



Holywell Church of England Primary School

# Teaching, Learning, Feedback and Assessment Policy

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## 1. Rationale

At Holywell Church of England Primary School, we use our vision, *Flowing, Strengthening, Deepening*, not only as our statement to guide the education and experience that we provide our children with, but also to guide our curriculum choices and our approach to teaching and learning as a whole.

Therefore, we think of our curriculum as:

- **Flowing** – identifying the key knowledge and skills that all children need to acquire in each subject.
- **Strengthening** – drawing links *within* each subject to enhance our children's understanding further.
- **Deepening** – making purposeful links *across* subjects to enrich understanding and create inter-linked 'schema' or 'networks' of knowledge and understanding.

Our curriculum has been sequenced and designed to ensure these links are built up over time as the children progress through school, and our teaching and learning policy is designed to ensure that our curriculum is delivered in the best possible way. Indeed, at Holywell, high quality teaching and learning is at the very core of what we aim to do. This is because high quality teaching and learning transforms lives, opens doors and provides opportunities. The purpose of this policy is to promote the best possible teaching and learning strategies and outcomes in order to fulfil this core purpose. It incorporates all aspects of teaching and learning including marking and feedback and assessment.

## 2. Aims

The aim of our teaching and learning policy is to help shape our young people into confident and resilient individuals with the cultural and academic knowledge required to participate in local and national life, and pursue fulfilling and rewarding futures.

To help achieve this, our policy aims to do the following:

- Promote the best possible teaching and learning strategies.
- Be grounded in evidence.
- Be a useful reference document for class teachers.
- Be helpful in explaining our approach to other stakeholders.
- Underpin our monitoring and CPD activities.

## 3. Teaching

### 3.1 – What we teach

At Holywell, we teach an ambitious, well-sequenced and broad curriculum. Our curriculum policy and individual subject overviews set out our approach to each subject, and include long and medium term plans detailing the objectives we teach.

Our emphasis is on valuing all subjects equally, as part of this, we do not teach cross-curricular topics. Rather, we teach each subject individually, with no expectation that the

geography and history units, for example, necessarily link to create a thematic topic. This is to ensure we avoid tenuous, inappropriate links driving our learning, rather than the knowledge and skill set of each subject.

We do however ensure that purposeful links are made and that these are based upon prior learning across the year group and the subject where possible.

### **3.2 – Who we teach**

Everyone. At Holywell, we believe that all children are entitled to the same ambitious, well-structured and broad curriculum. Therefore, we expect all children to be involved in the same learning and to achieve well. To support all learners to reach this goal, we may provide additional scaffolds to support those that need more help. We do recognise, however, that there may be a small number of children whose particular SEND needs mean they require a separate curriculum, or a high level of differentiation, and these are provided on a 1:1 basis. More information on this can be found in our SEND policy.

### **3.3 – How we teach**

At Holywell, we have used the latest evidence-based research from key educationalists to inform our pedagogy. In particular, we have drawn on Tom Sherrington's book 'Rosenshine's Principles in Action' and the work of Mary Myatt.

We have used these works to develop a coherent and consistent approach to lessons including:

**Review** → Each lesson starts with a review of key facts from previous lessons within the unit; this usually takes the form of a quick five question quiz. This is because constantly being required to recall prior learning means it is more likely to be transferred to our long term memory.

**Introduce** → The learning objective for the lesson, drawn from our medium term plans or the National Curriculum, is introduced. Links are made to previous learning within the subject, and purposeful links to learning in other subjects is made where they enrich the understanding. This is because linking new learning to pre-existing knowledge helps create rich networks of understanding, or schema, that build up over time and ensure learning is retained.

**Teach** → The new material is taught to the children. At Holywell, we have a strong emphasis on 'learning through reading'. The children are encouraged to learn through reading high quality texts<sup>1</sup> with a set of key questions to answer. During the teach stage of the lesson, the teacher will also engage in high quality questioning and modelling to ensure the new learning is clear. The emphasis is on presenting new information in small 'bitesize' chunks and building it up bit by bit. This is because our working memories are small, and if we overload them with too much information at once, we won't remember it.

**Check** → We check for understanding using a variety of AfL strategies, see section 5.2 for examples of these. This is so we can respond to the information these strategies provide by either re-teaching and re-modelling to make the information more clear, or identifying individual children who might need more focused support in the lesson to be successful.

**Independent Activity** → The children will be given an activity to complete, accompanied by high quality resources and scaffolds, that helps them to process and internalise the new learning. During this stage of the lesson, the teacher will circulate to provide verbal feedback, and/or work with identified focus children to ensure they are successful. We believe independent and partner based work to be more effective than group work, where it can be difficult to ascertain how well individual children have achieved. Group work is avoided therefore unless purposeful, and relevant to the subject for example in PSHE or PE.

**Plenary** → The plenary will sum up the learning, ensuring the key learning is again made clear, and provide the children with an opportunity to reflect on their work and their success. Mini plenaries are also used as a part of the learning process as appropriate.

The majority of lessons at Holywell will incorporate these elements. However, we recognise that there may be some instances where this lesson structure does not work, and therefore teachers have the professional discretion to adapt it as necessary.

There is no expectation that teachers create detailed lesson plans. Rather high quality PowerPoints with accompanying resources have been created and used to ensure the lesson's structure is embedded.

### **3.4 – When we teach**

At Holywell, lessons are divided into three groups: A, B and C. Group A subjects are taught daily; group B subjects are taught in a block, usually 3 lessons a week over a period of 2-3 weeks, and Group C subjects are taught weekly.

<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>	<b>Group C</b>
English Maths	Science History Geography Art DT	<u>Once Weekly</u> Music French Computing RE PSHE  <u>Twice Weekly</u> PE

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<sup>1</sup> The high quality texts linked to each unit of work have been mapped out and can be found in individual subject overviews.

By timetabling the curriculum in this way, we ensure there is an appropriate time for each subject to be covered fully, with equal weight given to each foundation subject. Group A and B subjects are taught using our own sequenced curriculum, whereas Group C subjects, that may require more specialised knowledge, are taught using high-quality schemes of work which adapt as necessary.

## **4. Feedback and Marking**

### **4.1 General Principles**

At Holywell, we believe that feedback and marking is a powerful tool to further learning and encourage children to self-reflect. We also acknowledge that marking can be time consuming and ineffective if done poorly. Therefore, we believe that feedback and marking should be both manageable and purposeful: manageable for staff and purposeful for children. We employ a range of different strategies to achieve this, and have drawn on the EEF's marking review in formulating our approach which found that:

- Detailed written marking was not having an impact on pupil outcomes in any proportionate way to the time and effort it takes.
- The most powerful feedback teachers could give to pupils is that which is given at the point of the work being done.
- Feedback and assessment was more powerful when the children were involved in the process through peer- and self- assessment and feedback, rather than assessment being something that was *done to them* by teachers and then shared with them as feedback.
- Brief written feedback may be provided where children have been unable to edit their work to a satisfactory standard and additional individual feedback is required to improve the quality of a piece of writing (e.g. the use of vocabulary). This feedback may also direct children to practising key skills such as spelling or handwriting where necessary.
- The timing of feedback should move away from the distance marking completed in the evening, and into the school day itself.

### **4.2**

As a result of these findings, we have formulated the following strategies to use in school: live marking (1), self- and peer- marking (2) and whole class feedback (3).

### **4.3 Live Marking**

Live marking is a powerful yet effective tool, which enables teachers to mark pupils' work during a lesson, teachers should mark using a pink pen. During the independent learning phase of a lesson, the teacher will circulate the class and provide high quality verbal feedback as the children are completing their work. Since teachers are speaking to pupils during the lesson, this enables feedback to be both clear and precise. When live marking, it is important that the following occurs:

- Not all spelling mistakes will be identified. The maximum will vary depending on the age and ability of the child. Identifying too many mistakes can be de-motivating.
- Errors in handwriting may be identified and a correct example should be copied at the end of a piece of work.
- The school marking code is applied.
- Marks are shared in a positive way i.e. the number of correct answers in a maths test should be recorded, not the number wrong.
- The children will know before they start a piece of work what features the teacher will pay particular attention to when marking.

It is expected that children will respond to verbal feedback in purple pen ( or pencil as they begin to use this strategy in the second half of year 1 ).

### **4.4 Whole Class Feedback**

Whole class feedback is a useful tool for addressing common misconceptions and mistakes, or general points for improvement relevant to groups of children or the whole class. It replaces individual written comments that are ineffective and time consuming. During lessons, or during a post-lesson review of books, the teacher will identify common misconceptions or general points for improvement relevant to groups of children or the whole class. They will then address these during mini-plenaries, if the point has been identified during the lesson, or at the start of the next lesson if identified during a post-lesson review of books. Teachers must take care when using this approach to ensure that this does not ever cause a child to feel humiliated or embarrassed about their work, whole class feedback should always be a collaborative and positive approach for all. In selecting this strategy, we have drawn on the work of educational assessment author and advisor Daisy Christodoulou, who writes:

*“One of the problems with traditional written comments is that they are not that useful and they take a lot of time. When a pupil reads a comment at the bottom of a piece of work that says ‘you need to be more systematic’, what is the pupil supposed to **do** in response to that feedback?”*

*The best thing about whole-class feedback, therefore, is the potential it offers you to give more useful feedback that isn't tied to the format of a prose sentence. Imagine you read a set of 25 narratives by your class that all have problems with tense consistency. You could write at the bottom of each essay: ‘you need to make your tense more consistent’.*

*Or, you could write nothing on the books, and at the start of the next lesson you could display the following two sentences:*

***The spaceship buzzed around the sky and then landed. Two aliens get out and threaten the locals!***

*You could then ask the class to find the error, correct the error, and then find a similar error in their own work and correct that.*

Whole class feedback ensures that common misconceptions and general points for improvement are continuously identified and promptly acted upon over the subsequent lessons. This could be through whole class marking, where by the children respond to the feedback in purple pen/pencil or through targeted starter activities surrounding the misconception.

#### **4.5 Self- and Peer- and Shared Marking**

At Holywell, we encourage children to take control of their own learning and develop independent learning skills. One of the key ways we do this is through self- and peer-marking.

Self- and peer-marking can take many forms, for example:

- Pupils might be given the answers to problems at the end of a Maths lesson; where a pupil has not grasped a concept, they are able to receive adult or peer support immediately.
- If completing a problem-solving, or open-ended tasks in Maths, teachers may plan in opportunities for groups of pupils to compare answers.
- In English lessons, a clear success criteria (Writer's Toolkit) is shared with the children; pupils will reflect on this success criteria throughout the learning process. This could be at the end of a lesson, during a lesson, or in any of the Phases of Writing.
- Teachers may use exemplars, in the form of a pupil's work. This could be displayed using a visualizer on the whiteboards. Through effective modelling, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their own work and make adjustments or improvements as necessary. It is vital that we use this type of marking to enable children to become effective at self- and peer- marking. Teachers should model the marking out aloud for the children to observe.

Before the end of lessons, children may sometimes be asked to mark work in pairs. The following points are important:

- Peer marking is usually introduced towards the end of Key Stage One, unless teachers feel that younger children are particularly ready for this.
- Children need to be trained to do this, through modelling with the whole class.
- Ground rules (e.g. listening, interruptions, confidentiality, etc.) need to be established with the class.
- Pairings need to be carefully thought-out by the teacher – this may not always be 'ability-based'.

- A dialogue between children is encouraged rather than taking turns to be the teacher. They should discuss each other's work together (e.g. 'I think this bit really shows how the character feels, what do you think?')
- Teaching children how to be constructively critical about their own work and their peer's work is good practice. Encouraging pupils to assess how successful they have been in meeting success criteria leads them to recognise what they need to do to improve their work before it is marked by an adult.

When self- or peer- marking, the children should use purple pens (or pencil at the end of Y1) and are encouraged to use the same marking code used by the class teachers, and need to be trained to do so.

#### **4.6 Secretarial Features of Feedback:**

Spelling, punctuation, grammar etc. are not emphasised for every piece of writing because children cannot effectively focus on too many elements at once.

Throughout the writing process, the children should be asked to check for errors themselves. This editing should be done in a purple pen/pencil. If several children have the same secretarial errors, this should inform assessment and therefore teachers need to plan immediate lessons and/or interventions which address this concept, before moving on with the writing.

#### **4.7 School Marking Code**

The school marking code is applied during both live marking by the teacher, and peer-marking.

Teachers will use pink pen

✓✓	Excellent feature
_____t	tense
<u>Wiggly line</u> <u>and sp</u>	Incorrect spelling
O	Change case of letter or punctuation mark/punctuation mark missing
^	Missing word
_____?	This doesn't make sense
/	New line needed
//	New paragraph needed
✓	Correct response (maths)
•	Incorrect response (maths)
• ✓	Corrected response (maths)



VF T	Verbal feedback from teacher
VF TA	Verbal feedback from teaching assistant
T S	Teacher supported
TA S	Teaching assistant supported
Stamp	Team point awarded

## 5. Assessment

### 5.1 General Principles

At Holywell, we utilise two different types of assessment: formative and summative. Formative assessments are carried out within lessons to identify how children are coping with the new material being taught, and are used to amend and adapt the current lesson and subsequent lessons to take account of the findings. Summative assessments are more formal tests that are carried out to ascertain the children's level of attainment across unit(s) of work and in a subject overall. Summative assessments can also be used in formative way when they are used to inform teaching. Assessments should be positive and motivating for children, encouraging them to reflect on their learning, as well as manageable and informative for staff.

### 5.2 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment, also known as assessment for learning, is a method of assessing pupils while learning is happening rather than at the end of a topic or sequence of lessons (summative assessment); it is integrated into every lesson and is ongoing.

Formative assessment can be conducted through a variety of methods, such as targeted questioning, exit questions and recap starter activities, or peer and self-assessment that promotes reflection and the sharing of knowledge. Additionally, a focus on sharing learning outcomes and success criteria with students, integrating mini-plenaries, or a whole-school approach to peer and self-assessment, for example.

Owing to the focus on continuous assessment, teachers can use the findings to build a picture of a class and groups of key students' understanding and progress. This allows on the spot adaptations to be made to lessons to ensure everyone is keeping up and achieving, and informs adaptations for future lessons.

### 5.3 Summative Assessment

Summative assessments are used to make judgements on pupils' level of attainment across an entire unit(s) of work, for the purpose of reporting. However, summative assessments are also used formatively, as they feed into planning and coverage decisions.

Across foundation subjects Science, History and Geography are assessed at the end of each unit through test style questions. These same tests are used for long term recall throughout the revisiting cycle. Art, DT and Music are assessed through evaluations on the child's end

piece where development of technical skills are evaluated alongside subject knowledge, creativity and individuality. PE we use our Primary PE Planning tracker tool, we assess children's progress in each unit against the relevant objectives. RE and PSHE is assessed through end of unit recall such as solo taxonomy hexagons, mind maps or class discussions. We are currently developing appropriate end of unit assessment tasks in both Computing and French. As there is no national consensus or guidance in place for reporting on attainment across foundation subjects, we do not do this. Summative assessments in foundation subjects are used in a purely formative way to inform the revisiting cycle.

More formal summative assessments for Reading, GPS and Maths are carried out termly using the PIXL assessment suite. These are completed by children in Years 3-5 years 2 and 6 use past SAT papers in place of these. In addition, teachers make a formal termly assessment of their children's writing, drawing on the support of their colleagues from both within and outside of schools in both internal and external moderations. The tests are marked and the data entered onto FFT Aspire along with the writing judgement, our data tracking tool. These assessment results feed into termly pupil progress meetings where we discuss how children identified as underperforming can be best supported.

At the end of the year a final judgement on the children's level of attainment for Reading, Writing and Maths is reported to parents via the children's annual report