**giving helpful written feedback**

**EFFECTIVE Written feeDBACK**

“*The best resource for professional development is ongoing professional feedback...not criticism, but skilled meaningful, targeted feedback… we can develop and reinforce professional development that is purposeful and results in trainee teachers who continue to grow and change in order to meet the needs of pupils.”*

Source: <http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/leadership_360/2014/02/feedback_as_professional_development.htmln>

The weekly mentor feedback form (**Appendix C**) consists of the following sections to complete each time:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Focus area feedback** | How well has the trainee engaged and understood the key elements of the focus area? How has this influenced their planning, teaching and knowledge? What might they still need to work on? |
| **2. Lesson observation** | Feedback on an agreed observed lesson (see guidance about written feedback below) |
| **3. Weekly review** | A general summary and feedback of teaching and progress overall, in relation to the 5 strands and targets from last week’s feedback form. |
| **4. Review of previous targets** | Evaluate if these have been addressed and met by the trainee or not? If not, what action is now required to help make good progress? |
| **5. Targets for this week** | What is a priority based upon general observations, lesson outcomes and your expertise? What actions can you suggest to support them to be met? |

**Qualities of effective written feedback**

To be effective, written feedback following a lesson observation should be:

* **prioritised**
* **specific**
* **actionable**
* **have a supportive tone**
* **be given as soon after an observation as possible – to have the biggest impact**

Prioritised

Positive and constructive feedbackshould be focused. Substantial feedback across all or many components can be overwhelming for a trainee and does not indicate what is essential or where they should start. Prioritised feedback hones in on the ideas and strategies that are the most important for the trainee to continue to apply or those that require some amendment to move forward in their practice. It is not essential for a mentor to note everything that they observe. It is more helpful to focus on target areas and elements the mentor deems essential at that point in the trainee’s learning and development.

Specific

Feedback from a specific lesson should be clear, precise, and cite specific examples, so the trainee can see the context of the commentary. Feedback should directly support the teacher’s practice and look to find evidence around target or focus areas. Using cause and effect statements helps the trainee understand why something did or did not work and the impact.

* Unhelpful feedback – *“You have good classroom management.”,*
* Helpful feedback – *“You set clear expectations and routines prior to independent work, so the pupils knew what to do when they finished work early. This meant that they maximised learning opportunities without interrupting you.”*

Actionable

Any targets/next steps are actionable so that the trainee may use them to improve their practice in the immediate future. Actionable feedback provides resources or strategies to implement into practice and offers the teacher a clear picture of what this would look like in the classroom.

Supportive tone

Trainees can be highly critical of themselves and their lessons. Even if a lesson has not gone well, it is important to frame negative/difficult feedback in a constructive and supportive way. Try to provide some positives and share less positive commentary in a non-personal manner. Reading many negative comments can impact the trainee’s self-esteem and their ability to move forward and improve target areas.

The vocabulary used in written feedback should reflect the standard of evidence and level of confidence that is being demonstrated, to prevent any mixed messages being communicated to trainees.

Vocabulary bank to support appropriate written feedback

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Is consistent and competent**  You…  You are...  You demonstrated...  You know…  You used… | Consistently… Demonstrates a well-established…  Successfully embedded... Has embedded and implemented…  Innovative/creative approaches… Impacts successfully on…  Wide range of approaches/ strategies Has competent skills/knowledge of…  Demonstrates a thorough understanding of…  Always effectively demonstrates… Ably impacts upon…  Demonstrated full understanding of… Highly proficient…  Anticipates and enacts… Actively encourages…  Highly confident in…… Critically reflective in…. |
| **Becoming more consistent and competent**  You…  You are generally  You are developing…  You are improving at… | Implement… Is increasingly demonstrating…  Able to adopt/ adapt… Well informed about…  Allows for a range… Able to use…  Effectively uses… In most lessons…  Provides frequent/consistent…… Has good knowledge and understanding of… Routinely… Growing awareness of…  Promotes good levels of… Increasingly applies…  An effective use of… Demonstrates a range/ good awareness… Plans opportunities for... Uses reflective practice…  Is proactive about… Meets the needs of… |
| **Remains inconsistent in places, emerging competence**  You…  You, at times…  With support, you…  You sometimes… | Is developing... Requires more consistency in…  Usually can … Demonstrates some/ basic…  Beginning to…. Generally able to….  Shows some awareness of… Uses some strategies…  Has some understanding… With support can….  With some success… Some learners…  Sometimes can… Some evidence of…  Recognises some opportunities to… Limited response to/knowledge of…  Developing a limited knowledge/ understanding of…  Has a basic knowledge/understanding of… |
| **Inadequate or little progress or not yet meeting expectations**  You are…  You are yet to…  You need to…  You should… | Not yet… Unable to establish…  Requires intervention to support… Not able to demonstrate…  Unable to identify… Lacks awareness/knowledge of…  Not informed by… Not yet confidently/consistently…  Demonstrates no/little awareness of… Unable to reflect upon…  Does not take account of… Has limited knowledge/understanding of… Not clear about… Inadequate… |