CONFERENCING AND EVALUATION POLICY

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Conferencing and Evaluation Framework

The BPA curriculum is delivered within relevant and purposeful contexts, is built upon prior learning, and is designed to be challenging, interesting and motivational to all pupils. We aim to create inquiring, lifelong learners who respect and care for the world they live in and all those who live in it. BPA learners will understand how they are connected to the world in order to take action to improve their own lives, and the lives of local and global communities.

Conferencing

Approaches

Pupil-led:
- Self
- Peer
- Adult

Adult-led:
- Pupil(s)
- Self
- Peer
- Leadership
- Stakeholders
- Other Professionals

Purpose: Assessment as Learning

Conferencing creates opportunities for:
- Challenge
- Support
- Evaluation
- Personal Development
- Professional Development
- Problem-Solving
- Growth Mindset
- Reflective Practice

Evaluation

Monitoring Learning:
- Assessment for Learning
  - Conferencing
  - Questioning
  - Observations
- Visible Thinking Routines
- Peer and Self Assessment
- Low-Stakes Testing
- Curriculum Attainment & Progress Maps

Measuring Learning:
- Assessment of Learning
  - Teacher Assessment
- Internal summative testing
- National Key Stage Assessment
- Moderation and Standardisation exercises
- SOLO Taxonomy

Documenting Learning:
- Digital Portfolios
- Writing Wall Displays
- Class Pages on Website
- Social Media posts
- Selection of Work in Pupil Books when Conferencing

Reporting on Learning:
- Pupil Progress Meetings
- LAT Module Reviews
- Parent/Teacher/Pupil Conferencing
- End of Year Reports
- Governors
- Conferencing

ACADEMY APPROACH to CONFERENCING

Conferencing
<u>What is Pupil Conferencing?</u>

At Bearsted Primary Academy, conferencing is any form of feedback, discussion, conversation or interaction a child has regarding their learning. Conferencing is at the centre of all feedback, evaluation and assessment here at Bearsted Primary Academy. These interactions are not exclusive to being adult led only, conferencing amongst pupils is strongly encouraged and it is our aim that learners will become adept in this skill as they progress through our academy. The art of conferencing enables a child to reflect, think critically and evaluatively about learning they have or are about to undertake. When conferencing is used effectively, a child can edit and improve their work independently and highly effectively. This will be evidenced in the continuing progress of the child. Conferencing is an empowering form of feedback to feed-forward in a child's learning journey. At the heart of conferencing is the child, therefore this approach makes feedback more purposeful and poignant to the specific learner.

Conferencing can take the following form (this is not an exhaustive list):
- Pupil-led;
- Adult-led;
- Self;
- Peer;
- 1:1;
- Small group;
- Whole-class;
- Leadership;
- Stakeholders;
- Other professionals.

Conferencing is any information, process or activity which affords or accelerates student learning based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities.

There is very little evidence to show that written marking is the most effective form of feedback – especially for primary-aged pupils (EEF 2016). 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. Feedback in this form becomes more personal and comprehensive than written marking.

There is only one exception to the above statement. Within Mathematics, pupils need to know if their calculations are correct or not. At Bearsted Primary Academy, we mark correct calculations in **RED** pen with a tick. This gives our pupils the visual recognition needed to know if they have been accurate. If a pupil makes a mistake, this will be left blank and the pupil will be 'conferenced' through the calculation. Whilst this conferencing is taking place, pupils will make amendments/re-do the calculation in **GREEN** pen. Modelling in any subject, such as correct number/letter formation, should also be written in **RED** pen. Pupils should then be encouraged to

use the **RED** and **GREEN** amendments to self-conference when they encounter difficulties in future learning situations.

In addition to this, conferencing acts as an enabler to springboard pupils' learning as they are intrinsically motivated to have greater understanding in what they have produced.

## The RESEARCH and RATIONALE behind CONFERENCING

Approaches and Purpose of Conferencing: Assessment *as* Learning

Conferencing is a discussion between adults and pupils, between peers, or with oneself through metacognition. Conferencing relies on careful, timely and purposeful intervention, questioning or comments being made to elicit further information, misconceptions or errors that have been made by learners. Successful conferencing does not happen by chance, it is successful when learners are guided and facilitated the opportunities for conferencing to take place.

Shute (2008) and Butler and Winne (1995) have identified that the timing of feedback is central to its effectiveness. Consequently, conferencing at Bearsted Primary Academy can take two forms: immediate ('in the moment') feedback or delayed feedback. Immediate feedback and skillful use of questioning allows a teacher to quickly and decisively pinpoint where the misconception lies in the application of a specific skill and intervene accordingly. Delayed feedback promotes the development of metacognition, independence and reflective learning. Both immediate and delayed feedback draw upon a wide, extensive range of research, tools and evidence in regard to child development, cognition and learning.

Principal literature, theories and tools underpinning conferencing are Vygotsky's Zones of Proximal development, Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle and Weiderhold's Question Matrix.

Zones of Proximal Development
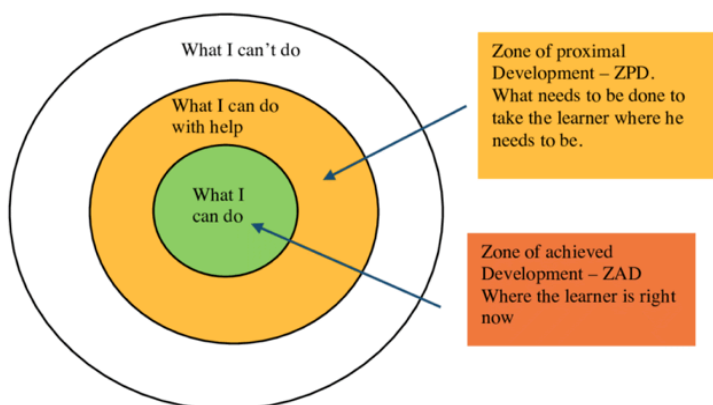
Language is an integral factor within communication. The effective use of language is a way in which a child communicates with others and they continue to learn by interacting with those around them. Conferencing is heavily underpinned by the use of effective learning conversations and language.

As a result, Vygotsky's Zones of Proximal Development closely relates to conferencing as it serves to move the child out of the 'What I can do' zone into the 'What I can do with help' zone. This collaboration between members of our learning community enables our children to make progress within and across lessons in their learning journey. As children's experiences, prior knowledge and confidence fluctuate within the Zones of Proximal Development, conferencing will play a different role within each zone. For example, conferencing can enable children to move from the 'What I can't do' zone. into the prior two zones. In addition, conferencing aims to scaffold

the learning of pupils as a tool for growth. Learners complete small, manageable steps in order to reach the intended learning goal. Working in collaboration with a skilled instructor or more knowledgeable peers, partaking in deep, meaningful conferencing helps students make connections between concepts.

Experiential learning

Experiential Learning Theory states that "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience'. Experiential Learning Theory directly lends itself to conferencing in the sense that conferencing is a physical experience involving the learner and/or others. It is the result of the conferencing experience that knowledge and learning is assimilated, challenged, built upon, corrected and retained. Conferencing allows learners to move through each of the four stages in the learning cycle, it provides learners with the opportunity of: experimentation, concrete experiences, reflection/assessment and conceptualising learning. Conferencing acts as the guide through and between the different stages of the learning cycle. To understand what conferencing at each stage of the learning cycle *might* sound like, see *appendix i.*

Question Matrix

Weiderhold's Question Matrix serves as a framework for learners and staff to ask purposeful and meaningful questions in relation to a pupil's learning. Conferencing is not only limited to questions delivered by adults or pupils but they serve a purpose to challenge and enable children to again move through the various components of the Learning Cycle and Zones of Proximal Development. Effective questioning challenges the views and thoughts of learners and aims to make connections and links between learning. Challenges, connections and links again push learners through Learning Cycles and Zones of Proximal Development and this is best achieved through conferencing. An example of the Question Matrix can be found in *appendix ii.*

Self Regulation- Agency & Action
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.

Traditional marking in books is not a component of the conferencing process, as such, adult notation will rarely, if at all, be seen in children's work. Self and peer marking can take place during lessons, if required and when appropriate, as this process in itself opens up opportunities for discussion and formative assessment. Self-assessment removes barriers to learning such as the fear of failure, shame or frustration when inaccurate.

As previously mentioned, Peer Assessment is an integral component of the process: pupils are enabled to support one another, particularly through the editing and

redrafting process. Allowing the majority of marks in exercise books to be made by pupils themselves encourages pupils to take greater pride and 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 receive written feedback), and of their levels of understanding.

Conferencing does not mean that staff do not review the learning and work of pupils. It is the opposite, staff review pupil's work multiple times each day to inform their assessment for learning. This review, both immediate and delayed, allows staff to build up a picture of each pupil's progress and attainment, and to inform future planning.

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 feedback rather than simple praise, encouragement or description (such as "good work today" or "you haven't checked your spelling"). If a pupil has indeed met their learning goals, 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 pupils' understanding is lacking. In all cases, conferencing is well-placed to deliver feedback that is effective, meaningful and impactful.

Put simply, conferencing is the marking, reviewing, evaluation and extension of our children's learning. Conferencing enables student progress and attainment whilst strengthening confidence.

ACADEMY APPROACH for EVALUATION

Evaluation at Bearsted Primary Academy

Evaluation and assessment at BPA is an ongoing process of reflecting on pupils' learning to inform future learning and teaching.

Pupils, through conferencing, are given agency in the assessment process. This means that we encourage pupils to not just self-assess, but to self-adjust. In other words, pupils at BPA are expected to take action to bring about improvements in their learning as a result of engaging with the conferencing and evaluation process.

At Bearsted Primary Academy, we integrate assessment of, for and as learning in order to foster a culture of improvement within the school. We assess pupils' knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding through a variety of tools and strategies that are bespoke to the context of each class and the individuals within it. This evaluative process has four distinct dimensions: Monitoring Learning, Documenting Learning, Measuring Learning and Reporting on Learning (IBO 2019). The weightings of the four dimensions that make up our practice can be seen in the diagram aside.

Monitoring Learning

Adults make good use of assessment for learning to monitor pupil progress and attainment. This occurs daily throughout all learning experiences and the information gathered is used to inform and adjust learning and teaching, ensuring that pupils are retaining and building on their knowledge, understanding and skills. As a result of our culture of improvement, which is centred around conferencing, this dimension of assessment is the most important and impactful one we engage in at Bearsted Primary Academy.

The strategies and tools primarily used to monitor learning are:
- Conferencing (adult-led, peer and self);
- Strategic use of questioning;
- Observation;
- Visible Thinking Routines/Graphic Organisers;
- Peer and self-assessment;
- Low-stakes testing;
- Curriculum Coverage, Attainment and PYP Planners (annotated regularly).

Teaching staff at BPA have regular opportunities to improve their own assessment capabilities through our collaborative training meetings. We ensure that both staff and pupil wellbeing informs all evaluation practices and that all assessment activities are meaningful and manageable.

Documenting Learning

Bearsted Primary Academy recognises that evidence of learning takes many different forms, including work in books, on display, digital evidence and what pupils themselves know, show and can do. When we refer to documenting learning, we mean the compilation of examples of pupil work that tell the story of learning and progress over time. Choosing work to include is a highly selective process and staff think carefully about how each piece of evidence adds to the narrative.

Over time, responsibility for documenting learning will be shared with pupils. The purpose of this dimension of assessment is to make the learning journey visible. Some examples of documenting learning include:
- Digital portfolios Google Classroom (for classes, subjects and individual pupils); *See our Portfolio Policy and Agreements at the end of this document for more information.*
- Toddle;
- Writing wall displays;
- Pupils' or adults' selections of work in books when conferencing.

Measuring Learning

Assessment of learning takes place frequently throughout the academic year, the timing and purpose of which is shared with all staff through our assessment calendar. We ensure that the type and frequency of measurements of learning are manageable and meaningful and that the information gathered is shared with pupils and used formatively to inform learning and teaching. The results of measurements of learning are also collaboratively analysed at a class, school and trust level to identify patterns and trends in pupil progress and attainment over time and to allow for the

strategic allocation of resources. Bearsted Primary Academy employs the following tools for Assessment of Learning:
- Internal summative testing (schedule for each year group);
- SOLO Taxonomy (to assess conceptual understanding - rollout in progress);
- Teacher Assessment (data drops are scheduled to inform either Pupil Progress Meetings, LAT Module Reviews or both);
- Moderation and standardisation exercises (within the Maidstone cluster, within Leigh Academies Trust, and with the local authority);
- National Assessments (Baseline Assessment, Phonics Screening Check, Multiplication Check, and Key Stage 2 Tests).

As well as assessing the core subject areas, teachers use assessment grids to also track the children's coverage and understanding of the skills in the foundation subjects. This ensures good progression for children and enables teachers to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. As part of the PYP framework, the children are also assessed against their level of understanding using solo taxonomy. This ensures that activities are planned for to allow the children to deepen their understanding and apply their skills in a range of contexts. An example assessment schedule is attached in *appendix iii.*

No current understanding	Surface understanding		Deeper understanding	
Pre-structural	Uni-structural	Multi-structural	Relational	Extended abstract
(I need help to generate an idea)	(I have one idea)	(I have many ideas)	(I can connect my ideas)	(I can take my ideas further)

Reporting on Learning
Bearsted Primary Academy involves all stakeholders in the reporting of pupil progress and attainment. All aspects of the IB PYP are reported on: Learner Profile Attributes, Approaches to Learning, and Academic, Social and Personal Development. This allows all parties to reflect holistically on pupils' successes and also to identify areas for growth and improvement. The following are the learning communities we communicate with and the methods used to report learning:
- Senior Leadership: Pupil Progress Meetings (Once per term);
- Trust Leadership: Module Reviews (Once per term);
- Governors: Academy Development Group and Academy Board Meetings;
- Parents: Parent/teacher/pupil conferences (Two formal conferences per year and ad hoc conferences throughout the year) and Pupil Reports (Term 6);
- Pupils: Daily conferencing, and parent/teacher/pupil conferences.

Appendix i

	Active Experimentation	Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation
Adult	What do you think might happen? What could the answer be? How could we find out? Let's explore what the problem could be.	What can you see? Can you explain what you are doing? Talk me through what you did here. What is happening here? How did you get to this answer? What method did you use?	What do you think is effective? What improvements could be made? Could you change anything?	What was the cause? What links can be made? What influenced this? Explain to me why you chose to use this method.
Child	I wonder what will happen? Am I able to find that out? Where would I look to find that information out?	What do I need to do next? What can I do now? What have I already done?	Why does that happen? What do I think? What have I done?	Why is this important? What do I notice? What have I learnt?

Appendix ii

	Event	Situation	Choice	Person	Reason	Means
Present	What is?	Where / When is?	Which did?	Who is?	Why is?	How is?
Past	What did?	Where / When did?	Which did?	Who did?	Why did?	How did?
Possibility	What can?	Where / When can?	Which can?	Who can?	Why can?	How can?
Probability	What would?	Where / When would?	Which would?	Who would?	Why would?	How would?
Prediction	What will?	Where / When will?	Which will?	Who will?	Why will?	How will?
Imagination	What might?	Where / When might?	Which might?	Who might?	Why might?	How might?

Appendix iii

	Low stakes assessment - to take place everyday ● High quality questioning: closed, open and hinged. ● 1:1 pupil conferencing. ● Starter activities to enable pupils to recall knowledge. ● Retrieval Practice					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
Formative	<u>Y1 - 6:</u> - WR end of unit assessments; - Google forms quizzes; - Writing moderation; - Effective questioning.					
Summative	YR 2 and YR6 Practice SATs papers.	YR 2 and YR6 Practice SATs papers. YR1, YR3, YR4 and YR5 PiRA & PUMA Papers. YR1 phonics screening.	YR 2 and YR6 Practice SATs papers.	YR 2 and YR6 Practice SATs papers. YR1, YR3, YR4 and YR5 PiRA & PUMA Papers. YR1 phonics screening.	YR2 SATs YR 6 SATS	YR 5 Practice SATs papers. Yr1, Yr3 and YR 4 PiRA & PUMA Papers. YR R Phonics Screening-*Past Paper*. YR4 multiplication check. YR1 phonics screening.