period of time to proof read their work, checking for similar errors and putting them right. Children sit in mixed ability pairs and support each other in the identification and correction of mistakes. Within the editing section of the lesson. For example, the teacher might show a different couple of pieces of work where children have described a character very well, pointing out what it is that has made the description so vivid. The teacher might then share a less good example which might be from an anonymous or fictional piece. The children would then suggest together how this might be improved. Then in their pairs they read together each other's work, and suggest improvements, alterations and refinements which the author of the piece then adds – in purple pen to help the teacher see what changes the child has made.

Intervening when children find editing hard
A few children will need more support than this in order to be successful at improving their own work. As with all intervention, teachers should always seek to use the minimal level possible, only escalating to the next level if the child still needs further support. Some children may need a gentle prompt to narrow down their focus when looking for mistakes, for example a written comment alerting them that there are some missing full stops, without telling them how many or where. Or a simple pointer – 'description' perhaps or 'ambiguous pronouns' or 'figurative language' or 'and then' with a green cross through it. This would be in addition to, and not instead of, the teacher modelling editing for these before the independent section of the lesson. Others might need even more support and need to be provided with clues to help them. For example, the teacher might need to draw a green box around a section of text to narrow down the search area for the pupil, alongside the comment that there are speech marks missing or tenses jumped or the same sentence structure over-used. Or they might need to write a comment at the end saying there are 8 run-on sentences or 5 instances of non-standard English. Where mistakes are deeply entrenched, or the children lack confidence, the teacher may need to do some direct work modelling how to overcome these: for example, to clear up the confusion with

apostrophe use. The teacher might set a group of children an editing challenge based not on their own work but on a fictional piece of work with only one, recurrent error. An adult might then support the group in identifying where apostrophes do and do not belong. They might do this instead of editing their own work or as a prelude to it, depending upon their learning needs. But what the teacher is not doing is using a marking code that does all the error identification for the pupil as this takes away any responsibility from the pupil at thinking hard about how to improve.

Feedback in Maths

Teachers gain valuable feedback about how much maths teaching is being retained in the longer term from the daily retrieval practice sessions at the start of lessons. This information should be used to revisit areas where learning is not secure. Quizzes given after teaching a unit and end of unit tests also provide vital feedback to the teacher about areas that might need more teaching for certain individuals either in class or through an intervention.

In terms of day to day maths learning, teachers and support staff should have the answers to problems available, and after doing 4 or 5 calculations, children should check their answers themselves. That way, if they have got the wrong end of the stick and misunderstood something, they can alert the teacher immediately. Another benefit is that less confident children might want to start at the easiest level of work provided, but with instant feedback available, after getting their first few calculations correct, they feel confident to move to the next level. Another strategy teachers can use is to get children to compare answers in a group and where answers do not agree, challenge each other and try and find where the other person has gone wrong.

Where children are more confident, and finish their work slightly earlier than others, they can consolidate their learning by 'marking' other children's books. When they do this, the crucial step is that they should not take their own book with them and just read off the correct answer. They should do the calculations again – faster and possibly mentally – so in effect doing the work twice thus getting the sort of over-learning that leads to solid long-term retention.

The onus is always on the learner checking their work and if they've got an answer wrong, trying to identify their own errors. Children need to be taught how to do this purposely; otherwise they think it just means scanning quickly through their work, reading but not really thinking. Checking involves thinking deeply about the work you have just learnt. When you think deeply about something, it is much more likely to get stored in your long-term memory, available to be recalled at will. As Daniel Willingham says 'memory is the residue of thought.' So as an alternative to providing the answers, teachers should sometimes use the visualiser to model ways of checking and then expect children to do the same, in effect 'proof reading' maths. So for example, children might repeat a calculation in a different coloured pen and check they've got the same answer. For addition calculations involving more than two numbers, adding the numbers in a different order is an even better way of checking. Teachers should model how children can use the inverse operation to go and check they get back to where they started. With 2 or 3 part word problems, a classic error is to give the answer as the first part of the problem and forget about following through to the second (or third) part of the question. Often,

word problems are written with each instruction on a different line, a bit like success criteria. Again, using a visualiser, teachers should show children how to check work as we go, returning to the question and ticking off each line – writing each answer alongside, being really clear we are answering the final question, having done all of the previous steps.

It is important that the children move towards internalising what they are doing (over the course of several lessons) so that they no longer need a written checklist because they have their own mental checklist stored in their long-term memory, which they are able to retrieve at will. Giving children work to 'mark' from fictitious other children, which includes all the common misconceptions, is a really good way of helping them develop this.

Marking Code

Where written marking or annotations are appropriate, the intention is that minimum teacher time should lead to maximum outcomes. One way in which we achieve this is through the use of our marking code, which combines use of highlighters and symbols codes. The core of this code is set out below:

Annotation	Meaning
//	New paragraph needed here
^	Missing word
●	There is an error of some description on this line
Sp	Incorrect spelling. This will used selectively when marking work, focussing on spelling patterns which should either have been secured by a pupil, or represent a pupil's next step in spelling development. Pupils will ordinarily be expected to find the correct spelling using a dictionary (with support where needed).
⬭	Punctuation missing or incorrect

Gradings

Staff will use the following gradings to assess children:

PKF – Pre Key Stage
WTS – Working towards the expected standard
EXS – Working at the expected standard
GDS – Working at greater depth standard

Appendix 1

Whole Class Feedback Sheet		
Year:	Subject:	Date:
Work to praise and share	Needs further support – how? When?	
Presentation	Basic skills errors	
Misconceptions and next lesson notes		