



Marking and Feedback Policy

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Educational research is unequivocal about the importance of high-quality feedback. It allows pupils to understand what is going well and what they need to do to improve their knowledge and understanding.

Schools within The Education Alliance use a wide variety of evidence-informed techniques to provide effective and timely feedback, underpinned by an ongoing programme of continued professional development. Teacher feedback can take many forms.

Our updated subject specific feedback guidance continues our focus on the quality of feedback, meaning that we may mark fewer pieces of work but with more impact. The key pieces of work for written marking are identified in curriculum plans, with subject-specific approaches to marking developed by subject specialists across our trust of schools. Each subject has their own frequency of marking guidance for both Key Stages Three and Four.

It's important to note, however, that feedback takes a wide range of forms, with teachers using feedback to inform their teaching. As such, we prioritise methods of immediate feedback (such as verbal feedback whilst the teacher is circulating, feedback on mini-whiteboard responses or questioning strategies) to enable pupils to apply feedback and improve within that lesson.

Across our wide range of feedback strategies, we are committed to delivering high quality feedback that meets these core principles:

- Feedback will be clear and easy for pupils to understand
- Feedback will focus on improving the pupil's knowledge/skills, not an individual piece of work in isolation
- Feedback is received and applied by pupils
- We use our feedback to show pupils that their work (in lessons and in homework) is valued

Within written feedback, we aim to:

- Give an evaluation of pupil progress
- Offer questions that will generate a response from pupils to develop a skill
- Give opportunities and time for pupils to reflect upon and respond to their feedback
- Make use of mark schemes to inform pupils of their strengths and areas for development in the lead up to mocks, assessments and GCSE examinations
- Give personal, individualised feedback to ensure pupils are clear on the progress being made and developments still needed

Literacy marking codes

In subjects where there is extended writing, the following codes are used when marking for literacy:

- sp Spelling error
- © Capital letter error
- P Incorrect or missing punctuation
- ^ Missing word/phrase
- // New paragraph needed

Written feedback is an integral element of teaching that is as important as the teaching that takes place in the classroom.

As an extension of the differentiated and challenging learning experiences in lessons, written feedback on key pieces is highly personalised for pupils. The marking of pupils' work will inform them of where they have achieved well and are succeeding in making progress as well as guiding them to where certain skills must be improved, practised or to identify misconceptions, which must be addressed with pupils to prevent it from happening again. This in turn is crucial in informing future planning for staff to address misconceptions and to continue to improve pupils' strengths, plus help them see how pupils are responding to the curriculum. Written feedback provided by the teacher should be in a form appropriate for the individual pupil and all pupils must be made aware of the criteria being used for both the production and the assessment of their work.

Written feedback allows both pupils and staff to reflect on the learning that has taken place and informs precise differentiation, challenge and planning for future progress.

When marked work is returned to pupils, time is dedicated for pupils to reflect upon comments and targets by improving a certain skill or piece of work or to respond to questions posed by the teacher to allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding. Pupils should also be given regular opportunities to assess their own and their peers' work and have their judgements qualified by the teacher too. Teachers should always record and track pupil progress, to enable accurate reporting and data entry.

Live Marking

Live marking pupils' work is a means of giving immediate feedback to an individual pupil, though teachers might consider live marking for a range of pupils across a lesson. Live marking is used where teachers give feedback whilst pupils work independently, coupling verbal feedback with written comments/codes/prompts. Live marking is likely to be used to help pupils respond to feedback whilst they are completing the task, as well as showing pupils that their work is valued.

In order for live marking to be effective, it could:

- Highlight specific strengths/areas for improvement
- Prompt improvements on the current task
- Be applicable to future work (focusing on improving the pupil's knowledge/skills, not just a single piece of work)

These features should be avoided, as they can make feedback from live marking ineffective:

- Acknowledgement marking (generic praise that doesn't focus on a specific strength)
- Generic praise
- A quantity of comments that could cause cognitive overload
- Feedback that pupils read/listen to but have no opportunity to apply and act on

Verbal Feedback with Teacher Circulating

Teachers may give immediate verbal feedback to an individual pupil during their independent practice. This feedback is likely to be given as the teacher circulates the room, so that the individual feedback is given to a range of pupils across a lesson. Verbal feedback with teacher circulating is likely to be used to help pupils respond to feedback whilst they are completing the task, as well as showing pupils that their work is valued.

In order for feedback on verbal feedback to be effective, it could:

- Highlight specific strengths/areas for improvement
- Prompt improvements on the current task
- Be applicable to future work (focusing on improving the pupil's knowledge/skills, not just a single piece of work)

These features should be avoided, as they can make verbal feedback with the teacher circulating ineffective:

- Generic praise
- A quantity of comments that could cause cognitive overload
- Feedback that pupils listen to but have no opportunity to apply and act on

Show-Call

Show-call is where a teacher live marks a pupils' work (either complete or part-way through a task) in front of the whole class (sharing it under the visualiser, for example). Though the individual pupil gets feedback on their work, this can also be used as an opportunity to address common misconceptions and give whole-class feedback, based on trends a teacher observes whilst circulating. Show-call is likely to be used to help address common misconceptions, as well as showing the selected pupil that their work is valued.

In order for show-call to be effective, it could:

- Highlight specific strengths/areas for improvement
- Prompt improvements on the current task
- Be applicable to future work (focusing on improving the pupil's knowledge/skills, not just a single piece of work)
- Be based on a teacher's assessment of the trends across a whole class' work

These features should be avoided, as they can make feedback from show-call ineffective:

- Acknowledgement marking (generic praise that doesn't focus on a specific strength)
- Generic praise
- A quantity of comments that could cause cognitive overload
- Feedback that pupils listen to but have no opportunity to apply and act on

Whole-Class Feedback

Teachers may read/view all of a class' work and make notes on patterns in what they see, including: strengths, areas for improvement/misconceptions, literacy errors and their impact on future teaching/wave 1 interventions. These notes may be collated on a proforma. The notes should be kept, in order to inform the teacher's planning of future lessons and aid reflection on a class' progress. Written feedback is likely to be used to support with improving pupils' skills/knowledge. However, where it involves sharing good examples from the class, it can also show pupils that their work is valued.

The feedback can then be shared with the class through the follow-up tasks in lessons. These might include instruction activities (such as teacher explanation/modelling); practice activities (tasks for pupils, applying the knowledge/skills from the feedback); or assessment activities (such as a teacher using the feedback to scaffold a self/peer assessment process).

In order for whole-class feedback to be effective, it could:

- Highlight specific strengths/areas for improvement
- Be applicable to future work (focusing on improving the pupil's knowledge/skills, not just a single piece of work)
- Enable pupils to apply the feedback
- Inform future teaching on an ongoing basis
- Show that pupils' work is valued by sharing good examples and specific praise verbally

These features should be avoided, as they can make whole-class feedback ineffective and cause unnecessary workload:

- Presentation of the feedback that could cause cognitive overload (for example, sharing a pre-populated sheet of all of the teacher's notes with the class)
- Feedback that's restricted to a single 'feedback lesson' and is not applied to future learning/work
- Just telling the class the common strengths/targets without any impact on instruction/practice activities

Feedback on mini-whiteboard responses

Feedback on mini-whiteboard responses is a means of giving immediate feedback to the whole class. This might include highlighting strengths/areas for development as well as re-explanation of concepts, followed by a chance to practise applying the knowledge. Feedback on mini-whiteboard responses is likely to be used to support with improving pupils' skills/knowledge but combining it with highlighting specific pupils' responses can also show pupils that their work is valued.

In order for feedback on mini-whiteboard responses to be effective, it could:

- Be combined with clear routines for ensuring all pupils have the equipment needed
- Be combined with a clear routine for all pupils to show their work at the same time (such as the 'show-me' routine)
- Highlight specific strengths/areas for improvement, so individual pupils know if their answer was correct
- Include probing questions to unpick pupils' responses and misconceptions
- Use examples from the pupils' responses to unpick as examples/non-examples
- Be followed up with tasks that ensure pupils practise applying the feedback

These features should be avoided, as they can make feedback on mini-whiteboards ineffective:

- Unclear routines for giving out equipment/pupils sharing their responses
- Not seeing the responses of all pupils
- Using mini-whiteboards as a drafting tool (although this can be useful, it shouldn't be confused with using mini whiteboards to facilitate assessment/feedback)
- Generic comments/praise

- Feedback that pupils listen to but have no opportunity to apply and act on

Subject leaders conduct book looks with a specific focus to ensure pupils are receiving quality feedback and are responding to it. Subject leaders feed this back to staff to ensure marking is consistent and promoting pupil progress. Book scrutinies feed into the schedule of departmental QA and allow subject leaders to see how pupils are responding to the curriculum within their work.

Focused training is given to staff during TDMs and moderation is completed regularly by departments in order to standardise mock exams and assessment marking. Sharing of best practice is also done within teams to show the expectations for effective pupil feedback.