



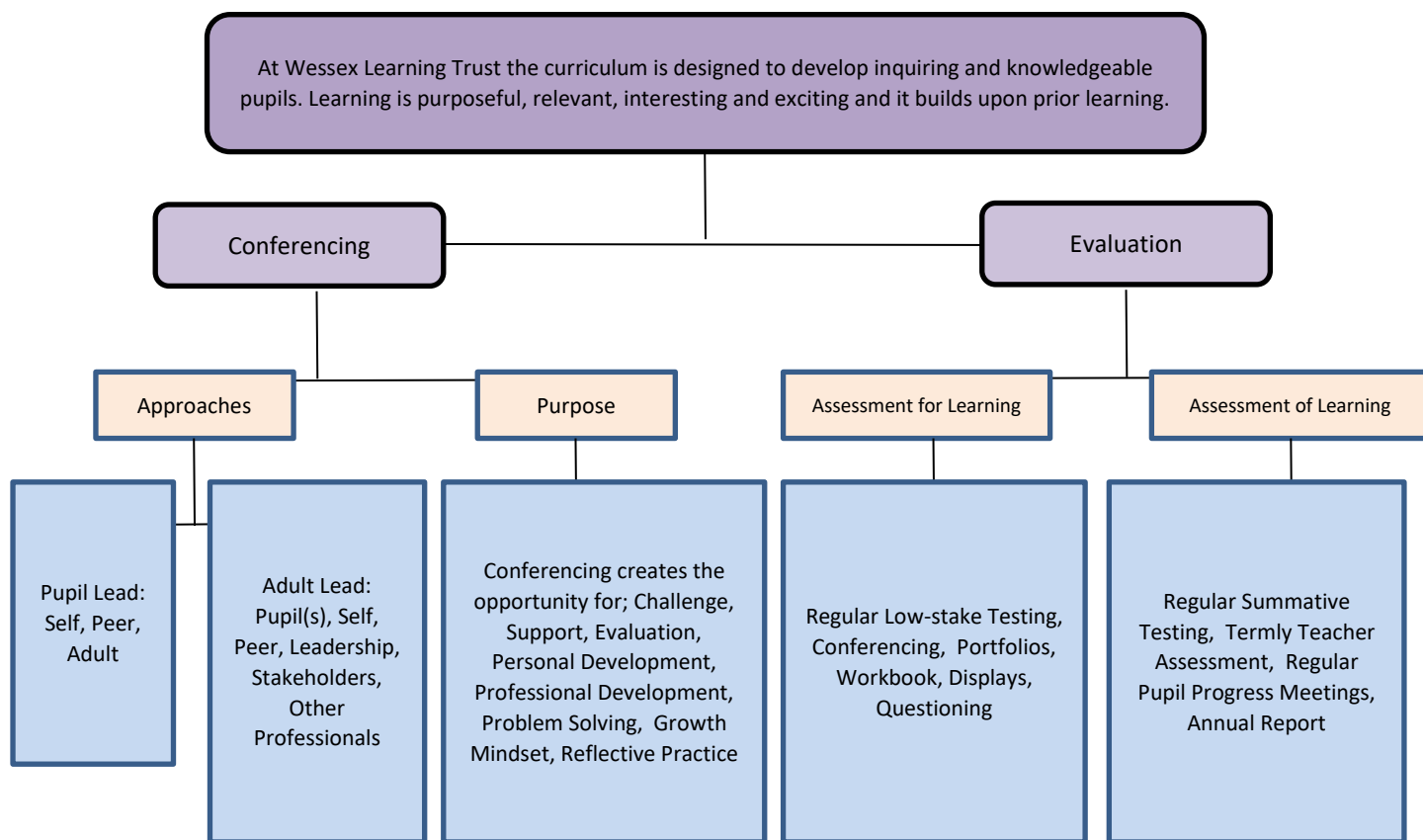
**East Brent CofE Academy**

**CONFERENCING AND EVALUATION  
POLICY**



**Wessex**  
Learning Trust  
We Learn Together!

## Conferencing and Evaluation Framework



### Conferencing

Conferencing has been adopted by East Brent CofE Academy to replace traditional written marking and feedback. It is used as a tool for effective feedback and evaluation which enables pupils to become independent and reflective learners through a process of self-evaluation and improvement. Through high quality dialogue about the children's learning, both pupils and adults are able to assess where pupils may need additional support or further challenge.

Conferencing at East Brent CofE Academy is in its initial stage of implementation during which adults have modelled and scaffolded expectations to pupils. Over time pupils have begun to take more responsibility for the learning conversations that they have with both adults and peers and have begun to lead the conversations more and more. We are now beginning to see pupils transfer this reflection and independence to their learning during lessons.

#### What is Pupil Conferencing?

In its simplest form, **conferencing is a conversation about learning**. It can be pupil-led or adult-led and can take place in a 1:1, small group or whole-class context. Instead of waiting until after school to review children's work and then writing comments to them, you can conference during lessons and throughout the school day.

#### Why use Pupil Conferencing instead of written marking?

There is very little evidence to show that written marking is the most effective form of feedback – especially for primary-aged pupils. Verbal feedback opens up an immediate conversation with the child, allowing you to **pinpoint and address misunderstandings or misconceptions**, or indeed to **challenge** the pupil. You will also find that because you never have the same conversation twice, your feedback becomes more personal and individualised.

In addition to this, because pupil conferencing gets pupils to **think more deeply** about their work and their learning, it helps **develop their independence and motivation** within the context of a 'growth mindset.' Pupils also enjoy the 1:1 time with their teacher or peer as it makes them feel that their work is more valued and purposeful. As a result of this,

pupils make more rapid progress as they become more aware of what is holding them back and what they need to do to improve.

### **Approaches and Purpose: Assessment as Learning**

Conferencing is a discussion between adults and pupils, between peers, or with oneself through metacognition.

Shute (2008) and Butler and Winne (1995) have identified that the timing of feedback is central to its effectiveness. Consequently, conferencing at East Brent CofE Academy can take two forms: immediate 'in the moment' feedback or delayed.

#### **Immediate feedback**

Immediate feedback **can happen at any time during the day** and **can be used either in response to procedural matters** (e.g. correct/incorrect, use of methods, task feedback) or, **with the use of high level questioning, allows a teacher to quickly and decisively pinpoint where the misconception lies in the application of a specific skill, thus enabling them to intervene accordingly.** In Early Years provision immediate feedback will be the most widely used method of conferencing and feedback, as this is more age-appropriate and results in greater impact on the learning of younger pupils.

At East Brent CofE Academy, all adults will mark in blue pen and there will be the marking codes 'I', 'S' or 'C' in a circle to indicate if children have worked independently, have received adult support or have been challenged. Blue highlighter is used to highlight misconceptions/errors in the children's work and these will be corrected by the child alongside. For their corrections and improvements, children will use pencil in Reception/Year 1 and purple pen from Year 2 and into Key Stage 2. A tick on a page indicates that an adult has seen the book in that lesson.

#### **Delayed feedback**

Delayed feedback **takes place during planned/scheduled discussions between adults and pupils, focusing on conceptual matters** (e.g. depth of understanding, ability to make connections, reasoning about new learning), as well as discussing progress, attainment and next steps. Delayed Feedback also **promotes the development of metacognition, independence and reflective learning.**

In both forms of conferencing, **in order to promote self-regulation, the pupil is encouraged at all times to take responsibility for the learning conversation** – to discuss what they were successful with, what they found challenging, what they need further help with, how they can further apply their learning, and what their next step is, for example. This reflection on learning is modelled first by the adults in the learning environment, often through a range of question prompts, with pupils quickly taking over the lead role in all learning conversations.

Traditional marking in books is not a component of the conferencing process. Self and peer marking of correct/incorrect answers or responses to problem-solving tasks can take place during lessons (using a purple pen where appropriate), if required, as this process in itself opens up opportunities for discussion and formative assessment. **Allowing the majority of marks in exercise books to be made by pupils themselves encourages pupils to take greater ownership of their work**, become more aware of how they are doing in that moment (as they are not waiting until the next day to find out what has been marked correct/incorrect), and be more focused on what they do/do not understand. At East Brent CofE Academy, pupils will use purple pen to edit their work following any conferencing about written work (although it is recognised that as pupils become more proficient at self-conferencing the natural progression will be for them to make improvements in the writing implement they are using). As conferencing is a personalised approach to feedback, there are no minimum or maximum expectations as to the number of times evidence will be seen in pupil books (or on other monitoring and assessment platforms) but it will be evident where conferencing is having the greatest impact through pupil outcomes and pupil voice. Teachers should still, however, review pupils' work each day to inform their assessment for learning, to build up a picture of each pupil's progress and attainment, and to inform future planning. In our Early Years provision, this will take the form of adults discussing Learning Journals, having extended conversations with pupils, or of adults assessing learning conversations

about pupils at the end of the day. **Peer assessment is also an integral component of the process: pupils are enabled to support one another, particularly through the editing and redrafting process.**

Many studies have shown that feedback has a significant influence on learning (*e.g.* Hattie 2009) and research has also been carried out to determine what it is that makes feedback effective (*e.g.* Bangert-Drowns *et al* 1991; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Shute 2008). Pajares and Graham's study (1998) found that pupils themselves prefer specific, constructive criticism rather than simple praise and encouragement (such as "good work today" or "you met the learning objective") or descriptive phrases (such as "you used fronted adverbials" or "you didn't check your spelling"). If a pupil has indeed met the objectives, they will already be aware of their success in this; similarly, if they have not been successful, simply stating what is wrong does not necessarily lead to improvement if understanding of the error is lacking. **In all cases, conferencing is well-placed to deliver meaningful feedback.**

## **Evaluation**

### **Monitoring Learning**

Adults make good use of assessment for learning to inform pupil progress and attainment. The tools primarily used to monitor learning are:

- Conferencing
- Questioning
- Observation
- Low-stakes testing
- Visual Thinking Routines
- SOLO Taxonomy - Training to be completed by all staff as part of Inquiry Led Learning

### **Documenting Learning**

East Brent CofE Academy recognises that evidence of learning takes many different forms. Some examples include:

- Books
- Displays
- Class Dojo Pages
- Class floor books
- Website/Facebook posts
- SOLO Taxonomy rubric on Planners- Training to be completed by all staff as part of Inquiry Led Learning

### **Measuring Learning**

Assessment of learning takes place frequently throughout the academic year. East Brent CofE Academy employs the following tools for AoL:

- Internal summative testing
- Teacher Assessment (baseline + 3 data drops per year)
- National Key Stage Assessments
- SOLO Taxonomy- Training to be completed by all staff as part of Inquiry Led Learning

### **Reporting on Learning**

East Brent CofE Academy involves all stakeholders in the reporting of pupil progress and attainment:

Senior Leadership - Pupil Progress Meetings

Trust Leadership – Raising Achievement Visits (RAVs), Desk Top Reviews (DTR)

Parents - Parent-teacher conferences and End of Year Reports

Pupils - Conferencing and Pupil Voice

## Appendix 1 - Guidance Documents

### How does Pupil Conferencing work?

**Immediate verbal feedback** can be given at any point in a lesson or throughout the day in response to pupil need.

The second element is the delayed feedback or **planned 'chat' or conference** with identified pupils. This can be timetabled in any way that works for you. There is no fixed duration- you may spend 5 minutes with one pupil but 10 with another and this may change from week-to-week. This may seem like a short amount of time but you can give much richer, and much more, verbal feedback in 5 minutes than you ever could in written form. This could also be with a small group if there are several pupils who would benefit from being involved in the same learning conversation. Pupils in group conversations should still be encouraged to take responsibility for the learning conversation and lead the discussion.

As the year goes on, pupils should take more and more responsibility for the conversation – it is helpful to **give pupils a few minutes to prepare** for their conference and to pick out what they feel they succeeded at and what they need to improve at. Over time, you will find that they start to lead the conversation more and more, and transfer this independence to their learning during lessons.

You may find it useful to **keep a journal** or diary for your pupil conferences or add notes to planners; you can use this to keep track of who you have conferenced with in a week, to write reminders for yourself, and to record any agreed targets. Pupils can do the same in their jotters, if it is helpful. You will still need to look through pupil books at the end of the day to help you plan the following day's work.

## Appendix 2 - Question Prompts for Pupil Conferencing

### **Using pupil work as a springboard:**

Show me something you are proud of in your book this week. Why are you proud of this piece of work?

Show me something you struggled with this week. Tell me more about how you got stuck. Do you understand it now? Can you explain how you would do it now? What other help do you need?

If we look at this week's work and compare it with last week's work, what do you think you've improved at? Can you show me examples? What do you need to work on next week?

Last week we talked about you showing target – can you show me where you worked on that this week?

I noticed you found task a bit tricky. Let's figure out what help you need.

### **Using a lesson experience as a springboard:**

Tell me a little bit about what you learned in subject this week. How would you explain what you've learned to someone who wasn't in our lesson?

How does our learning in lesson link to what you already knew before? What do you think is the next step in your learning?

How do you know that you have been successful in your learning in lesson? What would you do if you were stuck? What questions do you still want to ask about lesson?

### **General learning discussion:**

What do you think are your greatest strengths in subject? Why?

What are your biggest challenges / what do you find trickiest in subject? What help do you need to make this easier?

Can you think of something you used to find really tricky but is now much easier?

What helped you? How does your learning partner help you with subject?

Can you give me some examples from lesson? Do you know what you need to do to get better at subject/topic?