

Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy

Responding to Children's Work Policy

December 2014

RESPONDING TO CHILDREN'S WORK

At Northwick Park Academy we believe that as teachers we have the responsibility to respond positively and appropriately to children's work. Through our responses we seek not only to correct mistakes and identify weaknesses, but also to acknowledge strengths and celebrate achievements. We use this information to inform our on-going assessment of individual pupils and to guide our planning. When responding to children's work we endeavour to take account of the ability and maturity of the child.

Through our responses to children's work we aim to:

- ❖ make children part of the interactive learning experience and show them that their work is valued;
- ❖ assess children's knowledge and success in their work;
- ❖ identify difficulties, correct mistakes and help the child to improve his/her performance;
- ❖ give encouragement and advice for future work;
- ❖ increase the child's self-esteem;
- ❖ extend and challenge children individually, as a group and as a class;
- ❖ develop a meaningful relationship with the child;
- ❖ evaluate teaching effectiveness and inform future planning;
- ❖ gauge success against predetermined targets;
- ❖ inform parents, governors and outside agencies of progress;
- ❖ inform whole school assessment standards;
- ❖ model expectations;
- ❖ reinforce school policies;
- ❖ be consistent in our feedback throughout the school.

Of course the children remain at the centre of this process and we see it as a means by which they may be empowered by learning to:

- understand the teacher's marks and responses;
- comment confidently on their own work;
- reflect on progress;
- be involved in setting their own realistic targets;
- review the achievement of their targets.

All of this helps to ensure the children's active participation in their education while encouraging them to think for themselves, be self critical, and be willing to overcome difficulties and weaknesses.

STRATEGIES

We respond to children's work in a variety of ways. These include marking, verbal feedback and discussion, sharing work, questioning, praise, rewards and display. Whatever strategy is used, it is important that regard is taken of equal opportunities and the maturity of the child.

MARKING AND VERBAL FEEDBACK INCLUDING QUESTIONING AND PRAISE

At Northwick Park Academy the method of responding to children's work is at the teacher's discretion. Where possible it is important to involve the children in marking their own work and identifying their own successes and areas for improvement. This is linked to the success criteria generated at the beginning of each lesson. When marking and/or offering verbal feedback it is important to:

- ❖ be specific and mark or comment with the learning objective in mind;
- ❖ be sure that the child is aware of the objective and the success criteria;
- ❖ balance praise with constructive criticism;
- ❖ comment positively, meaningfully and appropriately according to the child's ability and maturity;
- ❖ mark and/or respond promptly so as to be relevant.

When possible, verbal comments should be supported with a date and teacher's initials to indicate feedback and discussion. A copy of the General Marking Key is attached as *Appendix A*.

GUIDELINES FOR MARKING

- Work should only be marked in pink or green ink or pencil.
- In Key Stage 2 children are encouraged to write on alternate lines to aid efficient marking.
- Positive marking (tickled pink) is essential, therefore a positive comment followed by a 'next steps' comment (green for growth) should always be made.

- In mathematics, an incorrect answer is marked with a small green cross. An incorrect figure should be circled to point out the error. If the child has the majority of their work wrong, it is expected that the teacher use their discretion and, rather than a page of crosses, a helpful comment is made and support provided.
- Corrections should be clearly labelled and, in mathematics, should be set out as a whole written question rather than the erasing and reworking the calculation.
- In all subject areas, correct terminology should be encouraged and marking should reflect the correct use and spelling of key words.

LEARNING TARGETS

Learning objectives are displayed in all classrooms and are regularly referred to during lessons. These aid the children in understanding what they are required to learn and in assessing their own progress.

Curriculum targets for English and mathematics are stuck into exercise books. These targets are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. Progress towards these targets is assessed by both pupils and adults each half term.

Presentation targets for English and maths are also stuck into exercise books and are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. Progress towards these targets is assessed by pupils and adults termly.

Where class targets are displayed, these are appropriate to the ages and abilities of the children.

Individual targets – are specific to the child on the annual report and shared during parent consultations. Personal and social targets are allocated and shared with parents on provision maps.

DISPLAY

Display is a feature of the school environment and should be used to support teaching and learning. We believe that displays should:

- ❖ reflect the current work of the children;
- ❖ cover a range of curriculum subjects;
- ❖ celebrate all abilities;
- ❖ be accessible and use a variety of formats including 3D;

- ❖ be a stimulating learning tool which demonstrates standards to be achieved;
- ❖ have some interactive features;
- ❖ make targets a focal point of the classroom;
- ❖ be titled and labelled with individual work signed or named;
- ❖ reflect any on-going success criteria.

REWARDS

A variety of rewards are used throughout the school to help model expectations and acknowledge children's efforts in achieving these. Rewards may be used not only to encourage academic excellence but also to motivate children towards improved effort and attitude. Individuals, teams, groups or a class may be rewarded.

Systems for rewards vary from the Reception to upper Key Stage 2.

Rewards include:

- ❖ praise from the class teacher and when appropriate from other staff including the headteacher;
- ❖ whole school Golden Time sessions (see Behaviour Policy);
- ❖ team points;
- ❖ stickers;
- ❖ stamps;
- ❖ certificates;
- ❖ well done award;
- ❖ a mention/letter home in the reading book from the class teacher or when appropriate from other staff including the headteacher;
- ❖ a postcard is mailed directly to parents/guardians in recognition of exceptional achievement;
- ❖ sharing work with the class;
- ❖ participation in an assembly.

Whatever rewards are used, they must be seen to be consistent, fair and appropriate. A reward should be recognition that expectations with regard to effort, behaviour and/or academic achievement have been met or surpassed. A reward should never be used as a bribe. It should be rewarded 'because...' and not 'if...'

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Our responses to children's work should be regularly monitored and evaluated to help determine our success in achieving our policy aims while informing children of their progress. Individual teachers should be encouraged to reflect on the ways in which they respond to children and their work and school assessment and subject leaders should also review strategies in use as part of the monitoring and evaluation of individual subjects and year group work.

This process may involve:

- ❖ sampling children's work;
- ❖ talking to children;
- ❖ discussion with colleagues;
- ❖ classroom observation;
- ❖ parental questionnaire.

CONCLUSION

Our response to children and their work form an integral part of the teaching and learning process. We hope to ensure our success as teachers and the children's progress as learners if we endeavour not only to transmit knowledge but to listen to, question, stimulate and challenge, enable, support and value the children we teach. Our considered responses should help to guide children through their education informing them of their progress while motivating them towards success.

Policy to be reviewed in December 2017

Appendix A

GENERAL MARKING KEY

The marking key is offered as a fast route to pinpointing a child's difficulties or errors. It should be used as a guideline for the child to recognise their own mistakes, and action that their teacher requires them to take.

- ❖ This is used to indicate verbal feedback has been given and should be dated and signed where appropriate.
- ❖ To be used when a child has missed out a word. The child or teacher can insert these.
- ❖ Acknowledges that a new paragraph is required.
- ❖ This can be used around a punctuation error.
- ❖ Underlining of a word should be used to indicate that a word is spelt incorrectly. 'SP' can then be written in the margin to allow the child to seek the word for him/herself. Or, the correct spelling should be written above the underlining for the child.
- ❖ The asterisk should be used to indicate missed phrases that are then written at the end of the text. Children should be encouraged to do the same.

