

Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School

Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy

At Elmfield we follow the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, which is designed to meet the developmental needs of the pupils in our care. The nature of the curriculum is such that a lot of lessons are exploratory and open-ended. Teachers consider and decide upon learning objectives for each lesson or series of lessons which are then made clear in their planning. Sometimes it is appropriate to share these objectives with the class at the beginning of a lesson to focus the pupils' minds on the task ahead. However, sometimes this narrows opportunities for exploration and discovery and the teacher may decide not to make these objectives visible to the class.

Criteria for a task are made clear to the pupils in an age and subject appropriate way. This may be as simple as reminding a younger class to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences or may be as detailed as discussing what makes a piece of work interesting and informative with an older class.

Marking, feedback and assessment at Elmfield, therefore, is not always based on explicitly explained learning objectives and success criteria. Teachers will use marking, feedback and assessment creatively and effectively to support their teaching of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum.

Therefore, marking, feedback and assessment at Elmfield:

- is an integral part of teaching and learning;
- influences the planning and development of lessons;
- maximises pupils' progress through helpful feedback and clear targets (where appropriate);
- is done through a wide range of strategies.

Marking, feedback and assessment procedures at Elmfield

Whole school strategies:

Marking, feedback and assessment at Elmfield will vary according to the age of the pupil and the nature of the subject. It will include:

a. **Individual written feedback** which:

- takes the form of an enabling comment which highlights what has been done well and points out ways in which to improve;
- may record a grade or effort mark;
- may come from peers
- may be in the form of corrections.

b. **Individual oral feedback** which:

- is positive, enabling and focussed on pupil development;
- engages pupils in dialogue framed around identifying options and best ways forward;
- acknowledges and celebrates successes and effort;
- can come from peers;
- can help pupils reflect on their own learning.

c. **Whole class/group feedback** which:

- provides feedback in the most time effective manner;
- identifies strengths and areas for improvement across the class/group;
- enables pupils to identify successful work and to contribute to ways of improving a less successful piece of work;
- provides pupils with opportunities to self-assess and identify areas for improvement.

d. **Self-assessment** which:

- is part of pupils' everyday school experience;
- enables pupils to look at their own work and identify strengths and weaknesses;
- asks pupils to reflect on their work, what they have enjoyed, found difficult, feel they have improved or need to work on in the future;
- moves pupils towards independence in learning.

e. **Peer assessment** which:

- enables pupils to have clear examples in their mind's eye of what 'good' looks like;
- helps pupils recognise what is 'good' in their own work and in others';

- helps pupils gain greater understanding of their own learning progress.

f. **Teacher assessment** which:

- enables teachers to track individual students' progress over a set period of time;
- enables teachers to identify patterns and trends with regard to attainment, effort, behaviour and other criteria;
- informs planning and learning for differentiation purposes

g. **Reports** which:

- enable us to share this information with pupils and parents/carers

h. **Parents' evenings** which:

- give teachers and parents/carers opportunities to discuss pupils' development and progress (upper school pupils are invited to these as well);
- give teachers an opportunity to share insights into the Waldorf curriculum and the methods used to deliver it;
- give teachers and parents/carers an opportunity to discuss child development and how the Waldorf curriculum supports this.

Implementation of the policy

a. Kindergarten

The initial interview forms part of our assessment of a child in the Early Years Department. This assessment is continued by the teacher through observation of the child. Notes are taken for each child on the modified EYFS Profile form and for each of the criteria the child may be assessed as Emerging, Developing, Secure or Cause for Concern.

This process begins in the Nursery class and continues through a child's time in Kindergarten. When the child is 5 years old he/she will be assessed by his/her teacher for Class 1 readiness using the EYFS Profile, and a visit to the school doctor will inform any decision.

Various other forms are used by the Early Years teachers and assistants to record more detailed observations and action plans. These are then attached to the child's Profile. The Profile is shared and discussed with the child's parents on a regular basis and signed on each occasion.

Detailed formal reports are written at the end of each year for all 4 and 5 year olds, using the headings given in the Profile.

b. Lower School

Main Lessons

Books are constantly reviewed by the teacher. A detailed breakdown of progress against the skills taught is recorded on an assessment checklist (see Appendix A), under the headings of not secure; working towards; secure. Classes 1 to 5 also complete a development profile for each child.

In Classes 1 and 2, feedback tends to be oral rather than written. More detailed feedback is given in Class 3. We also make good use of peer assessment in these early classes, with the children looking at each other's work and commenting on what they like and what the pupil could do better next time. This process is supportive, and the children appreciate the comments of their peers.

In **Classes 4-5**, the teacher gives ongoing verbal feedback to each child about their work, to help the children become more aware of how they can improve their work in a constructive and stress-free manner. At the end of each block the children peer assess each other.

The teacher will mark the main lesson book by giving general comments together with a small comment on individual pages and a summary of general comments regarding content and standard of work.

In **Classes 6-8**, books are marked once or twice before the end of a three week block, at which point a summative assessment is made by the teacher.

Short comments about the content, presentation and accuracy of the main lesson book are written in pencil on the main lesson book. Spelling and grammar errors are indicated. The teacher will also give oral feedback on all of these points during the main lesson.

Peer assessment of work takes place once in writing and more frequently orally over the same time period. Self-assessment will happen frequently with the teacher in class and a written self, peer and teacher assessment takes place at the end of the main lesson period.

All written assessment is recorded in the main lesson book. Parents are asked to sign the written record after reading it and looking through their child's book. The teacher keeps a copy of the written assessment for their files, to check against progression and to write the yearly report.

Subject lessons

Subject teachers will mark and/or give feedback in an age-appropriate and subject-appropriate way. There will be huge differences, for example, between appropriate feedback for a Class 3 games lesson and a Class 8 French lesson. Subject teachers will use a variety of ways to give timely and supportive feedback to their students as outlined above. For practical subjects, e.g. music, gym, games, Eurythmy, crafts and cookery, individual oral feedback will be given during the lessons by the teacher. Self and peer assessment is also encouraged as the pupils move towards the upper school.

Books may be marked by the teacher or possibly by the students under the teacher's direction, typically once a week. For Maths, answers will be marked right or wrong and the pupil may be given a mark out of 10 etc. If the teacher is marking the work, he/she may correct the pupil's workings and/or give the correct answer so that pupils can see where they went wrong, and may add a comment on effort or presentation and/or a suggestion for improvement. For English and foreign languages, any work handed in is usually given a written comment with suggestions for improvement, and spelling and grammar errors are underlined. Often a general comment on a task is made to the whole class. Sometimes individual students' work may be read out to the class and commented on or discussed, or handed out for peer assessment.

In all subjects, teachers keep a record of progress and any marks achieved in classwork, homework and in tests, as appropriate, in their preferred form. These records will form the basis of any written reports.

In foreign languages the teachers usually set end of year assessments for Classes 7 and 8. Class 8 also have an end of year assessment in Maths.

Feedback for Parents

Feedback is given to parents via end of year reports which offer a comprehensive overview of the pupil's work, behaviour and development during the school year. In Classes 7 and 8 parents also receive a mid-year report which gives a short summary of each pupil's application and attainment thus far in the year.

Class teachers give feedback to parents and carers at Parents' Evenings, normally at least once per term, on the general development and behaviour of the class as well as how the Main Lessons work with the development of the child. Teachers offer individual consultations with parents and carers, normally in the summer term, where they can offer feedback as to how that particular pupil is getting on.

Teachers' marking and record keeping are monitored as part of our on-going appraisal and mentoring process.

Festivals, class plays, concerts and other school events are all good opportunities for parents to see how their child is progressing in different areas of their development.

c. Upper School

Main Lessons

Main lesson books or folders are checked once or twice during the block, and pupils are given feedback including targets or suggestions for improvement.

At the end of the block, pupils' work and engagement is assessed by their teacher, using rubrics. The rubrics are attached to the main lesson books at the end of each block which both the next main lesson teacher and the pupil have access to in order to review targets set for the next main lesson.

A detailed grade breakdown is recorded for each individual pupil on a main lesson assessment grid showing all main lessons for the year and hence each pupil's progress.

Summary grades for application and attainment are reported in the half-termly pupil reports and these grades are restated together with a full written assessment in the end of year pupil reports.

Morning Modules

Pupils are given on-going oral feedback. At the end of the block, pupils' work and engagement is assessed by their teacher. Summary grades for application and attainment are reported in the half-termly pupil reports and these grades are restated together with a full written assessment in the end of year pupil reports. The end of module showcase is an opportunity for verbal peer and self-assessment.

Subject Lessons

Books may be marked by the teacher or in the classroom by the students, typically once a week. In smaller groups the latter approach is often preferred because it enables the teacher to discuss any difficulties there and then with the students.

For Maths, answers are marked right or wrong and the pupil may be given a mark out of 10 etc. If the teacher is marking the work, he/she may correct the pupil's workings and/or give the correct answer so that pupils can see where they went wrong, and may add a written comment including a target or suggestion for improvement. For English and foreign languages, any work handed in is usually given a written comment including a target or suggestion for improvement, and spelling and grammar errors are highlighted. Any targets set are monitored to ensure the student is progressing.

Often a general comment on a homework task is made to the whole class. Sometimes a class is given time to do corrections to recently marked homework, particularly if the homework revealed a widespread gap in understanding. Marking also informs future planning in that a teacher may decide to use a lesson or part of a lesson to go over something again. In practical lessons (e.g. Art, Music, Woodwork) teachers give frequent and ongoing verbal formative feedback to the whole class as well as to individuals, and make good use of peer and self-assessment.

Class 9 sit mock GCSE exams at the end of the school year. Classes 10 and 11 sit their mock GCSE exams in January. In all subjects, teachers keep a record of progress and any marks achieved in homework, practice papers and tests, as appropriate, in their preferred form.

Feedback for Parents

Feedback is given to parents via end of year reports which offer a comprehensive overview of the pupil's work, behaviour and development during the school year. In the Upper School parents additionally receive half-termly reports during the autumn and spring terms, which give an overview of application and attainment, behaviour, homework, attendance and punctuality.

Parents' Evenings are normally held once per term, and class guardians give feedback on the general development and behaviour of the class as well as how the Main Lessons work with the development of the child. Subject teachers in the Upper School are invited to individual consultations with parents/carers and pupils at least once a year.

Teachers' marking and record keeping are monitored as part of our on-going appraisal and mentoring process.

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