The Evolution School

Curriculum Impact Policy

Primary

(Assessment and Marking)

Assessment

Rationale

We are committed to regular assessment and know that its main purpose is to improve learning. We recognise that it is a vital element of curriculum planning and has four purposes:

Diagnostic – determining what the children already know, their knowledge and skills and possible gaps or weaknesses

Formative – providing information that can be continually fed into the planning process

Summative – providing a summary of the children's overall progress and attainment

Evaluative – provides information on teaching and learning and the progress of individual children and/or groups across the school

Aims:

- To ensure that assessment for learning is ongoing in all lessons and the results of this are fed into the planning and review cycle in a timely manner
- To involve children in their own learning e.g. weekly 'All about Me' sessions give the space and time for children to reflect on their learning to reflect on their learning, as well as their emotional responses.
- To set clear learning objectives that are phrased in a child friendly way so that our children can understand them and respond appropriately
- For children to know how their own learning equates to national expectations for their age (where applicable)
- For children to value assessment and see this as a positive learning tool (rather than something to make them feel anxious or worried about)

Our typical approach:

These types of assessment take place regularly:

1. **Self and peer assessment**

Self and peer assessment encourages children to take greater responsibility for their learning and when the children are able to, we actively encourage both.

Self – We encourage children to be participants rather than 'spectators', with their learning. At the beginning of new topics their views and opinions are actively sought and where possible are fed into the topic design. After key pieces of learning, the children are encouraged to reflect and to edit / proof-read their own work. Our aim is to ensure that the children's perception of learning is not a merely a passive process whereby they listen to the teacher, absorb the information and then regurgitate the information with no links to what they know already or with no change to their deeper understanding and long-term memory.

Peer – If children can explain to a peer why or how their work needs to be improved, this is an indication of their own level of learning and shows if they have 'mastered' the concept. We value children giving feedback to their peers and we carefully plan opportunities for this to happen. This is across a range of subjects and can be verbal, as well as written.

2. 'Read and Respond' to teacher's marking

Teachers' read and respond comments are used to address misconceptions, general errors or to reinforce and extend learning. They are not always used after each piece of work but used as necessary tools to support learning. See our marking code in **Appendix A**.

3. Verbal feedback

This usually happens during a lesson when a teacher may be circulating and a learning conversation has taken place to move or extend the learning. The child's book will be marked with 'VF' (verbal feedback) and may include a short summary of the learning point discussed but this may not always be necessary, if is not helpful to the child. Our support staff may also annotate the books if they would like the teacher to know what input/support the child has been given.

4. Rich, probing questioning

In our classrooms, the ability of children to be able to express their views and thoughts is generated through the questioning skills of our teachers. Good questioning skills from the teacher help to:

- Develop interest and motivate pupils to become actively involved in learning
- Help the children to develop their own critical thinking skills
- Support and push learning to ensure that it is fully embedded and mastered
- Encourage children to ask their own questions and start to pursue their own knowledge
- Review learning

Our teachers use both open and closed questions, depending on the context.

Closed – these tend to be used to assess memory recall of previous facts/learnt information e.g. when was World War II?

Open – these are used to encourage children to apply and analyse their knowledge e.g. how might a child feel if they had been evacuated during World War II?

We build a culture where every child knows that they may be asked a question at any point during a lesson. We ensure that a 'safe' classroom environment is created where the children know that making mistakes is part of the learning. We do sometimes ask children to put their hands up to respond to questions, but this is less common because we know that this relies on perhaps one or two more confident learners, while others may 'switch off'. The use of individual whiteboards is routinely used to capture children's responses or our 'think, pair, share' approach is also helpful in reducing anxiety levels.

5. Learning conversations – pupils assessing their own learning (the self-improvement process learning about learning/metacognition)

Teachers provide children with regular opportunities to engage in a dialogue about the learning process and to discuss any areas that might be challenging. Our 'All About Me' sessions provide a weekly platform for this, but we are also a small enough school to be able to make time for these learning conversations throughout the day. The type of questions /prompts that teachers may use are:

- What was the most important thing you found out today?
- How are you going to help yourself to remember that particular piece of information?
- What was the learning objective? Can you word it in a different way now?
- What helped you to learn?
- Was there anything that made it difficult for you to learn?
- Let's talk about some of the key words from today's lesson (see class word wall)
- What's the connection between this learning and the work we did earlier on ……?
- If someone asks you what you have learnt today, what will you say?

6.   Conferencing

This is a regular part of our teaching and assessment practice. Staff provide time for children to engage in a discussion about a particular piece of work and they are encouraged to talk about what progress they have made and any areas of difficulty. This is an opportunity for the child to be fully engaged in their learning and to know what their next steps are to continue their learning journey. The focus of these conversations could be:

- Evaluating progress
- Reviewing short and long term targets (and highlighting how they link to the child's IEP/PEP targets)
- Listening to the child's view
- Making it clear on what the child needs to do to improve and perhaps working through some examples together
- Helping the child to respond to their marking comments
- Reviewing targets and setting new ones
- Jointly agreeing ways of overcoming any obstacles or barriers to a child's learning

7.   Formative assessment

Formative assessment is on-going throughout the lesson or series of lessons and is a vital tool in the planning, teaching, assessing cycle. Due to the integrated approach to our curriculum, our teachers are also mindful of children showing their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. Formative assessment is used to complement our summative assessments.

8.   Summative assessment

Summative assessments are used to access what a child can do at a particular time. Typically, we carry out the following summative assessments, the timing of inhouse ones can be flexible to accommodate the child's emotional wellbeing:

- Year 1 National Phonics screening check
- Year 2 and Year 6 statutory national assessments (SATs)
- End of unit White Rose Assessments (Maths)
- Unaided writing – assessed using the national curriculum objectives
- A discussion between the child and teacher which makes clear the child's level of understanding (especially useful when a child's written skills may not yet match their cognitive level)
- Some practice exam questions from previous SATs papers also part of our normal classroom teaching

- Reading – termly reading and comprehension 'check-ins' to compliment classroom comprehensions (Salford Reading Scheme)

Initial/Baseline assessment:

An essential feature of any assessment system is the identification of starting points for learning from which progress can be measured.

All new children are tested, sometimes in class, sometimes individually by the teacher, Deputy Head or SENCo, within the first few weeks of starting at The Evolution School. Children may join our school at any time during Key Stage 1 or 2 and may, or may not, have regularly attended school prior to their placement.

Information obtained and considered during the assessment period includes:

- Any previous school records (we try to obtain verbal as well as written records because these can often be more informative)
- We use the 'Primary Gateway' to obtain any relevant national assessment data
- Statements (Wales) or Education, Health and Care plans and Annual Review Reports
- Standardised assessments to profile basic skills e.g. 'WRAT 5'
- Views of the parent/carer and/or placing authorities/allocated social worker
- Reports from the children's home or previous care placement
- Views of the child

Personal Skills Assessment:

To supplement our assessment process of more academic skills, we also monitor the progress of the children's development in the softer, personal skills. With the background and trauma that the majority of our children would have experienced before arriving at the school this holistic approach, we believe, is vital in supporting their learning journey. These skills are taught through all of the curriculum subjects and are explicitly taught in our PSHE programme.

Our personal skills curriculum combines the following elements: (see appendix B)

- Self-awareness
- Motivation
- Independence
- Social skills
- Resilience
- Managing feelings
- Empathy
- Being organised
- Metacognition

Our assessment of these personal skills requires an assessment of values, attitudes and skills which are difficult to measure. The school has developed a range of descriptions to guide teachers to assess personal skills and these along with a system for averaging out different teachers' assessments provides a reasonably robust way to consider children's progress. This information is the child's mid and end of year written reports.

Book scrutiny and/or Moderation:

Book scrutiny will happen regularly during learning walks carried out by the Head and Deputy Head teachers. Moderation will take place regularly in staff meetings. Children's work will be compared and discussed to ensure consistency across the whole team. Teachers are also facilitated to attend Shropshire Network meetings and to build networks with subject teachers in other schools to developan understanding of standards nationally. This is particularly vital with children's writing at the end of each key stage because there is no longer a SATs test that we can access to validate our judgements. We encourage all of our teachers to be reflective practitioners. The emphasis is on understanding why children perform in the way they have and exploring different ways of maximising each child's potential and ensuring we do not put artificial ceilings on their attainment aspirations because of their earlier life challenges.

Lesson observations:

Teachers are encouraged to undertake regular lesson observations of all practitioners working at the school - especially those who are deemed 'Outstanding' - to ensure that reciprocal learning takes place and standards of teaching continue to be raised across the whole-school. The philosophy must always be that we can learn from one another. Once observed, a peer review should be completed to ensure that the visiting teacher has reflected on what they have seen and any strategies and aspects of their own pedagogy that can be honed following their observation. At least one annual lesson observation will also be conducted by the Head or Deputy Head teacher in the summer term to ensure consistency across the whole-school regarding the quality of teaching and this will feed into the on-going school Evaluation Plan. The Head or Deputy Head teacher will visit lessons more frequently on learning walks to inform areas of development and to share good practice. If a teacher is struggling, a support programme will be set up and targets set and monitored more regularly. We have the advantage of having easy access to our secondary school subject specialist colleagues and supportive links can be made. Our appraisal, performance management and capability policy gives further guidance for supporting teachers.

Reporting:

- Daily reports (grades for effort as well as attainment)
- A summative written report for each child mid and end of year
- Termly personal skills tracker completed by all staff – as appropriate, averages tracked
- Annual Review of Statement/EHCP, conducted in line with statutory regulations
- PEP and LAC Reviews

Marking:

Our marking is,

- Meaningful (for both the child and as a record for the teacher to feed into subsequent lesson planning or individual targets)
- Manageable
- Motivating

At the Evolution Primary school, our marking helps our children to:

Understand what they have done well – children need to know what they have done well and the reasons for it.

Understand how to improve – children are actively encouraged to read their marking comments before starting any new work. Our comments provide a mixture of challenge, reminder, process and example prompts, as appropriate, to help children to understand.

Make visible signs of improvement as a result of feedback – for marking to be effective there must be visible signs through the children's work of progress as a result of marking and feedback.

Consistency:

All staff follow the school's marking code so that children are familiar with the terms used and do not have to re-learn different approaches when changing teacher or if different adults support their learning. We are very aware that sometimes verbal feedback (VF) has more of an impact on a child's learning than written feedback and any guidance/prompts is often much more effective at the point of writing, so we do use this approach whenever possible.

Policy reviewed	Sept 2025
Next review	Sept 2026

Appendix A

Children can write in pencil, pen (or a chosen pen for motivational purposes). Teachers mark in green and support staff mark in purple.

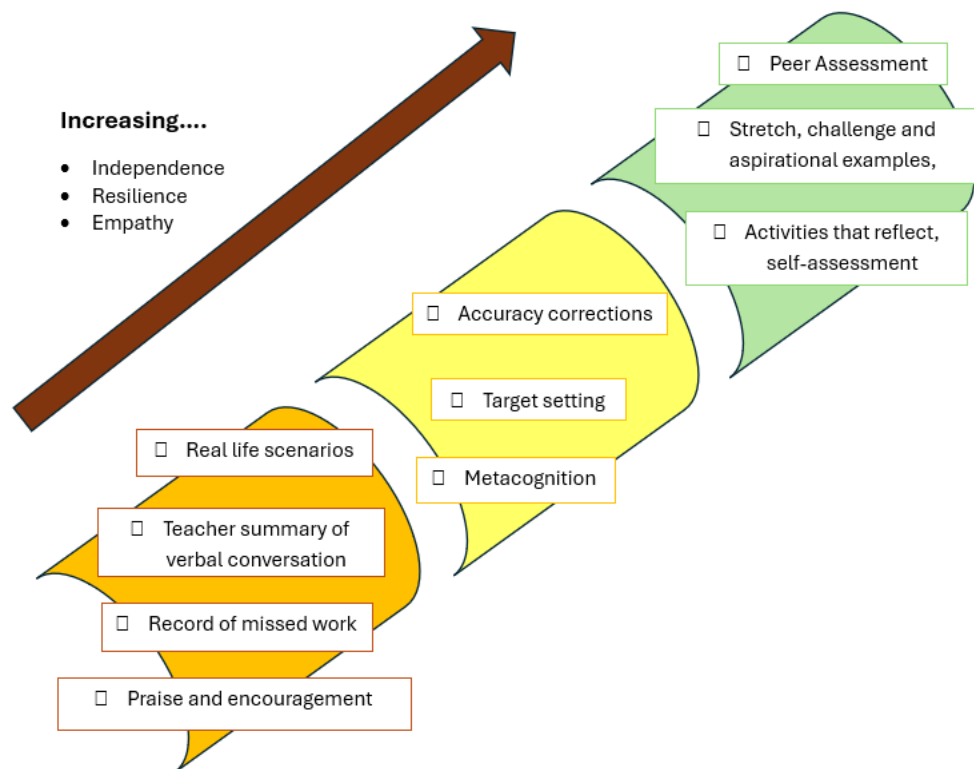| School Marking Code		
Success	✔	Tick and sign over the Learning Objective to indicate work is correct
	✓	Correct
	(T)✔	Indicates target has been met
	(I)	Independent Work
Improvements	(T) !	Reminds the child about their target
	•	Incorrect
	The ^ was walking to the shops.	Words missing
	sp	Word underlined and correct spelling shown in margin (or child encouraged to self-correct)
	P	Punctuation error
	//	Start a new line or paragraph
	←	Arrow if writing not starting at the margin
	C	C with an underline to indicate capital letter used incorrectly or omitted
Support	**S**	Support given by an adult
	VF	Verbal feedback from an adult and if appropriate a brief summary of what was discussed
	RR	A chance for the child to read and respond to a teacher's comments (acknowledged with a tick or further advice from the teacher as appropriate)
	⌐	Next steps

Marking Approaches

Increasing....

- Independence
- Resilience
- Empathy

☐ Peer Assessment

☐ Stretch, challenge and aspirational examples,

☐ Activities that reflect, self-assessment

☐ Accuracy corrections

☐ Target setting

☐ Metacognition

☐ Real life scenarios

☐ Teacher summary of verbal conversation

☐ Record of missed work

☐ Praise and encouragement

Appendix B

Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)

KEY				
1 - Never	2 Rarely	3 – Sometimes	4 - Often	5 - Always

SELF AWARENESS *examples include*

They know their strengths and weaknesses and can admit mistakes.
They can recognise when they have done well and can accept praise.
They can reflect on their actions and learn from them.
They know what they are feeling and can label those emotions.

MOTIVATION *examples include*

They can break up long term goals into small achievable steps.
They can anticipate and overcome potential obstacles.
They can monitor and evaluate their own performance.
They can use mistakes to make changes and bounce back from failure.

INDEPENDENCE *examples include*

They can work on a task without adult prompts or reminders.
They can maintain focus and concentration during lessons.
They can make good choices which lead to progress and keep them safe.
They can think for themselves and explain their thoughts with clarity.

SOCIAL SKILLS examples *include*

They can communicate effectively with their peers.
They can communicate effectively with a range of adults.
They can listen to others carefully and respond appropriately.
They can appreciate and respect the thoughts and feelings of others.
They are prepared to work with other people that may be outside their particular friendship group.
They can work well in groups and can co-operate with others.
They can solve problems and resolve conflicts with other people.

RESILIENCE *examples include*

They can cope with change without feeling too overwhelmed or anxious.
They can keep going with a task even if is challenging.
They can tackle difficult tasks and are happy to ask for help.
They see mistakes as an opportunity to learn more.
They enjoy challenging work as this helps them to make progress.

MANAGING FEELINGS *examples include*

They can express emotions clearly and openly in an appropriate way.
They can stop themselves behaving in ways that lead to negative consequences.
They know that feelings can affect learning and relationships.
They can use a range of strategies for managing uncomfortable feelings.

EMPATHY *examples include*

They know that other people can express their emotions differently.
They can see the world from other people's points of view.
They can show respect for people from different cultures or backgrounds.
They can listen to others and respond supportively and positively.
They are good at helping peers if they are upset/worried

BEING ORGANISED *examples include*

They come to school with a clear idea of what they need to do and are able to follow the class visual timetable.
They have everything with them that they need for the day e.g. reading book, packed lunch box etc.
They record their homework and ensure tasks are handed back on time.
They keep their own desk/book bag in an orderly way.
They plan ahead and raise issues with plenty of time for them to be resolved.

META COGNITION *examples include*

They are willing to accept a level of challenge in their learning.
They can talk about and explain if a task was too easy or too hard.
To recognise what helps them to learn best in particular situations.
They can plan their work.
They can use a range of strategies to help them to achieve e.g., using a mind map, mnemonics for facts, word association etc
They know what they are good at and what they need to improve.
They can talk about their learning confident**ly.**
They can take responsibility for their own learning e.g. ask to move to a different space away from someone who might be distracting them.