

MERSTONE SCHOOL



Marking and Homework

Policy

Adopted: Autumn 2015

Rationale:

The marking and homework policy is an integral part of the School Improvement Plan to support the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

At Merstone school 'marking' is not entrenched solely in pupils' written work. The key purpose of marking is to communicate to the pupils through focused staff responses where progress has been made and what next steps in learning may look like for each individual pupil.

The home/school partnership is also an extension of the school learning environment where parents or carers can share and enhance strategies to support learning to support 'homework'. The pupil can also demonstrate the transference of skills in another place with another task and/or person.

For the purpose of this policy 'homework' is defined as any work, games, activities or personal and social routines which pupils are asked or encouraged to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers. Whatever the activity, homework should be an enjoyable experience and not a task that puts pressure on the child or the family.

There are six key phases throughout the school where marking and homework may be addressed in different ways depending on the age and starting points of the child.

In each key phase we challenge our staff to consider within the marking and homework policy:

- How do we communicate our responses to pupils' outcomes?
- How do we mark (annotate) on worksheets/in workbooks?
- How are 'next steps' communicated to pupils?
- What are appropriate homework activities to extend learning?
- How do we involve parents or carers in homework tasks?

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we use:
 - stamps and stickers
 - verbal praise
 - physical praise, e.g. raising pupils' arm to acknowledge success with a task.
- Methods of marking include:
 - staff recording on post-its then transferring to pupil powerpoint
 - completing formative PMLD assessment records
 - annotating on an activity recording sheet
 - sending home examples of moderated evidence to parents.
- Due to the pupils' level of understanding the 'next steps' may be shared with parents or carers so that they are aware of the small steps of progress. Next steps are sent home termly through:
 - targets on termly reports
 - Individual Education Plan achievements
 - Developmental Journal records.

- Homework activities are generated from the topic overview and may include:
 - key words to support the topic
 - Rainbow Bear spending the weekend at home sharing weekend news
 - recognising achievements on leaves for the Good News garden.
- Parents or carers provide feedback on new words used at home related to the current topic. They may attend appropriate workshops to support their child's learning, e.g. the completion of the Developmental Journal to base-line starting points.

KEY STAGE 1:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we use:
 - a reward chart with smiley faces
 - verbal and gestural praise shared during work time and plenary to celebrate progress
 - individual reward systems evident in classrooms
 - reflection for higher ability children to evaluate what they did last lesson and what they need to remember to include in their learning outcomes this time.
- Methods of marking include:
 - detail in the amount of support (verbal, independent, etc.)
 - where the child completed the task (1:1, whole class activity, etc.)
 - staff ensuring the work is dated for the progression
 - indicating when marking what the child says and/or signs
 - use of Assessing Pupil Progress grids to mark outcomes and cross-referenced to photographic evidence.
- 'Next steps' are communicated with children by:
 - the nature of the next activity on reflection of progress with the last activity
 - the detail of the learning objective shared with pupils, e.g. 'Today we are going to ...'
 - a comment written on a worksheet
 - sign-posting on an Individual Education Plan target
 - consistently high expectations shared amongst the staff team.
- Homework activities may include:
 - weekly and /or fortnightly tasks
 - tasks usually linked to fine motor skills and speaking and listening skills
 - Number and Reading activities to support IEP target work
 - additional tasks provided during the extended holiday period.
- Tasks are communicated through:
 - Face to face parent or carer conversations at the end of the school day
 - home-school diary or telephone call
 - parents' evening where practical advice is shared on how to model tasks including counting, and recognizing letters and sounds in the environment.

KEY STAGE 2:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we use:
 - body language signing where appropriate for some pupil
 - verbal praise
 - rewards of choice and stickers to signify recognition of progress.

- Methods of marking include:
 - detail in the quality of written statements by staff and post-it notes
 - appropriate photographs to capture the task
 - facial emotions of smiley faces and thumbs up.
- 'Next steps' are communicated with pupils:
 - verbally and in writing
 - before the next task by staff discussion.
- Homework activities include:
 - requesting parents or carers read at home with supporting comprehension sheets
 - curriculum topic tasks
 - weekend recording sheets to share weekend news
 - handwriting tasks
 - Individual Education Plan targeted tasks
 - transferring skills from school to home, e.g. naming shapes in the home environment.
- Tasks are communicated to parents or carers by:
 - organising appropriate workshops to meet needs of parents or carers
 - ensuring the reading diary and reading book commutes between school and home
 - further development of the school website homepage for parent or carer and pupil to access appropriate programs.

KEY STAGE 3:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we use:
 - positive praise and share observations about pupil learning throughout the lesson
 - pupil engagement where appropriate in self-assessment by questioning what they found easy/difficult and like/dislike
 - discussion with the pupil about comments they have written at their level of understanding.
- Methods of marking include:
 - detail in written comment based on staff observations
 - comment from staff based on pupils' self-reflection
 - reference to ASDAN codes for marking work, e.g. physical support, gestural help or independent work.
- 'Next steps' are communicated by:
 - providing a witness statement in workbooks
 - evidencing progress on the Assessing Pupil Progress grids for individual learners.
- Homework activities include:
 - providing tasks in response to specific parent or carer requests
 - loaning from the resource library an alternative to 'homework' tasks.
- Tasks are communicated with parents or carers:
 - via home-school book
 - by requesting that parents or carers re-inforce the more challenging areas of the curriculum with further practice and consolidation.

KEY STAGE 4:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we:
 - revisit what we have been learning and tell each individual pupil and groups what they have achieved both academically or with behaviour targets
 - celebrate success at 'Star of the Week' assembly.
- Methods of marking include:
 - detail in written comment on pupil evidence sheet
 - evaluation on Individual Education Plan targets
 - formative assessment detailed in PMLD folders
 - appropriate external assessment forms.
- 'Next steps' are communicated by:
 - Indicating green spot to show next step in pupil learning by work
 - next task written when monitoring progress against Individual Education Plan targets
 - discussion as a class team at whole class, small group or individual level of marking.
- Homework activities are sent home for some pupils including reading book of their choice.
- Tasks are communicated with parents or carers via home-school book.

KEY STAGE 5:

- To communicate our responses to pupil's work we:
 - praise
 - issue merit awards
 - use verbal/written comments
 - seek pupil views, e.g. 'How do you think you did?'
 - use gesture/facial expression/body language
 - record content of Transition Plans to record achievements
 - review IEP targets.
- Methods of marking include:
 - detail in written comment
 - levels of support indicated
 - accredited ratings detailed on the continuum level.
- 'Next steps' are communicated verbally and in writing.
- Homework activities include:
 - researching for a subject or curriculum area
 - finding information
 - a practical activity, e.g. use of money when shopping or using transport to get somewhere.
- Tasks are communicated with parents or carers at parent evening and at Annual Review when targets are set.

Checklist for effective marking/homework:

- Is marking encouraging and supporting for the full range of learners?

- Is it clear to the pupil what they have done well and why? Clarity in the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ will take the teaching and learning even further.
- Are there helpful corrections where appropriate that have prioritized the key learning for each individual pupil?
- Are there next steps to help improve the next piece of work? This will sign-post to other staff what to look out for when working with the pupil.
- Has the marking addressed the basic skills of reading, writing and maths, including transference to other curriculum areas?
- Has the pupil responded to the marking comments and feedback?
- Is there evidence of self-assessment in future tasks?
- Where appropriate can the pupil identify how they may further improve their work?
- Has time been provide in lessons or work sent home to practice and consolidate skills?

Is the marking and homework making a difference to this pupil’s work?

Is the learning moving forward?

Can you see progress?