



**Assessment for Learning  
at Camp Primary & Nursery School**

**Formative Assessment and  
Marking Policy**

**September 2015**

# Formative Assessment

## Introduction

At Camp Primary & Nursery School, we want all children to make good progress and develop positive attitudes to their learning. Formative assessment or 'Assessment for learning' (AfL) is central to children recognising and achieving their potential.

Formative assessment or AfL is

*'an ongoing process, conducted both formally and informally, by which information and evidence about a child's learning is absorbed and used to plan the next step or guide through a given task'*

*(Ruth Sutton, Assessment- A framework for teachers, 1991)*

Assessment for learning

Both assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning play an important part in improving the success of all learners. Whereas assessment *of* learning is mostly concerned with assessment for reporting and grading purposes, assessment *for* learning is concerned with **both the learner and the teacher being aware of where learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how to get there.**

The following policy outlines the key issues that ensure the teachers and the children at Camp Primary & Nursery School achieve high standards and have ownership over the learning and teaching that takes place within the school. This does not replace summative assessment practices. These processes are complimentary and summative assessment can reflect the impact of the AfL.

## Aims

The intention is for AfL to occur in all lessons. Research has proved that AfL is one of the most powerful and effective ways of improving learning and raising standards. The way teachers mark and give feedback is central to the process.

## The key characteristics of Assessment for Learning

1. Language of learning
2. Explicit skill based learning objectives/intentions
3. Effective Success Criteria
4. Questioning
5. Feedback (from adult, child and peer)
6. Time for children to try improving
7. Adjusting teaching to take account of results

## **1. Language of learning**

Our language tells children what we believe and what we value. It can also have a huge effect on how children view themselves, how motivated they feel and, as a result, how well they achieve. Therefore the language we choose to use when talking to children about their learning is worth taking the time to think about.

Using 'language of learning' means using language which:

- **Celebrates learning rather than performance or ability**  
*e.g. talking about 'learning' rather 'work' – 'what are you learning?' rather than 'what are you doing?' This shows that learning is an ongoing process, not a fixed outcome.*
- **Develops a growth mindset and a belief that we can all achieve**  
*Mindsets predict motivation and achievement (Blackwell, L.S., Trzesniewski, K.H., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities are fixed traits and therefore focus on documenting their talents rather than developing them. We want to foster a 'growth mindset' in the children at Camp. This is where people believe that their basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This mindset creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for achieving. Younger classes may use a learning character (e.g. purple monster) who personifies the growth mindset and who can model a positive mindset towards talking learning activities.*
- **Encourages self-belief**  
*e.g. 'I can...' or 'I need help/time/practice to...' rather than 'I can't'. It develops an understanding that mistakes are part of the learning process. Making a mistake or getting 'stuck' can be turned into a positive opportunity to learn something new. We may refer to 'Mistake Monsters' and children being in the 'Learning Pit'.*
- **Develops metacognition**  
*Giving children the language of learning allows them to become aware of themselves as learners, to reflect upon their own learning and eventually, take ownership of their learning e.g. 'I learnt to do that by...' 'I learn best when...' 'My next step in learning is...' 'I will do...to help me to ...' 'I already know...Next I'd like to know...'*

## **2. Explicit learning objectives/intentions – shared and discussed with the learners**

Effective learning takes place when learners understand what they are trying to achieve and why it is important – 'the bigger picture'. It is therefore important that

pupils know the learning objective (LO) to the lesson as this gives a focus enabling pupils to review their own progress and to see if they have achieved the intention.

Teacher demonstration and modelling will closely relate to the learning objective as will the subsequent activities. Together these will support and guide children to achieve the lesson intention. **The learning objectives will focus on learning not activities.** L.O.s should be skill based and therefore be transferable to different activities or contexts. **The 'context' of the lesson or 'activity' can be shared separately** to make this explicit.

e.g. L.O: *To know how to write a narrative.*  
Context: *A story about Cinderella.*

Helpful learning objective stems include 'To know..., To be able to...'. To encourage children to be positive about their learning and to support them in visualising their own success, using the stem 'I can....' may also be used to show children the desired learning outcome for a lesson.

It is important to note that lessons do not all need to start with sharing the LO. It is important to capture the children's interest first and find a natural path to the LO and success criteria.

### **3. Success Criteria– how learners will know when they have achieved the LO or the steps towards it.**

Developing success criteria to achieve the learning objective will help provide children with a framework against which they can focus their efforts, evaluate their progress and discuss issues. We recognise that on occasions there is no need for more than 1 or 2 success criteria and to be most effective, a limit of no more than 5. Feedback can then be given against the success criteria (by the child themselves, their peer or the teacher). Feedback against the criteria frees children from personal discouragement.

Success criteria can be generated by the teacher, but it has been recognised that where children together generate their own success criteria to meet a learning objective they gain more ownership over the learning with positive results. Some techniques to generate SC with the children include:

- Prove It / Do It Wrong: Child to model a task they say they can do or adult models a task incorrectly and children point out errors to help refine SC.
- Finished piece of work: analyse and discuss features of another child's work (from the year before for example)

- Two Pieces of Finished Work: look at two pieces of work of differing quality shown side by side.
- Poor Quality Success Criteria: look at ready prepared SC and alter through discussion and trying out.
- Demonstration / Retrospective Creation: the adult models how to make/ do something while children pull out the sc/ do a task stopping frequently to pull out exactly what they've done.
- Revisiting existing success criteria: refine, amend and clarify sc after a task.

When generating success criteria it helps to focus on the process rather than the final effect e.g. *I will be successful if.... 'I set the scene in the opening paragraph' rather than 'people enjoy reading my story'*. The success criteria should guide the child in how to achieve. Two sets of SC can be used: one for the current skill being taught and one for on-going expectations or 'non-negotiables' e.g. using full stops.

#### **4. Questioning**

We use questioning in a variety of ways. Our key purpose is to develop learning and extend thinking. Asking questions raises issues; from this the teacher builds up knowledge and information about the children's understanding and misconceptions. Time needs to be invested in framing key questions to use during the demonstration and modelling part of the lesson to ensure learning progresses. Key questions, including *prompting, promoting and probing* questions, are recorded in teacher's medium or short term planning. **Wait or 'thinking' time is essential** to give all children the opportunity to think and respond. This enables more children to contribute to discussion and misconceptions can be dealt with more effectively. The use of mixed ability **talking partners** where children can rehearse their answers with the scaffold of a **speaking frame** will lead to greater responses from the children and therefore provide much more information for the teacher about the extent to which children have understood the new learning. This is especially important for English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners who may need support, rehearsal opportunities and encouragement to communicate what they do and do not understand.

#### **5. Feedback (from adult, self and peer) – feedback and marking are related to the LO and SC, indicating the child's success and helping them know how to improve.**

The purpose of this policy is to communicate that formative assessment cannot happen without the key ingredients mentioned above. The purpose of AfL is to **provide feedback in such a way that learning will improve as a direct result**. Teachers need to identify the next steps to learning for children as well as responding appropriately to the mistakes that they make. Teacher's feedback will provide pupils

with the information they need to achieve the next step and make better progress. Feedback will always be constructive and sensitive because **any assessment has an emotional impact**. Feedback that comments on the work rather than the child is more constructive for both learning and motivation. The following are a number of ways feedback can be given:

### **Oral / Verbal feedback**

- Most regular and interactive form of feedback.
- Focus on being constructive and informative to help pupils take the next steps in their learning
- Can be direct (targeted at pupils/individuals) or indirect (whole class can listen and reflect on what is said)
- Whole class or group marking of one piece of work can be useful as the teacher invites children's contributions so that the piece is marked through a process of discussion, analysis and modelling
- Opportunity to model the language pupils can use when responding or giving feedback to others
- Developmental feedback- recognise pupils' efforts and achievements and offer specific details of way forward.
- Emphasise the learner's progress and achievement rather than failure.

### **Written feedback**

- Related to the learning objective and success criteria and about what children were asked to pay attention to in the task, or 'non-negotiables' such as spelling or punctuation (relevant to the child's ability) and agreed school presentation expectations (see Appendix 1 and 2).

Pupils need time to read, understand and respond to the comments. The whole purpose being that where possible marking does the following;

**A. Highlights success** by 'tickled pink' (use of a pink pen or highlighter to indicate/underline where the pupil has achieved positively against the success criteria) or by use of positive symbol e.g. tick, smiley face or stamper at the appropriate place/s.

**B. Provides a 'next steps' prompt** to help children make improvements. These can occur in different ways e.g.

- a reminder prompt
- a scaffold prompt
- an example prompt
- a prompt to address misconceptions

### **Self assessment**

We will encourage pupils to be actively involved in self assessment. This can be by recording agreed symbols in their books or through a simple physical gesture such as thumbs up/hands up etc and to avoid peer pressure this can be carried out with eyes closed.

### **Peer assessment**

Children will be encouraged to be actively involved in peer assessment. They will often mark their own work against success criteria and can be involved in shared marking. This is not meant to replace teacher marking and feedback but is important for encouraging children to become more independent and responsible for their own learning. Time needs to be built into the lesson for this to be possible and allow children to reflect in structured ways as follows:

- Find one word you are really proud of and underline it. Tell the person next to you.
- Decide with your talking partner which of the success criteria you have been most successful with and which one needs help or could be taken further.
- You have 3 minutes to identify two places where you think you have done this well and read them to your partner.
- You have 5 minutes to note down one thing you could do to improve this piece of work next time.

### **6. Time for children to try improving**

Much of the Assessment for learning approach requires time to be allocated to allow children to consider successes and improvements, as well as responding to improvement prompts. Without time being built in, the whole process is less effective and children return to completing tasks without considering how they can improve. It is important that Peer Assessment is supported with a classroom charter to ensure response partners focus on the work, are positive and contribute constructively to the formative assessment procedure.

### **7. Adjusting teaching to take account of results**

Pupil feedback and marking will be used to inform future planning. Annotations on plans and/or highlighting of key objectives and assessment criteria will be used to record assessments of children's learning and understanding, in accordance with HfL assessment criteria guidance.

**Unless some learning action follows the assessment, the assessment has served only summative purposes.**

# Feedback and Marking Guidance

## Rationale & Principles

We aim to ensure that all children have their work marked in such a way that it will lead to improved learning, develop self-confidence, raise self-esteem and provide opportunities for assessment – including self-assessment.

**Key questions to consider for all feedback and marking:**

- ***Is the feedback / marking useful for the child?***
- ***Does it move learning on?***

**Key principles and guidance for feedback and marking:**

- Regular verbal or written feedback will be given to children in a variety of ways, appropriate to their age and ability (e.g. verbally, in writing, or by use of symbols or a stamper). Please see Key Stage specific guidance below.
- In English and Mathematics all children will receive 'next steps marking' at least once per week. (Please see Subject specific guidance below). The amount and type of detail recorded in children's book will vary depending on their age and ability.
- Feedback and marking will be written or presented in a way that makes it as precise, accessible and meaningful as possible for the child. The emphasis will be on a child's achievement and what the 'next steps' need to be in order for the child to further improve/ move on in their learning.
- 'Next steps marking' will include a prompt (e.g a reminder, a question, a scaffold or an example) to support the child to respond to the marking. These could be individual 'next steps', or 'next steps' for a group of children. Please see Key Stage specific guidance below.
- Response and improvement time must be made available for children to read, respond to written comments and make improvements (please see P7, section 6).
- Verbal feedback will be indicated on the child's work by the symbol 'V'. Verbal feedback has most impact when pointing out successes and improvement needs against learning objectives/success criteria. It is also useful when the feedback would be too complicated for the child to comprehend in writing.
- When a child is asked to edit their written work (for example part of a piece of writing) or to make a correction (e.g correction of a maths calculation) after the lesson they will do so in a way that makes improvements clear and obvious (e.g by use of a different colour pencil or pen).

- All marking will be positive, informative and constructive. The focus of the feedback will be the learning objective or agreed success criteria, or 'non-negotiables' such as spelling or punctuation (relevant to the child's ability) and agreed school presentation expectations (see Appendix 1 and 2).
- Spelling will be marked sensitively, but with a focus on mistakes not being repeated. A maximum of 3 spelling mistakes will be corrected or drawn attention to. Only spellings relevant to the child's ability level will be corrected. Children will be asked to practise writing the correct spelling of the identified word/s in their book three times.
- Punctuation mistakes will be inserted where omitted in the presence of the child, where possible, and with some discussion or modelling. Punctuation marks relevant to the child's ability level will be marked.
- Marking will inform teachers' judgements on how a child is progressing in relation to the whole class, levels of attainment and the child's individual ability and will be used to inform teachers' records and reports to parents and carers.
- Marking will encourage the learners to be equally aware of '**how**' and '**what**' they are learning, and support them to become increasingly independent in making improvements to their own work.

### **Key Stage specific guidance**

#### Early Years:

Feedback in EYFS is almost always given verbally. Any written comments are primarily for assessment purposes. Once the children are ready, marking may be used to draw attention to incorrect letter formation or key words/spellings (linked to the phonics stage that the children are at).

#### Key Stage 1:

In Key Stage 1 a lot of feedback/marking will occur with the child, during or shortly after a task has been completed. Children will be expected to respond to 'next steps', in line with this policy, as appropriate to their age and ability. They may need adult support to do this.

#### Key Stage 2:

As children move through Key Stage 2 they will be increasingly expected to respond in greater depth to feedback and 'next steps', as they become more independent and reflective learners.

### **Subject specific guidance**

#### English and Mathematics:

All work in English and Maths books will be marked or acknowledged (e.g by use of a stamper or symbol). In English and Mathematics all children will receive 'next steps marking' at least once per week, and will be given time to respond, as appropriate, to

this marking. All pieces of writing in 'Bursting to Write' books will be marked, with 'next steps marking' for children to respond to.

### Science:

All work in Science books will be marked or acknowledged, but only one focus group per week will be marked in more detail. This marking will be focused on 'moving learning forward' (for example a question to extend thinking).

### Foundation Subjects:

Most pieces of recorded work in books for Foundation Subjects (at least 3 out of every five as a guide) will be marked/ acknowledged.

### Homework:

There is a separate policy concerning expectations around homework. According to this policy, teachers will monitor the return and completion of homework tasks. There is no expectation that every homework task will be marked in detail although completed homework will be acknowledged.

## **Marking in books**

Marking will usually be carried out by the teacher. However, in some circumstances Teaching Assistants may support the teacher with marking e.g. via marking mental maths test papers or providing children with instant feedback on their work when supporting them in a small group. The teacher remains responsible for marking and assessment of the children in their class.

Work may be self-marked to encourage independent learning through self-checking.

Work may be marked by a peer to encourage both a supportive partnership and a more critical approach to learning by pupils themselves.

All marks and formative assessment comments will serve as a permanent record for the child. Marking may be shared with outside professional agencies and parents/carers during the consultation process.

### **Agreed marking symbols:**

<b>I</b>	Independent work
<b>S</b>	Support given for task (brackets to denote who provided support)
<b>V</b>	Verbal feedback (brackets denote who discussion took place with)
	Next steps
•	Try again / answer to be corrected

Stampers are used in classes to support feedback and marking at an age appropriate level. The meaning of the stamper symbols used within a class are clearly displayed in

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the classroom and the meaning of each is discussed with and explained to the children.

Appendix 1

## **Presentation expectations**

'Presentation in books' guidance sheet for children on display in all classrooms, shared with children at the beginning of the school year and referred to regularly please (full recap at the start of each term may be beneficial in some classes/for some children).

It would be a good idea to get the children involved in discussions re the importance of good presentation and perhaps write some joint success criteria for good presentation to keep on display in your classroom.

Some further presentation expectations guidance for teachers and support staff:

### **Layout**

- Margin in all books (except Maths books) in KS2
- Date:
  - Long and short date always written on whiteboard
  - Children write long date in Literacy books and short date in Maths books (leave up to teacher judgement for other subject areas)
  - Date on all work/activities in books - written in top left hand corner
- LO for lesson/activity always visible during lesson
- LO for lesson/activity on all work/activities in books, underneath the date
- Please see 'Presentation in books' sheet for specific guidance re layout in Maths books

### **Handwriting**

- Use of Collins handwriting scheme
- Copies of Collins books kept in Reception (Book 1A), Y1 (Book 1B), Y2 (Book 2) – mainly for FS&KS1 use (will be focus during FS/KS1 meetings)
- Electronic copies of Collins books on network (Subject Folders>Literacy>Handwriting)
- Letter formation sheet on display in all classrooms
- All staff modelling correct letter formation and joining
- Handwriting lessons weekly in all classes

### **Worksheets**

- Overall aim to reduce number of sheets used and increase amount of independent recording in books
- Expectations re how to stick worksheets into books neatly needs to be modelled explicitly
- Sheets need to be trimmed to an appropriate size to fit neatly into books

### **Pens/pencils:**

- Pen licence can be earned from Y2 (pencil use before this)
- Please see 'Presentation in books' sheet for specific guidance re use of pens/pencils, rulers and rubbers

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- Books should be marked according to agreed school policy, with regular 'next step marking' and a focus on how to further improve (regular opportunities for children to respond to their 'next steps' are very important)
- Handwritten marking should be in agreed handwriting approach (letter formation, joins etc) – see *handwriting section above*
- 'Pink and green' marking (tickled pink and green for growth) will be used for all marking and feedback in English and 'Bursting to Write' books.

Use of pink and green provides a clear and consistent visual prompt for the children and helps them identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, particularly for younger pupils. Teachers may decide to use 'pink and green' marking in other subject areas. The most important thing is that a consistent approach is in place and the areas of strength and areas for improvement are always clear and explicit to the children.

## Presentation in books

- Always write the **date** in the top left hand corner of the page.
- Always include the **Learning Objective**, underneath the date on a new line.  
e.g L.O. To present my work clearly.
- If your piece of work has a title, please underline it with a ruler.
- Write your words on the line.
- Start a new line if you have to. ~~Don't jump around~~
- In Maths books, write each digit in its own square:

1	2	3	4								
1	0		1	1		1	2		1	3	

1		1	0
2		1	1
3		1	2
4		1	3

- Leave a square between each answer or write each answer on a new line.
- Always use a sharp pencil in Maths books.
- Once your pen licence has been earned, pens can be used in English, Science and topic books (at discretion of teacher).
- Always use a ruler for underlining.
- Always use a pencil for drawing.
- Cross out any mistakes neatly, by putting a line through it.

e.g. mistake not ~~mistake~~

(Rubbers to be used at discretion of teacher – depending on age of children, activity etc)