



## **Giving children feed back about their learning**

Information for parents, St Martin's Primary School

### **Aim**

We aim to support, structure, mediate and scaffold children's learning by helping them to address the gap between what they already know, understand or can do at a given moment and what they will want or need to know, understand or be able to do in the future. We aim to help children to bridge that gap themselves by giving effective verbal feedback and by making written comments count. Our aim is to involve children as far as possible in the analysis and constructive criticism of their own work. Children should continually self-evaluate so that reflection, pride in success, modification and improvement becomes a natural part of their learning process.

### **Key Principles**

#### **Effective feedback should:**

Enable children to become reflective, active learners  
Relate to shared learning intentions and process success criteria  
Be specific, focusing on success and improvement rather than correction  
Give clear strategies on how to close the gap between current and desired performance  
Address the specific difficulties preventing individuals from reaching their learning targets  
Be accessible to children  
Allow specific time for children to respond  
Inform future planning and determine individual target setting  
Be seen by children as positive in improving their learning  
Encourage and teach children to self-mark and self-evaluate  
Give recognition and appropriate praise for achievement  
Be given regularly, whether verbal or written, as an integral part of the lesson

### **Strategies for enabling effective feedback during lessons**

- Using verbal prompts to help close the gap between the child's current performance and the desired goal. Reminder prompts draw the child's attention to the learning intention and generally asks for elaboration e.g. 'Say more about...' 'Explain this to me...'. Scaffolding prompts focus on specifics, helping children to extend their present understanding and develop more complex contributions e.g. 'Can you think of a better way of....?' 'What might you have used instead?' Example prompts make suggestions, offer information or give a range of possible answers e.g. 'You could try to..' 'It might be interesting to know that...'

- Using 2 stars and a wish verbally. The teacher explains what they like about a piece of work and then discuss one area which could be improved upon.
- Using self/ peer assessment/marking against the success criteria. Children can identify successes and look for improvement points.
- Using traffic lights, thumbs, smiley faces as a way of getting children to rate their achievement or understanding against the success criteria at different points of the lesson.
- Using talking partners e.g. Pairs think, articulate and extend their learning, and response partners e.g. Individuals identify what they like about their partner's work and then work together on improving one of the success criteria.
- Using real examples of completed work to generate success criteria or analyse against success criteria
- Comparing and contrasting finished pieces of work to engage children in thinking about which piece represents the most effective achievement.
- Using questions to focus feedback- How, why, what?
- Expressing an interest in children's work. The quality of the teacher-child relationship is very important.
- Using reflective listening to demonstrate understanding and acceptance e.g. 'So you think that...' 'You seem to be saying...'
- Allowing children time to follow up and act upon feedback. Children need to carry out the improvement suggestion, whether oral or written so that it becomes embedded.
- Being positive when acknowledging children's responses.

Verbal feedback may be identified in a child's workbook using a 'v' symbol.

### **Strategies for enabling effective feedback away from the child**

- Writing good comments where it really matters. Use insightful, diagnostic comments when the learning intention requires higher order thinking. Say specifically what has been done well, identify what has been less successful and suggest how improvement can be made.
- Using highlight and prompt marking e.g. two stars and a wish, highlighters, notes in the margin etc. Train children to understand this process by using scanned examples and marking it with them.
- Using written prompts to help close the gap.

### **General expectations**

Effective feedback involves being explicit about the success criteria and not over emphasising elements such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting unless they are the particular focus of the lesson. However, general expectations require children to take responsibility for these elements and year groups display reminders.

When a piece of work is completed, children should be given specific time to read their work through to check for any 'secretarial errors' e.g. to correct known spellings, to check sentence punctuation etc.