



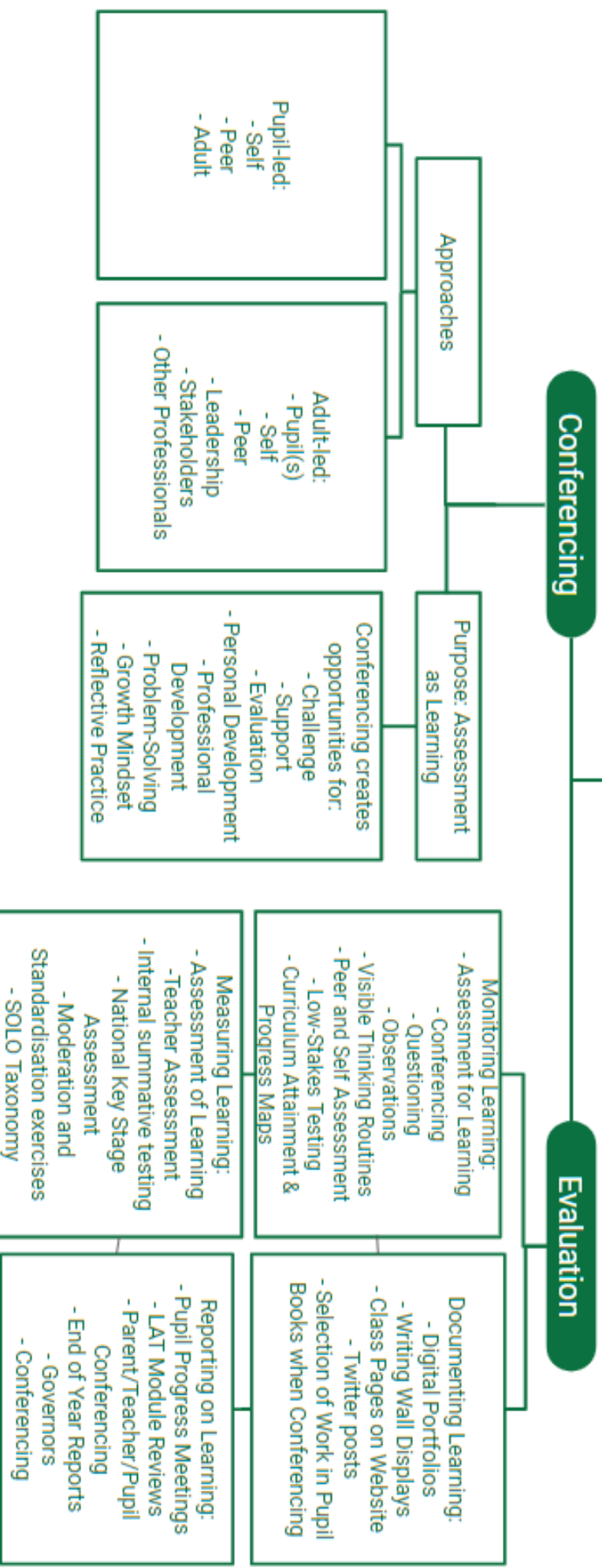
## **CONFERENCING AND EVALUATION POLICY**

**2021-22**



# Conferencing and Evaluation Framework

The OPA curriculum is delivered within relevant and purposeful contexts, its 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. OPA 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

## What is Pupil Conferencing?

Conferencing is the primary form of feedback at Oaks Primary Academy. In its simplest form, **conferencing is a conversation about improvement, learning and reflection**. It can be pupil-led or adult-led and can take place in a 1:1, small group or whole-class context. Teaching staff conference with pupils about their work during lessons and throughout the school day in order to give in-the-moment feedback. Conferencing is also used in social situations as a tool to promote self-regulation and reflection.

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

There is very little research 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.

In addition to this, because pupil conferencing gets pupils to **think more deeply** about their work, their learning, and their personal development, it helps **develop their independence and motivation** within the context of a 'growth mindset'. Pupils value the 1:1 time with teaching staff and peers; they make **more rapid progress** as they become more aware of what they are doing that is successful and what it is that is holding them back. Pupils are able to articulate what they need to do to improve.

### Approaches and Purpose of Conferencing: 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 Oaks 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.**

**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.

Traditional marking in books is not a component of the conferencing process. 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. **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 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 more aware of their levels of understanding. Teachers 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.

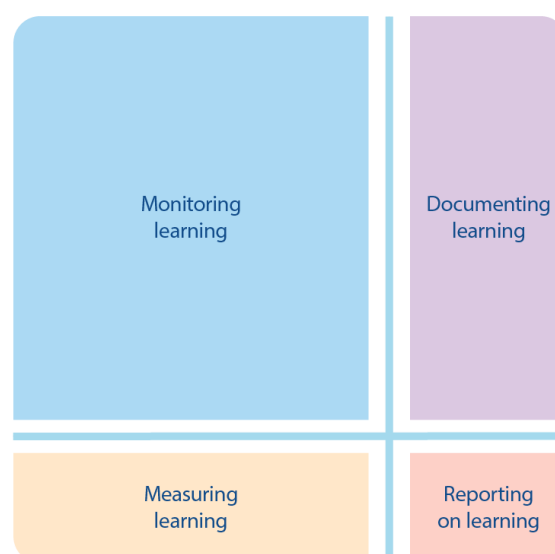
Many studies have shown that feedback has a significant influence on learning (e.g. Hattie 2009) and research has also been carried out to determine what it is that makes feedback effective (e.g. Bangert-Drowns *et al* 1991; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Shute 2008). Pajares and Graham's study (1998) found that pupils themselves prefer specific, constructive 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.**

### Evaluation at Oaks Primary Academy

Evaluation and assessment at OPA 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 OPA are expected to **take action** to bring about improvements in their learning as a result of engaging with the conferencing and evaluation process.

At Oaks 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 below:



## 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. Because 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 Oaks 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 (rollout in progress)
- Peer and self-assessment
- Low-stakes testing
- Curriculum Coverage, Attainment and Progress Maps (annotated regularly)

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

## Documenting Learning

Oaks 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 on Class Dojo (for classes, subjects and individual pupils); see our Portfolio Policy and Agreements at the end of this document for more information. **(January 2021 sourcing a new Digital Portfolio host due to GDPR. Toddle Trial complete and being used from September 2021)**
- Writing wall displays
- Class pages on the OPA website
- Twitter and Facebook posts linked to learning
- 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. Oaks Primary Academy employs the following tools for AoL:

- Internal summative testing (custom 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 (Phonics Screening Check, Key Stage 1 Tests, Multiplication Check, and Key Stage 2 Tests)

### **Reporting on Learning**

Oaks Primary Academy **involves all stakeholders** in the reporting of pupil progress and attainment. All aspects of the Profile for Success 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 (Two formal conferences per year and ad hoc conferences throughout the year)



## **Portfolio Policy and Agreements:**

### **Guiding Philosophy:**

A portfolio tells the story of individual as well as collaborative learning and reflects a pupil's learning journey over both the short and long term. It promotes pupil agency through voice, choice and ownership.

Portfolios show learning related to knowledge (knowing), understanding (showing) and skills (doing). The portfolio encourages reflective thinking and allows pupils and teaching staff to make learning visible.

The portfolio belongs to the pupil. The role of teaching staff is to support the pupil's awareness of the portfolio, its purpose and how to manage it. Initially, teaching staff may manage the selection and annotation of learning for the portfolio, however, over time, the pupil will become more involved in this process.

### **How do we decide what to include in the portfolio?**

**It is agreed that evidence included needs to have purpose and intention.**

All posts should have a clear purpose, context and represent or celebrate the pupils' development in relation to both the National Curriculum and the elements of the PYP.

Posts on the portfolio should show:

- A balance between content chosen by the pupil and by teaching staff
- Broad and balanced evidence from across the curriculum
- An explicit description of the national curriculum learning objectives shown, and the level of attainment, where appropriate
- Development of and reflection on the Approaches to Learning skills and sub-skills

- Development of and reflection on the Learner Profile attributes
- Examples of and reflection on Agency and Action
- Reflections on assessment, particularly of conceptual understanding

**Teachers and pupils are supported in selecting and annotating evidence for the portfolio through the following question prompts:**

- Why did you choose this?
- What learning does it show?
- Is this evidence linked to knowledge, understanding or skills?
- How does it show learning?
- What curriculum objectives does this evidence?
- What level of attainment does this evidence?
- What Approaches to Learning skills or sub-skills does this show?
- What Learner Profile attribute does this demonstrate?
- How does this demonstrate authentic agency or action?
- What feedback was given about this learning?
- How did this challenge the learner?
- How does this demonstrate conceptual understanding?

**The annotation on the post should make the responses to the relevant question prompts above clear.**