

STELLA MARIS SCHOOL

REPORT WRITING POLICY



Note: This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS

Created July 2010

Reviewed September 2015

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

When writing reports it is useful to keep in mind the following principles.

- Avoid unnecessary jargon; pupils will read their reports, and parents are usually most interested in the overview.
- Keep comments kept brief and clear.
- Write specific rather than general comments.
- Refer to whether or not the pupil is happy, settled, and behaving well.
- Refer to attainment and progress to give parents' clear understanding of progress.
- Recognise effort as well as attainment.
- Refer to strengths and areas for improvement with some targets for improvement clearly identified.
- Advise parents about how they can help and support their pupil.

2. WHAT MAKES A GOOD REPORT?

2.1 Work covered

Comments should not consist of a list the work covered during the term/year. It needs to include constructive and positive comments and to be clear and realistic. How the pupil has fared with the topics or the curriculum as a whole?

2.2 Highlight achievements and weaknesses

Comments must highlight

- achievement with reference to work/topics covered
- Weaknesses - with clearly identified targets to indicate the way forward for the pupil.

2.3 Honesty

If we are not honest we do not do the pupil any favours, we present a misleading picture to parents and we do not provide a professional approach for our colleagues.

2.4 Attitude and application

Attitude and application during lessons is important and should be commented upon. This includes the pupil's effort and interest – his/her 'work ethic'.

2.5 Behavioural issues

Behavioural issues must be recorded together with a suggestion for improvement and how to achieve this.

2.6 Accuracy & grammar

A good report comment reads well, is informative and constructive, has good sentence structure and is grammatically correct. Proof reading is essential and final reports should not be submitted until this process is complete. Spellings must be checked.

3. TARGETS

3.1 Reports

- offer an opportunity to show pupils what they know, understand and can do
- give pupils helpful feedback on their achievements

- must include the setting of clear targets for improvement

3.2 Targets should

- make clear the pupil's areas for development
- enable pupils to understand what they have to do to attain specific levels and grades
- inform pupils what they must aim for in order that they can learn more effectively

4. FORM/CLASS TEACHER REPORT/COMMENT

- A summative paragraph commenting on the pupil's overall academic progress and achievements is a useful start to the report.
- Comment upon a pupil's contribution to the form, helpfulness, cooperation with others etc.
- Overall attitude and application during lessons is important as are contributions to school life and should be commented upon.
- Comment on the pupil's involvement in extra-curricular activities, sports teams, music, drama, etc. Acknowledge out of school achievements where possible.

5. MAKING THE TASK WORKABLE

5.1 The style

Plain English is by far the best style.

Parents are not usually familiar with national curriculum jargon and are irritated by it.

Reports look more professional if the vocabulary is descriptive and concise.

It is better to avoid using the words 'good' 'well' and 'bad' and 'average'. These words give a very general picture and so they are not very informative. You can usually find a more interesting and thoughtful comment.

In place of words such as 'good' 'well' and 'bad' and 'average', try the ones below.

- participates sensibly
- grasps new concepts quickly
- loves learning new skills
- understands clearly
- takes pleasure in
- concentrates for long periods
- enjoys being involved in
- lively imagination
- wide general knowledge
- has a wide range of interests
- puts in his best effort
- has read widely
- is quick to transfer new information from his short-term to long-term memory
- is well-organised/reliable/keen
- sensible/careful worker
- continues to improve
- Retains facts easily.

5.2 The tone

Getting the tone right is almost as important as getting the information across accurately. Whilst you have to be honest about the pupils' shortcomings, it is important to highlight their strengths and your tone should display your own interest in and care for the pupil.

These expressions demonstrate a positive attitude to the pupil:

- I was pleased when...
- I hope he will soon...
- I should be delighted if...
- I hope he will develop his talent for...
- I enjoy teaching her because...
- I wish her well next year.

For the less able:

- slow but perseveres
- tries hard but needs extra support with
- does his best but lacks confidence
- is fairly keen but has a short attention span
- often tries hard but can be careless
- needs lots of practice at each level
- copes best in a small group
- needs extra practice at each level to keep up with the class
- acquires new skills/concepts after a lot of practice.

For the reluctant learner:

- makes avoidable mistakes
- needs to check her work more closely
- needs to be supervised closely to keep her on task
- needs to put in more effort to keep up with the group
- is easily distracted
- often needs to finish off his work at break-times.

For the pupil with poor social skills:

- needs to consider other pupil's feelings
- has not yet learnt how to make friends
- does not realise that other pupil will treat him exactly as he treats them
- does not realise that other pupil deserve as much attention as her
- must learn that he will never get his own way by giving cheek.

6. USEFUL COMMENT BANKS FOR REFERENCE

<http://www.teachersnetwork.org/ntol/howto/align/reportsam/index.htm>

<http://www.zephyrus.co.uk/reportcomments.html>

7. PUBLICATION OF REPORTS

- Reports are published twice a year. Once in the Early Spring Term and once in July i.e. the last day of the school year. Opportunities are available for parents to discuss the reports with class teachers.

- Reports are not published to pupils who are no longer on the school role.