

Hardwick Primary School

Marking and Feedback policy

Introduction

At Hardwick School we take a professional approach to the task of marking work and giving feedback. We aim to have a consistent approach to the marking symbols used by individual teachers and therefore have a school marking code. However, in addition to this code, teachers use their professional judgement to enhance it and also to take into account the age and needs of the children. All children are entitled to regular and comprehensive feedback on their learning. Therefore all teachers will mark work and give feedback as an essential part of the assessment process.

Aims

We mark children's work and offer feedback in order to:

- show that we value their work, and encourage them to do the same;
- boost self-esteem and aspirations, through use of praise and encouragement;
- give a clear general picture of how far they have come in their learning, and what the next steps are;
- offer them specific information on the extent to which they have met the lesson objective, and/or the individual targets set for them;
- promote self-assessment, whereby they recognise their difficulties and are encouraged to accept guidance from others;
- share expectations;
- gauge their understanding, and identify any misconceptions;
- provide a basis both for summative and for formative assessment and inform individual tracking of progress.
- provide the ongoing assessment that should inform future lesson-planning.

Principles of marking and feedback

- The process of marking and offering feedback should be a positive one, with pride of place given to recognition of the efforts made by the child.
- The marking should always be in accordance with the lesson objective and the child's own personal learning targets.
- The child must be able to read and respond to the comments made, and be given time to do so. Where the child is not able to read and respond in the usual way, other arrangements for communication must be made.
- Comments should be appropriate to the age and ability of the child
- Comments will focus on only one or two key areas for improvement at any one time.
- Teachers should aim to promote children's self-assessment by linking marking and feedback into a wider process of engaging the child in his or her own learning. This includes sharing the learning objectives and the key expectations for the task right from the outset.
- Whenever possible, marking and feedback should involve the child directly. The younger the child, the more important it is that the feedback is oral and immediate.
- Written comments should be neat, legible and written in a contrasting colour
- The marking system should be constructive and formative. A useful formula is this: 'praise, advice on improvement, more praise'.
- Feedback may also be given by a teaching assistant, through peer review, through plenaries and in group sessions.
- Feedback can identify a child's key learning difficulties.
- Errors that were made by many children should not be the subject of individual comments, but should be noted in planning.
- Marking will normally be done before the next lesson in that subject, although this may not always be possible for longer pieces of work.

General advice to teachers

- The best marking and feedback is without doubt the dialogue that takes place between teacher and pupil while the task is being completed.
- In order to encourage a positive response, any negative comments must always be followed up by a constructive statement on how to improve.
- The main objective of marking and feedback is not to find fault, but to help children learn. If children's work is well matched to their abilities, then errors that need to be corrected will not be so numerous as to affect their self-esteem.
- A delicate balance has to be achieved. Children should not receive the impression that things are right when they are not. On the other hand, they should not be discouraged from being adventurous for fear of having faults emphasised.
- The school has explicit guidelines that apply to all pieces of work (e.g. the date and title must be underlined, with the lesson objective at the top). At Key stage 2 all pupils are expected to follow these guidelines and at KS1 pupils should be working towards them.
- In addition to these general rules there are specific rules for specific types of work, for example maths. These rules have been taught and may be on display. They make it clear what good-quality work in the subject is like.
- The extent of the teacher's response to a piece of work is determined not by the number of errors found in it, but by the teacher's professional judgement. Consideration is given to what a particular child is capable of, what the next learning stages involve, and what should now have priority.
- Teachers mainly mark by comment (in preference to marks out of ten, or levels). Where possible, teachers establish direct links between oral or written praise and the class or school rewards systems. Stamps and/or stickers may also be used from time to time. (Teachers should remember that stickers and stars in themselves do nothing to close gaps in understanding, or to bring about improvements)
- Ticks are normal where work is correct, and a dot where errors have been made. Other symbols may be used once their meaning has been explained, for example a Sp for a spelling mistake (see attached code).
- Where pupils interact in the marking process, they will be all the more engaged and receptive to correction. In fact pupils should be encouraged to set some of the questions.
- When appropriate, children may mark their own or another child's work, but the teacher must always review this marking.
- In addition, the children could indicate where they think a particular target has been achieved. Their learning partners might also check on their behalf, before the work is handed in, that a particular target has been met.
- Occasional personal tutorials offer a valuable opportunity to review and evaluate the progress a child is making, by highlighting successes and identifying the next learning points.
- Teachers comment on spelling and grammar only in the following cases:
 - if spellings and grammar were part of the lesson focus/objective;
 - if it is a spelling/high frequency word that all pupils should know;
 - if it is related to the child's target.

Monitoring and review

- This policy was adopted by the governing body on *date*
- This policy is due for review Autumn Term 2009

Appendix 1

Hardwick Marking Code

? = achieved the learning intention

wt = working towards learning intention

? = are you sure

circle around missing or incorrect punctuation

sp = word underlined for spelling correction (correct spelling written in margin)

// = new paragraph

C = comment/feedback has been given directly to the child

S = someone has scribed for the child

P = worked in a pair

i = worked independently

a = worked with an adult

small tick = correct

dot = incorrect

An age appropriate version of this code should be on display in class for pupils